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INDIA AS A SECURITY PROVIDER

Editors

S D Muni | Vivek Chadha

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2015

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S.D. MUNI
VIVEK CHADHA



INSTITUTE FOR DEFENCE STUDIES & ANALYSES
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S.D. Muni, Vivek Chadha (Eds)

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Contents

List of Contributors *vii*

1. Introduction 1
S.D. Muni
2. Political Will and Military Capacity to Provide Security 9
Brig Rumel Dahiya (Retd)

INDIA AND ITS IMMEDIATE NEIGHBOURS

3. Can India be a Security Provider to its Neighbours: Competing Interests, Dichotomical Expectations, Challenges and Constraints 31
Smruti S Pattanaik
4. Defence and Security Partnership with Myanmar 67
Sampa Kundu
5. Afghanistan Post-2014: Can India Emerge as a Key ‘Security Collaborator’? 82
Rajeev Agarwal
6. Mutual Assured Security: India-Nepal Security Cooperation to Mitigate Common Threats 104
Nihar R Nayak
7. Assuring Security to Sri Lanka 122
Gulbin Sultana

INDO-PACIFIC

8. Maritime Security Partner in the Indo-Pacific 145
Cdr Abhijit Singh
9. India-U.S. Security Cooperation in Asia: Can India be a Net Security Provider? 166
Saroj Bishoyi

10. Security Engagement in Southeast Asia <i>Rahul Mishra</i>	193
11. India in East Asia: Reviewing the Role of a Security Provider <i>Jagannath Panda</i>	213
12. India and China: Competition and Cooperation in the Evolving Asian Security Scenario <i>Avinash Godbole</i>	230
13. India-South Korea Defence and Security Cooperation: Exploring the Possibilities and Challenges <i>Pranamita Baruah</i>	250
14. India-Japan Security Cooperation: Expectation, Challenges and the Way Forward <i>Titli Basu</i>	268
WEST ASIA	
15. India's Constraints in the Gulf Region <i>Prasanta Kumar Pradhan</i>	287
16. India and Iran: Progress and Prospects of an Evolving Security Relationship <i>M Mahtab Alam Rizvi</i>	301
17. Equipping to Play the Role: India-Israel Strategic Engagement <i>S. Samuel C. Rajiv</i>	312
NUCLEAR	
18. Global Centre for Nuclear Energy Partnership: India's Gift Basket of Nuclear Security <i>Reshmi Kazi</i>	329
19. Concluding Assessment <i>Vivek Chadha</i>	349
<i>Annexures</i>	357
<i>Index</i>	393

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1

Introduction

S.D. Muni

The role of a security provider is generally assigned to or expected out of the great and capable powers that can deploy their surplus national assets for the safety and stability of other countries. The buzz of India being a security provider in the Asian— particularly the Indian Ocean region – has been growing louder in the official and intellectual strategic discourse in Asia for the past decade and a half. Officially, the US policy makers were the first to clearly articulate it. Addressing the Shangrila Dialogue in Singapore on May 30, 2009, the US Secretary of Defense Robert Gates said: “In coming years, we look to India to be a partner and net provider of security in the Indian Ocean and beyond”. This theme has continuously been reiterated by many other US leaders and officials in recent years. The perception in the US and elsewhere, about India emerging as a security provider in Asia, must have been prompted by the ground reality of developments in India’s military capabilities and political will. India offering to escort US ships passing through the Malacca Strait in 2002, and providing a credible response to the Tsunami of December 2004, were significant pointers in this respect. In both these cases, the US had a chance to be a witness to India’s capabilities and strategic intent. With China proving to be a growing strategic challenge to its hegemony in the Asia-Pacific region, the US has also been looking for strategic partners and military allies who could share the burden of meeting the Chinese challenge. It made considerable sense to US policy makers to encourage India—given its great geo-strategic advantage of location—as a ‘pivot’ in the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean regions (India’s first Prime Minister Nehru used this term for India as early as in 1944), to play the role of a security provider in this respect.¹

This is not to say that India was not itself aware of its potential and growing capabilities to be an Asian security provider. India has, in fact, always been a

security provider to its willing immediate neighbours like Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar (then Burma) and Indonesia, since its own independence in 1947. It continued to play this role throughout the 1970s and 1980s in relation to Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Maldives. With the rise in its economic strength and military capabilities from the late 1990s onwards, India has, since the beginning of this century, been openly expressing its aspirations and willingness to be a dependable security partner to its immediate and extended neighbours, as stability and order in Asia has been in its own intrinsic interests. The statements made by the then Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee in 2006 and the then National Security Adviser Shivshankar Menon in 2010 at the Shangrila Dialogue in Singapore, where top honchos of the Asian strategic community gather for serious policy discussions every year, bear strong testimony to this. India's maritime military strategy, officially outlined in May 2007, stipulated:

Smaller nations in our neighbourhood as well as nations that depend on the waters of the Indian Ocean for their trade and energy supplies have come to expect that the Indian Navy will ensure a measure of stability and tranquillity in the waters around our shores. Ensuring good order at sea is therefore a legitimate duty of the Indian Navy. This task will require enhanced capabilities, cooperation and interoperability with regional and extra-regional navies.²

Highlighting the thrust of this strategy, India's then Defence Minister A.K. Antony, in a conference of Naval Commanders on October 12, 2011, said: "Indian Navy has been mandated to be a net security provider to island nations in the Indian Ocean Region...most of the major international shipping lanes are located along our island territories. This bestows on us the ability to be a potent and stabilising force in the region". India's realisation of its growing capabilities and aspirations has, however, not remained confined to the role of the Indian Navy. It includes army and air force as well. This was disclosed to the nation by the then Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, while laying the foundation stone for the Indian National Defence University on May 23, 2013. He said: "We have added...Army's firepower...We have enhanced the full spectrum of capabilities of our Air Force...We have placed special emphasis on strengthening the capabilities of our Navy..." All this, he added has made India "conscious of our strategic opportunities...to become a net provider of security in our immediate region and beyond".³ India's new government under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has taken initiatives to enhance FDI in India's defence industry to make it more self-reliant and capable of exporting arms which will go a long way towards reinforcing India's security provider's role. Launching India's upgraded aircraft carrier *INS Vikramaditya*, in June 2014, Prime Minister Modi, barely a month after assuming power, said: "Indian -made arms and equipment's should also serve as protectors for small nations across the world."⁴

Security Provider: A Conceptual Range

A country, being a security provider, is not meant to be a provider of total and comprehensive traditional and/or non-traditional security, though this is evident in some cases, particularly where military alliances are in operation. The concept of providing a nuclear umbrella was seen as a part of comprehensive security, as was promised by the US to its close allies like Japan, Australia and Israel. Thus, the security role of the US in relation to Europe or chosen allies like Japan and Australia border on that holistic meaning of a security provider, as the US stands as almost a guarantor of security to its allies. For other countries like India, providing of any security related goods or services may define the security providing role more in the nature of security cooperation... Anit Mukherjee suggests four categories of activities that should be included in such a role. They are:

- (i) Capacity building,
- (ii) Military diplomacy,
- (iii) Military assistance, and
- (iv) Direct deployment of military forces to aid and stabilise a situation.⁵

This is a reasonably workable categorisation, though one can easily find an overlap among these categories. For instance, supplying of arms, which has been clubbed under 'Military Assistance' could also be a part of building capacity, where arms are either supplied as a grant or under specially favourable terms. It is also a very significant commercial exercise, as in the case of major arms suppliers of the world. Even there, the consideration of the implications of arms sold in terms of building capabilities is taken into account for strategic interests. In the US, the State exercises tight control on what weapons can be transferred to a given country and what cannot. In attempting to analyse India's role as a regional security provider, Harsh V. Pant has argued that this role has been performed by India through four sets of policies: First, "Assurance Policies", that included sending troops during situations like the liberation of Bangladesh (1971) and Peacekeeping in Sri Lanka (1987). India's role in Nepal, Maldives and Myanmar could also be included here. Pant also includes India's role in economic reconstruction and its assistance during natural disasters as a part of its assurance policies. Second, under "Prevention Policies, issues such as democratisation, mediation in conflicts and immigration" are included. Third, through its "Protection Policies", India extends support to the neighbours in the areas of "health, organised crime, terrorism and environmental degradation". And last, under "Compellence Policies", India extends significant support to the UN Peacekeeping activities.⁶ This categorisation is somewhat confusing and deals with the subject matter primarily from India's vantage point and not for its impact on the recipients of India's security support.

All such analyses however, underline the fact that the role of a security provider has much wider scope, as the concept of security has widened immensely to cover traditional and non-traditional as well as military and human security. Accordingly, the security providing role may be in the form of concluding security-related treaties and agreements, providing all forms of military assistance, extending economic and political support and rescue operations during natural disasters and even pandemics. A broad idea about some of these activities by India can be had from the Annexure attached to this volume.

Dynamics of Security Providing

International strategic engagements are seldom acts of philanthropy. India is no exception in this respect. Its role as a security provider therefore, is primarily driven by its own security interests and concerns. No policy that does not enhance India's security in the short or long run, directly or indirectly, can be framed in this respect. With the changing times and evolving strategic context, the parameters of what constitutes security interests and concerns may change, may be reviewed and redefined. India's self-security perception may also not exclude denial of economic and strategic space to adversarial and/or rival powers in security-sensitive areas like the immediate neighbourhood and the Indian Ocean. With regard to the latter, the former Naval Chief, Admiral Nirmal Verma said: "There are ample opportunities for us to cooperate with countries in the Indian Ocean Region and beyond.... It is important to realise that if one nation does not meet a need, there will always be another ready to fill the vacuum. Such cooperation drives the strategic balance between friendly and other influences in the region". Analysts have interpreted such statements as "not merely a response to prevent polarization by promoting a more consensual approach, but is also driven by a desire to deny China opportunities to further expand its footprint in the Indian Ocean".⁷

The recipient of India's security role will be one where a basic minimum security synergy exists between India and the given recipient. The more the synergy the closer the security engagement. There are occasional instances where adversarial countries or even those that are considered a direct threat to India may be offered security support, at least in the area of non-traditional security. The example of India offering assistance to Pakistan during the floods in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir and other areas in 2014, may be recalled as a reference. Such gestures may be seen as moves to either blunt the adversarial impact of a relationship in the long run or to send a diplomatic message to the people of that country as also to the international community at large, that India gives priority to humanitarian values over the prevailing nature of strategic relations.

India's security providing role has evolved depending upon the context of its

security as well as the nature and level of its capabilities. One can see this evolution broadly in three phases. During the late Forties and early Fifties, India saw the Cold War-led military blocs as a source of threat to world peace and stability. In its foreign policy, military engagement with other countries was not considered a desirable or an ethically preferable activity. India also had no capabilities during this phase, economically or militarily, to extend support to any country. Having brought to experience wars and conflicts by its two adversarial neighbours Pakistan (in 1947, 1965 and 1971) and China (in 1962), India was more of a recipient than a provider of security support. In the aftermath of a humiliating defeat at the hands of China, India sought military support not only from its dependable friend, the former Soviet Union, but also from its reluctant sympathisers, the US and the UK. Following China's acquisition of nuclear weapons in 1964, questions were raised in India if the country should seek a nuclear umbrella from any of the two then prevailing super powers.

Immediate neighbouring countries where India assumed the role of a security provider, were an exception to that however, as their security, particularly those of Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar (then Burma) and Sri Lanka were perceived as closely linked to India's own. India also came to the rescue of the legitimate governments of Mauritius, Seychelles and Maldives in the face of attempted coups in 1983, 1986 and 1988 respectively. India was offering security support to its immediate neighbours since its independence and particularly after the rise of a Communist China on its northern frontier. India joined the UN peacekeeping operations during this phase and has since been contributing towards its global responsibilities through this channel. During the Fifties, India also played a stabilising role beyond its immediate neighbourhood like in Korea(s) and Indo-China, under the UN and the international community's obligations. This may not measure up to the conventional standards of a security providing role but it did help in advancing the cause of global peace and security.

The second phase in the evolution of India's role as a security provider in Asia evolved with the end of the Cold War, which also coincided with the gradual rise of China and a new shift in India's approach to the world marked by greater economic and strategic engagement. India initiated its 'Look East' Policy which made it a member of ASEAN and its related organisations like the ASEAN Regional Forum, where regional security issues were being addressed. India's agreements with countries like Malaysia, Vietnam and Laos to service Soviet-supplied MIG fighter aircraft, indicated its slow but steadily expanding security partnership in the region. In 1995, the Indian Navy also launched its MILAN initiative to build 'friendship across the seas' and military exercises with friendly countries in the region were also initiated. In 1999, India safely escorted a Japanese pirated cargo ship. With the opening up of India's economy and increasing trade

and investment ties, its growth story also started, registering an average growth rate of 6 per cent during the Nineties, and thus helped it to move in the direction of its military modernisation. In view of these developments, the Southeast Asian countries encouraged India to integrate with the region more closely and play a greater and active role in Asian security affairs, as they were gradually becoming anxious about China's growing economic and military clout. Recall the statement made by the ASEAN Secretary General Rodolfo C. Severino when, in his India-ASEAN Lecture in New Delhi on January 09, 2001, he said: "I am confident that I speak for ASEAN when I say that ASEAN values immensely India's strategic engagement in our part of the world. I am sure that India will also find its involvement with Southeast Asia useful to itself".⁸ A year later, addressing the ASEAN Summit in Kampuchea in 2002, Singapore's Prime Minister compared ASEAN with an aircraft that had two wings of Japan, China and Korea on the east and India on the west to keep it in balance.⁹ The characteristic feature of this phase was that India's security providing role expanded beyond its immediate neighbours and to the countries where India's own security interests were not directly involved. India was now willing to include the balancing of the activities of its adversarial countries and seeking a strategic space in the extended neighbourhood as a part of its security concerns. The scope of the security providing role had also widened from being bilateral to multilateral, within the framework of regional groupings and organisations.

The third phase may be seen as having begun with the early years of the twenty-first century. The then Foreign Minister Yashwant Sinha, in his address at the Harvard University on September, 29, 2003, announced that a new phase in India's 'Look East' Policy had begun, which was characterised not only by 'an expanded definition of East' but also a "shift from trade to wider economic and security issues including joint efforts to protect the sea-lanes and coordinate counter-terrorism activities".¹⁰ In the previous year, India provided escort to US ships passing through the Malacca Strait, as noted earlier. During this phase, India not only registered high growth until 2009, but had also carried out overall, specially naval, military modernisation at a faster pace. The development of Andaman and Nicobar Islands as a unified tri-Service base since 2001, will give India a long reach beyond the Malacca Strait and in the Bay of Bengal region. Similarly, the launching of a large naval base, *INS Kadamba*, in Karwar (Goa) in 2005, has reinforced India's naval sway over the Western Indian Ocean. Such facilities have considerably augmented India's security providing role to its Asian neighbours. It is during this phase that the Indian political and military leadership has started openly articulating India's role as a security provider in Asia, as already noted. It is also during this phase that other countries have started urging upon India to play this role. We noted some of the US statements earlier in this respect.

In this third phase, India has established “strategic partnerships” with a number of Asian and other countries. In substance, all these partnerships differ from each other, underlining varying levels of security cooperation between India and a given strategic partner. The security providing role is, however, not confined only to the strategic partners. Some of the strategic partnerships also help in building India’s own capabilities that eventually may reinforce its security providing role. Within the bilateral and multilateral parameters, India’s security providing role is being cast in collaboration with major Asian players. The Indo-US joint statement during President Obama’s visit to India in January 2015, is particularly notable in this respect:

Over the next five years, we will strengthen our regional dialogues, invest in making trilateral consultations with third countries in the region more robust, deepen regional integration, strengthen regional forums, explore additional multilateral opportunities for engagement, and pursue areas where we can build capacity in the region that bolster long-term peace and prosperity for all.¹¹

India’s promised thrust towards defence production and exports under the new government, is bound to give an impetus to India’s security providing capacities and role.

The Present Volume

Looking at the evolution of India’s security providing role, one can mark out three distinct areas where this role has been played, namely, the immediate neighbours considered an integral part of India’s own security, the extended neighbourhood in the east and the west (India’s role has been far more active and involved on the eastern front of the Asian neighbourhood than the western front), and through UN Peacekeeping in Africa and elsewhere. In this volume, an attempt has been made to critically evaluate this role in the first two areas, i.e., the immediate and the extended neighbourhood. Since there is considerable literature already available on the UN Peacekeeping role and India’s contribution thereof, we have left that unsaid in this volume. This being the first attempt of its own kind, all the contributions may not fully satisfy the readers’ curiosities and quests on India’s regional and global emergence as a security player. But this role is evolving and hopefully, there will be further attempts to map it out with greater precision and depth.

ENDNOTES

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2

Political Will and Military Capacity to Provide Security

Brig Rumel Dahiya (Retd)

The nature of conflict and competition is changing at the same time when national boundaries are being blurred by deepening global integration. Therefore, while defending and securing our homeland, we also have to be prepared to preserve India's expanding international assets...we have unprecedented access to high technology, capital and partnerships. We have also sought to assume our responsibility for stability in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). We are well positioned, therefore, to become a net provider of security in our immediate region and beyond.¹

—Dr Manmohan Singh, India's former Prime Minister

India's political, economic, diplomatic, and military profile is rising simultaneously with the growing aversion in the developed countries to commit resources for enforcing peace and stability in the world. There is an increasing demand on India to fill the gap and take on greater responsibility towards the security of common goods. Some analysts may see this as an outsider's attempt at altercasting² and forcing India into a role it is ill-prepared to shoulder, but Indian leaders themselves of late have been talking about India's responsibilities in contributing to regional, if not global, security.³ India's vital interests in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), the military and diplomatic measures being adopted to ensure security of its maritime trade and challenges such as piracy, narcotics, arms trade and terrorism are well recognised.⁴ Indian policymakers, since 2003 at least, also understand the importance of the Indian Ocean for its economic and security interests and the need for joining hands with other countries for common good.⁵

The Indian Armed Forces have been employed in the past for peace and stability operations away from its territories and may have to be employed again

if India's vital interests are threatened. India is also increasingly being seen as a benign security provider. This expectation raises the question of not only military capacities but also structural issues which enable response in a manner and time frame that defines India's stature and capability.⁶ But can India be considered as a security provider in the region and beyond?

India's capability to conduct operations outside its territory were examined by the scholars of Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA) in 2012 without specifying the contingencies or possible scenarios. Their report concluded that "...as India's interests extend beyond its borders, it will have to enhance its capability to safeguard them".⁷ The report detailed India's energy security vulnerability and the need for providing safety to its migrant population, particularly in the Gulf region, and concluded that India is likely to continue supporting peacekeeping and peace enforcement operations only under the United Nations (UN) mandate. It also made some valuable recommendations⁸ regarding organisations; coordination mechanism; robust contingency planning and war gaming exercises by the military; preparation of Out-Of-Area-Contingency (OOAC) doctrine and policies; enhancement of intelligence and situational awareness functions and building regional expertise; and the military related imperatives, such as logistical and sustainment issues.

This paper attempts to define the concept of a security provider and examines India's readiness for such a role, India's experience in military involvement outside its territories in different types of operations/missions, readiness of India's military to undertake such operations and imperative of protection and evacuation of Indian migrants and the likely areas where India may have to get involved.

Engagements outside country's borders are described differently by different scholars. Assistance in the aftermath of disasters normally comes under the rubric of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. This is normally considered a benign assistance. Some others refer to all kinds of assistance including military involvement as 'Operations-Other-Than-War' (OOTW). Some scholars would like to use the term 'Regional Stability Operations'.⁹

Who Is a Security Provider?

A security provider has to have the capacity to solve or manage the conflicts that exist on its periphery or in area of interest either by itself or in cooperation with other countries. To tackle these issues, the country has to possess and be prepared to deploy a vast array of instruments to manage crises. Kerry Longhurst, a scholar at the European Research Institute, University of Birmingham, outlines the key attributes of security providers thus:

In order to be providers or producers of security states must have a full range of military and non-military tools to carry out a variety of crisis

management tasks. In turn, in order to work, these attributes require steady and predictable national defence budgets grounded in a broad domestic consensus to ensure continuity of strategic priorities. Tied to this, security producers need to be able to focus a greater proportion of their defence spending on research and development, to be able to have at hand modern and well-equipped readily deployable forces.¹⁰

A security provider also needs to be able to guarantee stability, prevent conflicts and manage crises at its own doorstep. Barbe and Keienzle explain the distinction between security provider and security consumer in terms of interest and action thus:

...a security provider has a stronger interest in the immediate security of a third party rather than in direct security gains for itself. Nevertheless, a security provider is also interested in its own security improvements. The prospect of own security gains—often rather indirect and in the long term—are even a significant incentive for security providers to act, which is why the action of a security provider easily lead to a win-win situation, where both the third party and the security provider gain in security. A security consumer, on the other hand, is primarily interested in its own security and is largely indifferent towards the security needs of third parties.¹¹

Some analysts consider India to be a relatively passive player regionally and globally, despite the capacities it enjoys in terms of manpower, democracy, emerging economics and technological capabilities.¹²

Is India Prepared for the Role of a Security Provider?

There are also frequent references and exhortations for India—mainly from the US—to take on the role of a security provider. It would be in the interest of the US, as Ashley Tellis recently commented, “If India can achieve the economic and geopolitical success it seeks for its own development, it could in time become a security provider in the Indian Ocean basin, easing US burdens there”.¹³ The US Secretary of the Navy, Donald Winter commented in 2008 that the US welcomed India “taking up the responsibility to ensure security in (this) part of the world”.¹⁴ The then Secretary of Defence, Robert Gates, declared in 2009, “In coming years, we look to India to be a partner and net provider of security in the Indian Ocean and beyond”.¹⁵ The *2010 US Quadrennial Defense Review* explained this American view:

India’s military capabilities are rapidly improving through increased defence acquisitions, and they now include long-range maritime surveillance, maritime interdiction and patrolling, air interdiction, and strategic airlift. India has already established its worldwide military influence through

counter-piracy, peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief efforts. As its military capabilities grow, India will contribute to Asia as a net provider of security in the Indian Ocean and beyond.¹⁶

Similar averments were also made by the US Ambassador designate to India, Nancy Powell,¹⁷ and the US Assistant Secretary of State for Political Military Affairs, Puneet Talwar, on September 1, 2014.¹⁸

David Brewster, a scholar with Maritime Studies Programme at Gateway House, Australia, opines,

It is natural to expect that India's area of strategic interest will grow as its economic and political influence expands. This means that in coming years India will have a growing interest in encouraging regional stability, including in containing problems that emanate from the many failed or fragile states in our region. Many countries see India in benign terms and welcome its rise as a regional security provider. There is a growing expectation that India will shoulder more of the responsibilities of providing the so-called 'public goods' of security.¹⁹

Analysing India's current strategic position, Donald L Berlin states that "... its ascent now seems assured in light of changes in India's economic and political mind-set, especially the advent of better economic policies and a diplomacy emphasizing realism. India also is no longer geopolitically contained in South Asia, as it was in the Cold War..."²⁰ In his opinion, India is on path to achieve, potentially, the regional influence in the Indian Ocean and to this end, New Delhi has raised its profile and strengthened its position in a variety of nations on the littoral, especially Iran, Sri Lanka, Burma, Singapore, Thailand and most of the ocean's small island nations but that it will need to strengthen further its hand in coastal Africa and the Arabian Peninsula.²¹

How India's image in its extended neighbourhood has undergone a change can be seen from its defence relationship with countries in South East Asia, many of whom were apprehensive about its growing military power in the 1980s and 1990s, particularly on the issue of military establishments in Andaman and Nicobar Islands.²²

However, there is also scepticism in some quarters. S. Amer Latif, former Director in the Office of the US Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, has noted that "knowledgeable people inside the Pentagon and at Pacific Command know it will take a long time for India to emerge as a credible provider of security in Asia",²³ and that "despite the impressive progress in recent years, questions still remain about India's commitment and ability to be a security provider in Asia".²⁴ Elsewhere, Amer Latif talks about key lacunas like public apathy, personnel challenges and policy incoherence affecting India's defence modernisation that

prevent it from becoming a credible security provider. He also advocates the need for procurement reforms for speedy acquisition of military capabilities.²⁵

Despite scepticism about India assuming the role of a security provider and apprehensions about altercasting by outsiders, there is growing domestic acceptance of the fact that India will have to take on a larger role in maintaining peace and stability in the region. Well-known commentator on strategic affairs, C. Raja Mohan opines that there appears to be new political will in Delhi to see itself as a regional security provider. He talks about the domestic logic of securing its vital interests and growing international interest in India's possible contribution to collective goods in Indian Ocean region beyond being responsible for this change.²⁶

Rory Medcalf, from the Lowy Institute, Australia, in his scholarly article, "Unselfish Giants? Understanding China and India as Security Providers", aptly summarises the growing inclination in both India and China of becoming increasingly active as contributors of public goods in international security.²⁷

Also there are indications of the Indian leadership's desire to project India as a 'net security provider'.²⁸ India's then Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh, while addressing the Annual Combined Commanders' Conference in 2009 said, "The [country's] armed forces must be fully equipped to deal with all threat scenarios. Our troops should be trained to fight anywhere, anytime and under any conditions... their ability to deal with non-traditional threats must receive [*even*] greater attention."²⁹ Similar views were expressed by then Defence Minister, A K Antony, while addressing the Naval Commanders in 2011. He assured India's maritime neighbours of the country's "unstinted support for their security and economic prosperity" and that the Indian Navy had been "mandated to be a net security provider to island nations in the IOR".³⁰

In assuming the role of a security provider, however, India needs to be cautious and careful in responding to the expectations. Delivering a lecture on "India in the 21st Century World", the then National Security Adviser, Shiv Shankar Menon said: "There is a demand that India be a net provider of security and we need to take a call on that... The demand is that we step in, in terms of maritime security and help in building maritime capabilities." But India will have to "take the basic decision on how far we are willing to assume these functions... we have not decided".³¹ It seems he was perhaps responding to the expectations from others about a more robust role than the Indian Armed Forces had been performing since independence.

How Do the Armed Forces Look at the Peace and Stability Operations?

Of all the three Services in India, it is the Indian Navy that has been most explicit

in enunciating a doctrine that encapsulates India's regional interests and its role in safeguarding these. Indian Maritime Doctrine clearly spell out the roles and tasks with regard to operations beyond India's shores. Among the principal roles of the Indian Navy, the two that indicate India's desire and willingness to provide security away from its shores are: project influence in India's maritime area of interest to further the nation's political, economic and security objectives; and provide maritime assistance (including disaster relief) in India's maritime neighbourhood.³² This is rightly so because navy has some characteristics that make it suitable for carrying out such roles.³³ One of India's national security objectives listed in Indian Navy's Maritime Doctrine is to "strengthen co-operation and friendship with other countries to promote regional and global stability".³⁴

The Doctrine also specifies military objectives and missions that indicate the Armed Forces', and particularly Navy's, plans if not the readiness for providing security in the region. Relevant for the purpose of this discussion are: objective—safeguard India's national interests and maritime security; missions—power projection and expeditionary operations.³⁵ The Doctrine also specifies the Navy's missions in diplomatic role, with the objective of promoting regional and global security such as maritime assistance and support, presence to display credible defence posture and capacity and peace support operations, besides the diplomatic and military task of OOAC and Non-combatant Evacuation Operations (NEOs).³⁶ It also lists Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) and hydrography as some of its missions besides explaining the expeditionary operations, distant operations and conflict scenarios for which the Navy should be prepared.³⁷

India has established an expanded maritime security cooperation framework with various island countries in the Indian Ocean, namely, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Mauritius and Seychelles as a mutual acknowledgement of the commonality of the sea-borne security challenges and the need for cooperative approaches.³⁸ Military equipment has also been gifted to a number of countries in the past, including helicopters, landing craft, survey vessels, etc.³⁹ India also has a robust defence cooperation with many countries in the region and beyond. This involves training exchanges, joint exercises, surveillance and hydrography and anti-piracy operations and exercises.⁴⁰

Iskander Rehman while analysing India's Naval Doctrine has commented that "over the past decade the Indian Navy has frequently displayed with a certain panache its desire and capacity to be viewed as a provider of public goods as well as a reliable partner".⁴¹ In April 2002, as part of their bilateral cooperation, Indian and US naval ships had engaged in joint escort duties in Malacca Straits.⁴²

India's then Chief of Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal NAK Browne, in a nuanced statement mentioned that "India's military was not preparing to fight other peoples'

wars. There is a big difference in expanding strategic reach and being expeditionary... Earlier, we have been talking of our strategic interests starting from the Gulf of Aden to the Malacca Straits. But as the global footprint of India increases, certainly the Indian Air Force [IAF] will be called upon to serve India's interests based on our capabilities".⁴³ Admiral Sureesh Mehta had also said that "...contingencies can be envisioned where we may be compelled to cross the seas to protect our own island territories, or even reach "out of area" to safeguard the interests of our friends".⁴⁴

Basic Doctrine of the IAF 2012 defines its vision as: "To acquire strategic reach and capabilities across the spectrum of conflict that serve the ends of military diplomacy, nation building and enable force projection within India's strategic area of influence."⁴⁵ Among its various role the doctrine lists: deploying and employing forces to protect and project the national interests in any out of country contingency operation.⁴⁶ The main tasks that the Indian Air Force may be involved in are: airborne operations, air transported operations,⁴⁷ suppressing air defences, transportation and logistics support including air supply and casualty evacuation and suppression of hostile fire besides assistance in disaster management or humanitarian relief tasks.

The Indian Army has not made its doctrine public, but it has taken part in various UN Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKO) and combat operations as a lead force in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Maldives; therefore, it goes without saying that the Army factors the overseas tasks in its planning. At one stage, the Indian Peace-Keeping Force (IPKF) had 70,000 troops operating in Sri Lanka;⁴⁸ four army divisions including 4, 36 and 54 Infantry Divisions and 57 Mountain Division and more than 100 infantry battalions saw action in Sri Lanka in two and a half years as a result of normal turn over.⁴⁹ Many specialised units were also deployed.

Acquisition of assets like the C17 Globemaster III heavy-lift aircraft, C 130J Super Hercules, IL-78 air-to-air refuelling tankers, long-range maritime surveillance aircraft P8I Poseidon, aircraft carrier INS Vikarmaditya, remote sensing satellites, amphibian ship INS Jalashwa,⁵⁰ and continuing acquisition of Mi-17 V5 helicopters, proposed new landing crafts, Chinook heavy-lift helicopters, A330 multi-role tankers and Japanese-origin US 2i amphibious aircraft fits into the overall capability development plans to make the armed forces modern and well equipped readily deployable forces. Since Operation (Op) Pawan, the Indian Army has grown in size and the other services have seen sizeable increase in assets required for regional stability operations. India possesses a significant air borne and air transported operations capability and amphibious capability⁵¹ which can be employed at short notice at long distances. Therefore, the question of military surplus to undertake such operations is not a constraint. It is also to be noted

that the India has never recalled its troops from UNPKO even during conflicts with its neighbours.

India's Experience of Military Operations in the Neighbourhood

Indian soldiers had been participating in large numbers in operations overseas during the colonial period.⁵² After independence India has participated in the UNPKO the world over. But of all the engagements outside India, the ones that had the largest footprint of Indian Armed Forces were the Bangladesh Liberation War in 1971 and IPKF operation named Op Pawan, 1987-89, in Sri Lanka. Op Cactus, undertaken at a much smaller scale to restore the legitimate government in Maldives in 1988 was another operation which involved all three services; army, navy and air force. Sri Lanka had also sought military assistance from India in the past wherein in early 1971 about 500 Indian troops were sent to secure the Colombo airport during a Communist (*The Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna*) uprising.⁵³ There were some smaller interventions in the past which were important all the same. The aerial evacuation of King Tribhuvan of Nepal in 1950 and his subsequent restoration to the throne was one such operation.⁵⁴

Each of these operations had some unique characteristics which have been well documented. Deeper analyses of these operations are beyond the scope of this paper, except to highlight some important lessons which the government and the Armed Forces need to consider for their planning and execution of operations in future.

India's involvement in the Bangladesh Liberation War was perhaps one of the most significant exercise in responsibility-to-protect (R2P) when the citizens of East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) were subjected to mass-scale atrocities⁵⁵ resulting in the exodus of 10 million refugees to India⁵⁶ and the displacement of 30 million people. The main aim was to enable 10 million refugees to return in safety to Bangladesh and to ensure the security of India's own borders.⁵⁷ It was characterised by: display of political will by India in the face of opposition by powerful states like the US and China; diplomatic adroitness in signing The Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation on August 1971⁵⁸ that specified mutual strategic cooperation; and close cooperation between the Indian Army and the Mukti Bahini.⁵⁹ Also on display were coordination between the political leadership, military and various agencies of the state in India, clarity of objectives and a quick withdrawal after the politico-military objectives were achieved. All three services employed their assets to achieve the common objective.⁶⁰

Some of the very same characteristics that led to the success of India's engagement in Bangladesh were sadly missing from the conceptualisation, planning and conduct of Op Pawan. India's then High Commissioner in Sri

Lanka and later India's Foreign Secretary as well as National Security Adviser, J N Dixit opines that in glaringly negative contrast to the harmony, cohesiveness and coordination which characterised Indian policies related to the Bangladesh crisis in 1971, there was no cohesion in operational aspects of Indian policies and harmonious coordination between agencies of the Government of India dealing with the Sri Lankan crisis.⁶¹ Inter-departmental rivalries in the Government of India resulted in lack of cohesion and coordination between these different agencies.⁶² There was communication gap between the political leadership that made the decisions and those who were required to implement them on the ground.⁶³ That adversely affected the outcome in Op Pawan.⁶⁴ The inadequacy of intelligence also had a serious impact on operations⁶⁵ and the command and control set up left much to be desired.⁶⁶

India's vital interests were of course at stake that influenced India's decision to get involved in Sri Lanka.⁶⁷ These included India's sensitivity to the involvement of outside powers in its area of interest.⁶⁸ Some analysts argue that neither the political nor military objectives were achieved in the end; however, the inability to achieve them was not on account of the failure of the IPKF but due to political and diplomatic handling which was wrong from the start.⁶⁹ Nevertheless, there is no denying the fact that by the time IPKF withdrew, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) was marginalised and provincial elections were successfully held in the North and the East. There was the problem of the functional levels of the Armed Forces not being kept in the loop before Op Pawan was launched. Non-availability of political or military guidelines and insufficient intelligence about the situation in Sri Lanka made the contingency planning by the Indian Armed Forces difficult.⁷⁰ Besides, the IPKF did not have full backing of the Indian public opinion and faced hostilities from Sinhalese public opinion, while it was viewed with an amount of reservation and suspicion by the Sri Lankan Tamil population.⁷¹ The sensitivity to domestic politics notwithstanding, India provided help to Sri Lanka even in 2009.⁷²

J N Dixit also touches upon the important point about India's loss of credibility—not being able to fulfil the commitments given to a smaller neighbour (Sri Lanka) by withdrawing troops suddenly—although the move got the government a “good conduct certificate from different countries, at their own motives”.⁷³ It needs to be appreciated, however, that after the open call for withdrawal of IPKF from then Sri Lankan President, Ranasinghe Premadasa, it would have been impossible for IPKF to sustain the operations in Sri Lanka. India's former Chief of Army Staff, General VP Malik says, “After two years of fighting and suffering heavy casualties, there was little support from the political leadership and the country.”⁷⁴ These factors will need to be taken into consideration while planning for any future involvement abroad by Indian Armed Forces.

About India's broad approach to external involvements, J N Dixit opines that:

... the withdrawal proves the point that India had no desire to maintain a military presence in Sri Lanka beyond the timeframe desired by the Sri Lankan Government... the induction and withdrawal of the Indian Armed Forces from Sri Lanka were in conformity with the basic principle of India's foreign policy that the Indian Armed Forces would go abroad only for peace keeping [*sic*] operations on the basis of the request from the parties concerned, whether the parties concerned are the United Nations or an individual political entity,... This was so in case of Bangladesh and Maldives.⁷⁵

This broad approach is likely to continue.

There were important lessons that emerged from Op Pawan which the policy planners must pay attention to. Dr S Kalyanaraman writing in the *Journal of Defence Studies* has cogently brought out major lessons from Op Pawan, which remain relevant for future as well. These are: the imperative of a clear mandate; the need for an effective military contingency planning process; the need of clarity on command and control; the need for robust intelligence, planning and co-ordination; and the importance of civil affairs to be integrated into the operational planning.⁷⁶

Op Cactus was launched in Maldives to foil a coup d'état by rebel forces against President Gayoom in November 1988 while the Indian Armed Forces were still involved in Op Pawan. The operation itself was small in comparison. However, involving air assault at Hulhule and foiling an armed coup was India's first such rapid action strategic mission at the request of a neighbour. Swift decision-making with the involvement of all stakeholders, speedy planning, mounting and executing the operation with optimal resources assigned for the task were the reasons for success.⁷⁷ However, even during Operation Cactus, the surveyed maps of Maldives were unavailable—a shortcoming that resurfaced.⁷⁸ Concurrence by the US and Sri Lanka simplified decision-making. Successful conduct of operations and immediate withdrawal of combat troops, except for a small component retained at the request of the President of Maldives earned the country appreciation. The operation also highlighted the need for a rapid action force at national level which can undertake operations at short notice.

Anti-Piracy, NCE, HADR and UNPKO

During its anti-piracy patrols in the Horn of Africa, the Indian Navy has thwarted 40 attacks on Indian and foreign merchant ships since October 23, 2008. Indian warships have been carrying out patrol in the Gulf of Aden along the Internationally Recognised Transit Corridor (IRTC). So far over 2,671 merchant

ships of varying nationalities, including 311 Indian flagged vessels, have been escorted safely by Indian warships. To optimise the escort operations, the Indian Navy coordinates patrol by its warship with that of the other navies.⁷⁹ In the past India has collaborated with Malaysia and Indonesia in controlling piracy in the Malacca Straits, and is now regularly also carrying out anti-piracy exercises with the countries in the Persian Gulf, countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and island states in the Indian Ocean.

The Indian Government uses the terms HADR for activities that assuage human suffering caused by natural disasters like cyclones, droughts, earthquakes or floods. This definition is narrower than the Western donors' conception of humanitarian assistance, which also includes helping civilian populations affected by armed conflicts.⁸⁰

The Indian Navy and Indian Air force have been involved in the NCE operations on a number of occasions in the past. Three notable instances in this regard were the evacuation of Indian citizens from Kuwait in 1990, from Lebanon in 2006 and from Libya in 2011.⁸¹ Op Sukoon undertaken to evacuate the Indian nationals from Lebanon, in which four ships of the Indian Navy were deployed after the outbreak of hostilities between Israel and Lebanon in 2006, was unique in that besides evacuating 2280 Indian citizens, the evacuated persons included 69 Nepalese, 436 Sri Lankan and seven Lebanese Nationals.⁸² The evacuation of people of other nationalities was, however, not a deliberate exercise of being a security provider.

The importance of HADR and the challenges that many countries in Asia-Pacific face from natural disasters was brought out by the tsunami of 2004 during which 2,89,944 lives were lost in India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Thailand alone.⁸³ Besides the 2004 tsunami,⁸⁴ many other disasters have taken place in India's neighbourhood such as floods in Sri Lanka in 2003,⁸⁵ earthquake in Indonesia in 2006, mudslides in Philippines in 2006, cyclone Nargis in Myanmar in 2008, floods in Sri Lanka in 2011,⁸⁶ floods in Thailand in 2011 and flash floods in Philippines in December 2011.⁸⁷ India provided help after most of these disasters. India also airlifted relief material to Port Louis in the US in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in 2005,⁸⁸ and provided humanitarian assistance to Kyrgyzstan in the year 2010.⁸⁹ The most dramatic display of India's readiness to help its neighbours was when Rajiv Gandhi took along the visiting Sri Lankan President, J R Jayawardene, to the marooned Bangladeshi Island, Uri Char in 1985 to show solidarity with the affected people.⁹⁰

Of particular significance was the role of the Indian Armed Forces in their response to requests for assistance after the December 26, 2004 tsunami. The Indian Navy, Indian Air Force, Coast Guard and Army deployed some 20,000 troops, 40 ships and 32 aircraft (including helicopters) in the national and

international effort that included Sri Lanka, Maldives and Indonesia. For the international effort alone, the Air Force lifted 500 tonnes of relief material and 1,750 personnel by air; Navy delivered 735 tonnes and conducted 1,063 sorties by sea, and the Armed Forces as a whole, provided medical aid to nearly 15,000 people. Indian Air Force helicopters and a naval ship were dispatched with relief supplies within hours of request by Sri Lanka. The Indian Armed Forces were able to demonstrate speed, proficiency at man-power intensive tasks, specialised skills and a humanitarian approach in responding to the crisis that included search and rescue, evacuation, relief supplies including food and water, shelter, medical, diving and salvage operations, clearing of harbours, repair, restoration or services and rehabilitation and reconstruction activities, including the laying of Bailey bridges.⁹¹ India's involvement in HADR operations is likely to continue in the future as well.

One of the areas in which India has contributed significantly towards restoring peace and stability globally, is the United Nations Peacekeeping Missions. Discussing India's approach to peacekeeping in the early years after its independence, Francis Parakatil says, "When faced with any international dispute, India's first reaction was to attempt to settle it by peaceful means. It is patent, then, that in principle it was against the use of armed forces by the United Nations..."⁹² While speaking in the Parliament on August 3, 1950 about the Korean crisis and India's reluctance to send the troops there, Pandit Nehru declared that to provide military assistance was beyond India's capacity and that such assistance, further, would make little difference. He reiterated the defensive character of India's military organisation by saying that "our whole defence organisation has been built up and is looked upon as a defence organisation and not from the point of view of service and not in distant theatres of war".⁹³ The military capabilities have grown manifold since then.

Despite this assertion India sent a sizable Custodian Force to Korea (1953), and also took part in various peacekeeping operations in Middle East (1948 and 1956), Congo (1960-64), Cyprus (1964) and West Irian operations (1962-63), primarily because of its faith in UN as the only organisation which can play an effective role in preserving peace.⁹⁴

Since the inception of the UN Peacekeeping in 1950, India has contributed more than 1,60,000 troops, the largest number from any country, and has participated in more than 43 missions globally, 156 Indian peace-keepers have also made the supreme sacrifice while serving in the UN Missions.⁹⁵ Presently, India is the third largest troop contributor with 7,860 personnel deployed with 10 United Nations Peacekeeping missions.⁹⁶ Involvement in peacekeeping operations has increased Indian military's situational awareness and the ability to work with militaries of other countries in various regions of the world which can

be leveraged in future if it has to undertake operations in any of these areas by itself or, which is more likely, in conjunction with militaries of other countries.

India also provides training to personnel belonging to all the three services of many countries in various defence institutions in India.⁹⁷ Indian military training teams have also been deputed, at different times, to undertake training programmes in foreign countries such as Lesotho, Zambia, Seychelles, Bhutan, Kampuchea, Iraq and Tanzania, under bilateral arrangements.

Bilateral and Multilateral Security Cooperation

David Brewster, Visiting Fellow at the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, Australian National University, opines:

In conjunction with an expansion of India's naval capabilities, there has been a significant extension of India's maritime security relationships throughout the region. Much of the emphasis has been in developing relationships with small states at or near the key points of entry into the Indian Ocean (including, Mauritius, Seychelles, Oman, Qatar and Singapore).... Some of these states have long seen India as a benign security provider and have maritime policing needs that India can usefully fulfil. In some cases, India may not only be a cooperative security provider, but may also effectively act as a security guarantor, as is arguably the case with Mauritius and the Maldives.⁹⁸

In the past, India has been a security guarantor to Nepal and Bhutan as well. On a bilateral basis, India has provided assistance to Mauritius in protecting its Exclusive Economic Zone from time to time; Mozambique for ensuring security of the maritime frontiers during the African Union Summit held at Maputo in July 2003 and for coastal security during the World Economic Forum Summit and Afro-Pacific-Caribbean (APC) Heads of State from May 23 to July 13, 2004; hydrographic and anti-piracy assistance to Seychelles besides holding a Joint Army Exercise 'Lamitye-11' in 2011; and joint exercises with Sri Lanka, Maldives and Seychelles Coast Guards in November 2010. Other ships have been making regular visits for joint exercises with the Coast Guards of Singapore, Sri Lanka and Maldives.⁹⁹ Regular exercises are also held with some other ASEAN countries. Such visits provide the Indian Navy and Coast Guard the situational awareness and opportunity to forge linkages with the navies and coast guards of maritime states. But India has to go beyond its motion of defence diplomacy¹⁰⁰ and get more closely involved in substantive military to military engagements like joint exercises with the countries where the Indian Armed Forces may have to be involved in future. Agreements on intelligence sharing, attending each other's military exercises, frequent interaction amongst service officers on either side, export of military equipment, assistance in maintenance facilities, assistance in

hydrography in coastal waters, help and development of seaports and airfields, etc. need to be encouraged.

Conclusion

Analysis of India's involvement in different types of operations in the past and statements made by India's political and military leadership provide an understanding of the likely manner of involvement of India's Armed Forces in regional stability operations and the measures required to be taken to succeed.

Firstly, Indian Armed Forces will continue to participate in UNPKO, HADR and NCE operations without much reservation anywhere, but definitely within its extended neighbourhood and the IOR.

Secondly, it will get involved in all kinds of operations within its 'sphere of responsibility'¹⁰¹ to assure the countries involved of India's commitment to their security and stability. India has the 'military surplus' and is building up attendant capabilities for undertaking such operations successfully and India's benign intentions are well recognised globally. However, the operational, organisational, logistical and coordination related lessons learnt during the previous operations will need to be implemented. A rapid reaction capability in all its dimensions will have to be put in place.

Thirdly, it will need to have detailed contingency plans in place for large-scale evacuation of its citizens with or without the consent of host countries.

Fourthly, before making the decision to get involved militarily, the leadership will have to ask some fundamental questions to itself such as:

- (a) Are India's vital interests involved requiring Indian military's involvement?
- (b) Are objectives of the mission clear enough?
- (c) Does the mission have public support at home and in the receiving country?
- (d) Do we have adequate intelligence about the operational area and the situational awareness?
- (e) Have adequate consultations between the government and the Armed Forces been held and operational plans coordinated?
- (f) Are the military, diplomacy and the intelligence agencies on the same page?
- (g) Are the forces prepared to be employed combat ready and command and control issues resolved?
- (h) Are the logistics tied up, particularly if the operations are likely to be prolonged beyond the initial planning period?
- (i) How are current developments affecting India's power, do we have enough power to protect our vital interests and, how much of our power are we willing to use to defend them?¹⁰²

Most importantly, as General Malik says, “Sending the forces outside our own country for enforcing peace is an important national security decision. It requires multi-institutional handling, political consensus and continuity.”¹⁰³

ENDNOTES

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INDIA AND ITS IMMEDIATE
NEIGHBOURS

3

Can India be a Security Provider to its Neighbours: Competing Interests, Dichotomical Expectations, Challenges and Constraints

Smruti S Pattanaik

India's role in the region and its perception of its neighbourhood has seen normative shifts in the recent past. First shift happened with the end of Cold War when regional and local issues that received less priority due to the great power rivalry, attracted focus and attention. This prompted certain foreign policy choices. For the first time the concept of mutual security gained traction. Non-traditional security became core rallying point for the countries in the region. The second shift was discernable after the year 2000, when its neighbourhood policy received a neoliberal thrust and there was a general movement towards reinvigoration of its policy. Thereafter, trade and connectivity emerged as new buzzwords. This change in approach was influenced by a confident India that emerged in the aftermath of India's nuclear test, coupled with its growing economic prowess. Defence cooperation and joint military exercises emerged as new thrust area. There was perceptible change in the manner in which India looked at the world. While Indira Gandhi, writing in the *Foreign Affairs* on "India and the World"; had argued, "We are not tied to the traditional concepts of foreign policy designed to safeguard overseas possessions, investments, and carving out of spheres of influence and creation of *cordons sanitaires*. We are not interested in exporting ideologies,"¹ India's policy witnessed a significant shift. India in 2005 was not hesitant to articulate that it would prefer democracy though would not impose on anyone against its wish.² It openly articulated that it can play a role of security provider indicating a new thrust in its foreign policy. This was evident, when the then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, laying the foundation stone for the National Defence University in Gurgaon, said, "Our defence

cooperation has grown and today we have unprecedented access to high technology, capital and partnerships....We are well positioned, therefore, to become a net provider of security in our immediate region and beyond".³ Though the Ministry of Defence defines defence cooperation as a "tool in strengthening bilateral relations",⁴ yet, India is not seen as a reliable defence partner when it comes to delivering military equipment. Its domestic constraints severely cripples its external outreach. This was evident in the context of Sri Lanka during the last phase of its war while New Delhi watched with concern the blossoming defence cooperation of Sri Lanka with Pakistan and China. New Delhi's sluggishness in implementing its promise to deliver ammunition to Afghanistan also puts a question mark on its role as a security provider especially in the context of strategic partnership that this country has signed with Afghanistan. In spite of such domestic constraints India's growing international stature would require New Delhi to assume a leadership role in the region. However, there will be limits to its exercise of hardpower.

Several challenges would constrain India's role, including bureaucratic and institutional hurdles⁵ that cripple the prospect of any such role that it aspires for and is a primary contender in the region. However, to succeed as a country that can provide security in the region, a reinvigoration of foreign policy in general and neighbourhood policy in particular is required. MEA, which defines its role, "to secure the country's fundamental security and strategic objectives under the dynamic circumstances and challenges of global politics and international relations" has a budget which does not reflect the foreign policy aspiration or the goal set out for the diplomats by the Indian state. Out of the Budget Estimate for 2014-15 of Rs. 14730 crores (\$ 2.43 billion), the Ministry of External Affairs is provided with Rs. 9630.39 crores (\$1.59 billion) under Non-Plan and Rs. 5100 crores (\$0.84 billion) under Plan budget severely constraining its role.⁶ Commenting on the resource constraint, the Parliament Standing Committee on External Affairs expressed "their concern at serious under-resourcing of the Ministry of External Affairs whose budgetary allocation and staff strength do not commensurate with the global nature of its responsibility and emerging & expanding arenas of engagement. The Committee notes that there is a vast gap between the requirements and actual resources available at the disposal of the Ministry...it is dismally inappropriate as compared to the mandate assigned to the Ministry."⁷ The Ministry of Defence budget stands at Rs 229,000 crore (\$37.9 billion) which is inadequate for India's Defence modernisation.⁸

Taking historical view, this chapter discusses what has shaped India's role in the region? How do neighbours perceive India and what defines the expectation of the ruling elite, opposition and other stakeholders in the immediate neighbourhood? What are the challenges that India faces in augmenting its

neighbourhood policy in meeting expectation in the neighbourhood? Given the emerging transnational challenges the chapter will discuss various bilateral treaties and agreements that India has signed and the effort it is making in terms of defence cooperation. The question is can India make a case for mutual security with its neighbours since nature of threat has undergone change? Taking all these factors into consideration this chapter assesses whether India can play the role of a net security provider. It needs to be clarified here that India's role as a security provider as defined in this chapter does not imply military security only; it has several dimensions which includes India's developmental aid, its role in implementing developmental projects and its role as a stabiliser in a region that is witnessing several ethno-religious conflicts and struggling to consolidate democracy.⁹ Though India's role has been limited there is vast potential for India to emerge as a security provider as it undergoes change given the evolving security dynamics and challenges they pose to the region.

Augmenting Mutual Security: India's Changing Role in South Asia

Driven by security centric approach, which it inherited largely from the British, India's frontier policy, New Delhi concluded treaties with the neighbouring countries as a means to protect its larger strategic interest in the region and that of its neighbours. The role of external power and their attitude towards the subcontinent is intimately connected to India's security perceptions and the bilateral relations that India share with its neighbours.¹⁰ The treaties and agreements that India signed with Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka¹¹ also catered to the security of these countries and not just that of India's. For example, India sent its navy to help the Sri Lankan Government, when such a request was made, to fight the JVP insurgency in 1971.¹² Since Sri Lanka was unable to deal with the LTTE violence in North and the JVP violence in the south it decided to invite the IPKF to enforce peace in the north. The aircraft that was used to drop the IPKF for its peace mission in Northern Sri Lanka was used to airlift Sri Lankan forces from North and East to the South to fight the JVP insurgency.¹³ In these Treaties/Agreements two components of providing security to its neighbours remained important. First, providing training to the armed forces in the neighbourhood, including joint exercises and equipping them as per their requirements based on specific requests and second, direct military support if there is a request for such support from the host government as it happened in the cases of Sri Lanka and Maldives.

China's occupation of Tibet in 1950 influenced both India and Nepal to sign a treaty that takes care of the concerns of the two countries.¹⁴ After the signing of the 1950 treaty with Nepal, defence of Nepal became part of India's

security.¹⁵ India also advised Nepal on defence and foreign policy matters as Nehru argued, “because both the matters are common to us”.¹⁶ Emphasising on mutual security, Rana Prime Minister Mohun Shamser of Nepal, while speaking to the Gorkha soldiers in Dehradun, said, “there are unbroken ties and traditional friendship with our great neighbour India and this friendship has now become more profound in that you are making valuable contribution in safeguarding the security of India which is vitally important for Nepal also”.¹⁷ Both the countries took steps to establish border check posts in the Nepal-China border, which was jointly manned by Nepalese Army personnel and Indian wireless operators. India also helped in the reorganisation of Nepalese Army under the Indian Military Mission, which was converted to Indian Military Training and Advisory Group (IMTAG). This mission was appointed on the request of Nepal in 1952 and was finally withdrawn in 1969. Nepal’s old Treaty with Tibet was no more valid. New Delhi also made it clear to Nepal that in case it wanted to negotiate a new treaty with China to replace its old Treaty with Tibet; India must be made a part of the negotiating team and such negotiation would only be held either in Kathmandu or Delhi. It needs to be mentioned that the 1954 treaty with India helped China to consolidate its position over Chumbi valley and for the first time made China India’s neighbor. India also represented Nepalese interest through the India Missions in the countries where Nepal did not have diplomatic representation.

India and Bhutan shared similar concerns with regard to China. Developments in Tibet in 1949 compelled the two countries to continue with the relationship that British India had shared with Bhutan. The two countries therefore decided to sign the 1949 treaty of Peace and Friendship. As a part of the treaty, Bhutan’s foreign policy was to be guided by India. However, Bhutan pursued an independent foreign policy and was a member of UN in 1971. Both the countries have now signed a new treaty, which presumably constitute core security concerns of the two countries. Though Nepal-China border dispute is settled; Bhutan is negotiating a border agreement with China. The manner in which this border dispute would be resolved would have strategic consequences for India.¹⁸ As a Bhutanese analyst argued, “Bhutan’s greatest threat came from its northern borders—be it suzerainty claims, cartographic invasion, territorial intrusion, enclaves occupation etc...all was quiet on its southern front because an excellent Indo-Bhutan friendship was thought to have guaranteed it. There was not a single security post along the southern border.”¹⁹

It needs to be mentioned here that Beijing has constantly tried to undermine India’s relations with Nepal and Bhutan while trying to expand its own relation with them. It questioned their status as independent states due to the treaties these countries had signed with India.²⁰ China also aided and abetted insurgents

groups in the North East. Its reluctance to resolve the border dispute with India only heightens New Delhi's suspicion. All these were seen as attempt to keep India engaged in the region and curtail its emergence as a major player in the world affair. Its refusal to recognise Bangladesh under Mujib as an independent country also points to the pattern of Chinese engagement in South Asia.²¹

The 1972 treaty signed between India and Bangladesh also embodied "the will of the two governments to pursue common policies in matters of interest to both countries..."²² Soon after Bangladesh's liberation, India provided defence equipment and also trained the Jatiyo Rakhi Bahini at the request of Bangladesh Government.²³ The mutual security concerns of the governments of India and Sri Lanka was represented in the letter exchanged between Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and President Jayewardene along with the Indo-Lanka Accord of 1987. India continues to provide training to the armies of Nepal, Bhutan and Sri Lanka.

During the cold war; India looked at the region primarily from the military security point of view taking into account the threats that external powers posed to India's security and stability. Neighbouring countries relations and engagement with the great powers, China-Pakistan strategic and military nexus to counter India, U.S. intention and interest in South Asia and its decision to arm Pakistan were some of the major concerns for India. Subsequently, Sino-India war and India's military defeat in 1962 was followed by Pakistan-China Boundary Agreement which laid the foundation of 'all weather friendship' with a clear objective to counter-balance India. The 1962 war was also a serious setback to India's role as a security provider to the Himalayan countries of Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan.

The 1971 war and defeat of Pakistan which led to the creation of Bangladesh reconfigured the new geo-politics of South Asia in which India emerged as an unchallenged regional power. Its regional challenger Pakistan was weakened substantially, though it started reasserting itself after the U.S. military aid to confront the communist intervention in Afghanistan. U.S. relationship with Pakistan and India's relations with the Soviet Union were major factors that influenced the approach of external actors to South Asia in general and India and Pakistan in particular. India was extremely sensitive about the growing interest and presence of the external powers in the neighbourhood. Whether it is the U.S. listening post in Trincomalee, the fear of nuclearisation of Indian Ocean or political instability and ethno-sectarian and religious conflicts in the neighbourhood; India remained concerned about the implications that these developments may have on its security and internal stability. The Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) revolt in 1971 and 1987 in southern Sri Lanka which received some funding from North Korea and the Tamil rebellion in the North created a situation of political instability in Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka Government also requested

military aid from U.S., UK, China, Israel and other countries to crush Tamil rebellion further compounding India's apprehension regarding external powers intervention and stability in its strategic neighbourhood. Further, the military coup in Bangladesh where the U.S. and Pakistan played a behind the scene role also raised concerns in India.²⁴ Moreover, its policy of non-alignment was not likened by major powers that saw it as direct affront to their power and influence. The Indo-Lanka accord facilitated the Indian Peace Keeping Force presence in Sri Lanka at the request of the Sri Lankan Government. Unfortunately its well-intended mission, in which 1200 Indian soldiers lost their lives, could not produce political dividends that New Delhi aspired for. In 1988, it successfully countered a small rebellion that threatened President Gayoom's regime at the request of Maldivian Government. It was only towards the end of the cold war India's regional primacy was recognised by countries like the U.S. However, the end of cold war brought alive many 'simmering regional conflicts and bilateral rivalries' and made them geopolitically relevant.²⁵

The Changing Matrix in the Post-Cold War Period

With the end of the phase of peace keeping mission in Sri Lanka, preventing coup in Maldives, conflict resolution and mediation in the neighbourhood; India adopted a policy of distancing itself from domestic political developments though it kept a close watch on the evolving situation and engaging its neighbours through a series of economic initiatives. New Delhi projected India as an 'opportunity not a threat'.²⁶ Coalition politics and associated instability kept India embroiled in its internal politics. In addition, the balance of payment crisis in the early nineties, the bitter experience in Sri Lanka and subsequent assassination of Rajiv Gandhi informed India's neighbourhood policy. The 1990s also witnessed an emphasis on economic aspect of international relations that placed primacy on trade liberalisation, market access and development of communication network to facilitate trade. Globalisation also transformed the manner in which the nation-states looked at their security. India signed Free Trade agreement with Sri Lanka and took several measures to improve its trading relations with its neighbours. This also brought economic issues to the agenda of SAARC in a vigorous manner. India's Look East Policy²⁷ also required an emphasis on its regional policy in which Myanmar and Bangladesh became important components.²⁸ Its relationship with China improved significantly after 1988 Rajiv Gandhi's visit and China also tried to distance itself from India's bilateral conflict with neighbours.²⁹ With the India-U.S. rapprochement, in the post nuclearisation phase; a degree of synergy on strategic issues emerged between India and the U.S.

Democratic transition in the neighbourhood in the 1990s also had an impact

on India's approach. The new democratic dispensations were extremely weak and in spite of political transition, the old ruling elites continued to hold their sway. For example: in Pakistan, the Army remained a major player and thus anti-India rhetoric peaked as successive democratically elected governments wanted to please the army to prove their nationalistic credentials. The Bangladesh Nationalist Party which is ideologically opposed to pluralism and secularism adopted anti-Indianism as a vote bank strategy given the relationship the party shares with India in the historical context; in Nepal in spite of democratic political transition the palace retained its effective control over Nepal politics and there was bitter struggle for power among the political parties; in Bhutan the refugee crisis unfolded drawing the attention of the world community to a country that is considered as 'Shangri-La'; in Sri Lanka after the IPKF withdrawal, the failure of Colombo to reach a political settlement contributed to the intensification of fight between the LTTE and the Sri Lankan Security forces. Soon after the Soviet withdrawal, Afghanistan witnessed civil war and power struggle ensued to control Kabul. One of the issues that heightened India's concern was cross border terrorism that was pursued by Pakistan as a strategy. While tension related to terrorism in Punjab which Pakistan was fuelling was on a wane, Kashmir drew international attention. Towards the end of 1990s; India's relations with the U.S. was tensed as it raked up the Kashmir issue and actively encouraged separatist groups like the Hurriyat Conference.

India's policy also witnessed a transition—from an emphasis on reciprocity to unilateral concession under Gujral doctrine in 1997 and a transition from a realistic thrust to a neo-liberal orientation after India's economic reform propelled a growth rate of 8-9 per cent which was previously unimaginable. It could thus afford to invest, even in a limited way, in the neighbourhood. India focused on infrastructure development and connectivity in the neighbourhood to lubricate its growth engine. Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh speaking in the 14th SAARC summit in 2005 accepted this as 'India's asymmetric responsibility' in the region. Improvement of Indo-U.S. relations especially after the visit of President Clinton's reduced the mutual mistrust and suspicion.³⁰ The growing synergy provided India with strategic space in South Asia.

There was also a shift from over-emphasising bilateralism to multilateral regionalism to engage neighbours at different levels. Moreover this economic dimension of foreign policy also grew out of New Delhi's aspiration to play a global role and therefore needed to be rooted in a successful regional policy. Moreover, India's own growth is also linked to its neighbourhood policy. Realising the obvious constraints that New Delhi faces in the region its neighbours want to maximise their benefit and warn that India cannot be a regional leader unless it resolve all outstanding issues with them to their satisfaction. However, India cooperated with the governments that were willing to synergise their economy

through Indian investment as connectivity emerged as a key that would drive the economy. In this context, India extended \$ 1 billion credit line to Bangladesh in 2011. It has more than \$ 2 billion investment in Afghanistan and now \$ 1 billion credit line has also been provided to Nepal during Prime Minister Modi's visit in 2014.

The neighbourhood also saw the reactivation of external powers interest in the region even though India retained its regional primacy. Sometimes India was consulted or briefed by them. For example: the Norwegian mediation in Sri Lanka where India stuck "to its role behind the scenes".³¹ Considering continuing instability in Nepal, India also facilitated political transition by bringing the seven political parties and the Maoist together. India however watched with caution the presence of UNMIN in Nepal, as a watchdog of surrendered arms and combatants³² and increased social intervention of the EU in the NGO sectors in both Nepal and Bangladesh. In Afghanistan, India supported the Karzai Government and Afghan led dialogue with Taliban and signed a strategic partnership agreement. But it was cautious to supply military equipment to Afghanistan given the regional dynamics. (See Annex-I for India's arms supply to its neighbours). In spite of greatest provocation from Pakistan after 26/11 India restrained itself. This ensured that Pakistan troops remain engaged in their western frontier with Afghanistan to fight the militants in the tribal area. During Op *Parakram* in 2001 deployment of Pakistan troop in its border with India allowed the Taliban and al-Qaeda to escape to Pakistan tribal area in search of safe heavens.³³ The two decades of 1990 and 2000 witnessed India's deepening economic engagement and continuation of its role as a country that would ensure political stability through mediation, negotiation and if necessary defeating the forces of instability by providing military aid and intelligence inputs to the governments in the region.

This period also saw competing interest and re-emergence of Chinese factor in the neighbourhood. China's increasing presence in the neighbourhood is being watched by India closely. Though the two countries are likely to compete to increase their trade and economic linkages in South Asia; its strategic engagement in terms of strengthening military ties (refer Annex II) and building strategic ports would be a matter of concern and would affect India's regional profile. The Chinese interests in South Asia also became perceptively visible after 2000. Its regional profile got a boost after it decided to supply weapons to Nepal and Sri Lanka to enable the governments there to fight internal challenges taking advantage of India's constraint. Ethnic conflict and contestation, undermining the plural character of the society or intrusive role of military is seen in the larger context of India's security. Because each one of them can lead to instability and considering multi-cultural and plural character of Indian society; New Delhi cannot remain

immune to these developments in the neighbourhood. India's role however would be severely limited since defence preparedness of many countries in the region is based on a perception of threat from India, which includes military, political interference and fear of economic and political domination.

Factors that Shape India's Role: Expectations of Regimes, Opposition Political Parties and Civil Society in the Neighbourhood

India's own conception of regional primacy or to treat South Asia as a strategic unity is intertwined with neighbour's sovereignty consciousness. The treaties that India signed with neighbouring countries were deliberately undermined by regimes that took over power subsequently.³⁴ The more India tried to define its security and stability in terms of a frontier policy; the ruling elites neighbouring countries were less inclined to become part of that system.

While Pakistan's approach to India was defined by two-nation theory that resulted in permanent hostility between the two ideological rivals; other neighbours' approaches to India were defined by their perception of India,³⁵ their geophysical location, domestic elite contestation and their power equation with India and most importantly their own approaches to their frontiers which are inhabited by people who share affinities with their ethnic compatriots living across the border in India.³⁶ Authoritarian, military and undemocratic regimes have also dominated the politics in the neighbourhood for significant period of time. India emerged as a threat to those ruling elites who wanted to establish monolithic states disregarding plurality of its populace. They perceived India's credential as a democratic polity and its political leaders' sympathetic attitude towards democratic movement within their country as a threat. Democratic forces in these countries also maintain links with Indian political leadership. They look towards India for political and moral support. Though India is not in the forefront of exporting ideology to other countries, it has generally empathised with democratic movements in the neighbourhood.³⁷ However it has preferred stability than democracy in the neighbourhood.³⁸ India also played a role in Bhutan's democratic transition when Nehru visited Bhutan in 1958 and for the first time Nepali migrants living in the southern part of Bhutan were given citizenship. India's role in restoration of monarchy and the institution of multiparty democracy by helping in the overthrow of the autocratic Rana regime though was hailed initially, but soon the monarchy's decision to take over power brought discordant note in the relations between the Nepal and India.³⁹

Elite competition also affects India's role; for example, the Indo-Sri Lanka accord was sabotaged by Sri Lankan Prime Minister R. Premadasa who supplied arms to the LTTE to fight the IPKF since he had a disagreement with President

Jayewardene over the 1987 Indo-Lanka Accord.⁴⁰ Similarly though Indian soldiers sacrificed their lives in the Bangladesh's liberation war; India's contribution to the liberation war is often questioned by conservative and anti-Indian forces that attribute various motives to India's role and its decision to help Mujib bahini. This reflects the limitation of India's role to provide stability and establish order in a regional environment where significant elite remain hostile to India and perceive its intervention in the context of domestic elite competition. Therefore one observes a dichotomy between the desire of the ruling elites' in the neighbouring countries for India's non-interference in their domestic matter and a converse expectation from civil society groups, opposition political parties and politically marginalised minorities that look for India's support to mitigate their grievances. Therefore, India has involved itself to seek inclusive and representative government in the neighbouring countries.⁴¹

Examples of these contrasting expectation and political zero sum game in the neighbourhood are many. Given the difficult political and democratic transition in the neighbourhood, the Madhesi in Nepal expect India to pressurise the Nepal Government for their larger political rights; the ruling regime in Nepal wants India to exercise its political leverage over various groups to break political deadlock and help in a successful political transition.⁴² In Bangladesh, the main opposition political party want India to support its position on Care Taker Government; whereas the civil society, other opposition political parties and intellectuals want India to play a role in influencing Awami League government to provide political space to the opposition citing their apprehension that rightist elements would occupy the space vacated by a weakened opposition.⁴³ India's inability to meet the contradictory expectations in the neighbouring countries due to competing elite interest is perceived as a failure. For example: any truck with BNP would make AL unhappy in Bangladesh and BNP resents AL's close relations with India;⁴⁴ any support to Nepali Congress makes the Madhesi political parties unhappy in Nepal. India has struggled to protect its interests sometimes at the cost of democracy and political aspirations of the people in the neighbourhood.⁴⁵ In Sri Lanka, while the government wants India not to pressurise them to devolve powers to the Tamil under the Indo-Lanka Accord of 1987; the Tamils want India to put pressure on Sri Lanka to deliver the long promised devolution of power. Yet, India was instrumental and provided support to the Sri Lankan Government to eliminate the LTTE. State's interest to protect its security and maintain its internal stability sometimes comes as a disappointment to various democratic and civil society movements which look for India's support and leadership role in promoting a plural and democratic society. Therefore, while India's role is seen as a factor of stability by the opposition, the ruling elites perceive it as a potential factor of instability. This situation may change in Sri Lanka with a new government assuming power.

While there is a heightened expectation from India in the neighbouring countries, vested interests continue to project and couch India's role as 'hegemonic and big brotherly', hampering any positive engagement. Looking at bilateral relations from a nationalist perspective makes such engagement a zero sum game. Ironically, enormous expectation from India to help the neighbouring countries in fulfilling their developmental agenda, providing their product market access is not matched with an assurance not to undermine India's security by fostering forces that can destabilise India. Rather, China card becomes a useful instrument to counter India. This is justified as their freedom of choice in exercising foreign policy. Dichotomical approaches, exaggeration of Indian threat and imaginary grievances are used to justify foreign policy choices of the countries in the neighbourhood.⁴⁶

At the same time there are countries that criticise India's reluctance to take stance in resolving the problem or help them to overcome the security situation they are facing. India's refusal to intervene in the Bhutanese refugees issue which drew criticism from Nepali political elites, though India advised Nepal and Bhutan to bilaterally negotiate and settle the issue. India's refusal to get directly involved in the Sri Lankan ethnic conflict after 1990 and its refusal to send military help when Sri Lanka forces faced debacle in the war to control Jaffna in 2000, New Delhi's inability to directly supply weapons to Afghanistan in 2013 after signing strategic partnership agreement with Kabul are some of the instances.

Another factor that impacts on India's role is the identity politics in the neighbourhood that often portrays India as the 'Other'. Most of the states in South Asia have constructed a national identity that emphasises on their distinctness from India.⁴⁷ Socio-cultural commonality sometimes is frowned upon by elements within these states that also have been at the forefront of fomenting anti-India sentiments constraining India's role. Projecting India as an 'enemy' or a 'hegemon' do not create conducive atmosphere for India to play a role commensurating to its political and economic strength.

Consolidating Cooperation in the Neighbourhood: Bilateral Treaties, Agreements and Bilateral Aid

To consolidate security and keep the external powers out of the region, India replicated some of the treaties of the British India Empire especially in its relationship with Nepal and Bhutan. It also tried to forge new ties with other countries of the region. With Afghanistan, it concluded a Treaty of Peace and Friendship in 1950. It also offered a Treaty of Peace and Friendship and no war pact to Pakistan. The Treaty of Peace and Friendship which India signed with Sheikh Mujib's Government is a case in point. This treaty was one of the most controversial treaties, extremely politicised and never operationalised; it was seen

as an affront to the sovereignty of the newly liberated nation which lapsed unsung in 1996. Except for Nepal, where India has agreed to revise the 1950 Peace and Friendship Treaty; India has signed new treaties that takes into account the aspirations of the nation states in an emerging global order. Economic security, partnership and connectivity have found emphasis compared to the elaborate security centric features of the past treaties which were framed in the cold war period and based on the apprehensions of the post-colonial state. Brief analysis of various agreements India has signed with the neighbouring countries points out towards the new thrust in India's neighbourhood policy. For example, terrorism has found mention in most of these bilateral cooperation mechanisms.

India has signed a revised Peace and Friendship Treaty with Bhutan in 2007, Development Partnership Agreement with Bangladesh and Maldives in 2011, Strategic Partnership Agreement with Afghanistan in 2011.

Framework Agreement on Cooperation for Development between India and Maldives, which was signed in 2011, takes into account the aspirations of the people of both the countries. It includes trade, connectivity, environment, disaster management, training and capacity building. Article five takes into consideration the geographical location of both the countries and promises cooperation on the issues of piracy, maritime security, terrorism, coordinated patrolling and undertakes to train and build the capacity of police and security forces.⁴⁸ The agreement attests the advantage they have in cooperating in identified issues of mutual concerns.

It has trilateral maritime cooperation mechanism with Sri Lanka and Maldives taking into account the emerging challenges of piracy and terrorism. Under the trilateral maritime cooperation the three countries have agreed,

“to enhance Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) through access to systems run under the aegis of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), such as Long Range Identification and Tracking (LRIT) services and sharing of Automatic Identification System (AIS) data; Training and capacity building initiatives in areas of MDA, Search and Rescue and Oil Pollution Response; and Joint activities including trilateral exercises, maintaining lines of communication on illegal maritime activities, formulation of marine oil pollution response contingency plans and cooperation in legal and policy issues related to piracy”.⁴⁹

The letter exchanged between the Prime Minister of India Rajiv Gandhi and President Jayawardene of Sri Lanka along with the Indo-Lanka accord, provides an insight into mutual security concerns of the two states. Sri Lanka pledged to meet India's security concerns arising out of the employment of foreign military and intelligence personnel, not allowing Trincomalee or any other ports to be used by any other country which may be considered prejudicial to India's interest,

not allowing foreign broadcasting corporations for any military and intelligence purpose. India also agreed to deport all Sri Lankan citizens engaged in terrorism or advocating separatism from Indian soil as well agreed to provide training and military supplies to Sri Lankan security forces. It has annual defence dialogue with Sri Lanka

India's relations with Nepal are guided by the 1950 treaty. India shares an open border with Nepal which is marked by layers of relations between the people, political elites and armies of the two countries. India has close defence cooperation with Nepal. The chief of army staff in one country is also honorary chief of staff in the other country. The most significant aspect of the treaty is that it provides resident status to the Nepalese citizens in India, allowing them to work in India and vice versa is also applicable to the Indian citizens. However, Nepalese have benefitted more in terms of employment in India such that Nepalis can seek jobs in all the fields except for Indian Foreign Service, Indian Administrative Service and Indian Police Service.⁵⁰ India also recruits Gorkhas to the Indian Army, a unique feature in the relations between the two countries. Both the countries have institutionalised India-Nepal Bilateral Consultative Group (BCG) on security issues that have been meeting regularly. Some of the issues that the two countries discuss are military training, defence hardware and information sharing.

India signed a new treaty with Bhutan in 2007. This treaty replaced the 1949 treaty which made Bhutan's foreign policy a subset of India's foreign policy. The revision of this treaty was in the interest of both the countries. Article two, of the revised India-Bhutan Friendship Treaty envisages close cooperation on issues relating to their national interests. Both the countries also pledge not to "allow the use of its territory for activities harmful to the national security and interest of the other."⁵¹ Article four, allows Bhutan to import arms, ammunition and warlike material through the Indian territory, subjected to India's satisfaction that these would not pose any sort of danger to India. Both the countries also undertake to provide equal justice to each other's citizens. Indian Military Training Team (IMTRAT) was established in 1963 that provides training to the Royal Bhutanese Army.

India signed Framework Agreement on Cooperation for Development Bangladesh in 2011. Article nine of this agreement provides an assurance that the territory of the two countries would not be used for activities harmful to the other. This new treaty also endorses cooperation on entire gamut of issues which include trade through road, rail, inland waterways, air and shipping, river water sharing, flood forecasting and control, natural disaster management, sharing of electricity, sub-regional cooperation in the power sector.⁵² This treaty reflects India's concerns as insurgent groups were provided shelter in Bangladesh in the past.

Unlike other countries in the region, India's relationship with Afghanistan

is based on strategic partnership. Both the countries are facing terrorism emanating from Pakistan that threatens to destabilise the countries. An agreement was signed in October 2011, which has clear provision for training, equipping and capacity building of Afghan security forces to face the post transition challenges. Both the countries also intend to fight international terrorism, organised crime, trafficking in narcotics, money laundering etc. The agreement provides strategic dialogue at the level of national security advisor and summit level consultations between the foreign ministries once a year. It has now been able to train 1,050 Afghan National Army officers at various military establishments in the country. It is also training officers in counter-terrorism operation, counter IED, information technology and battle field nursing assistance.⁵³ India is mulling the option of sending military advisors to train Afghan troops in their home terrain to make the training more effective. It has undertaken to finance Russia to supply military equipment like armoured vehicles, artillery, tanks and helicopters to Afghanistan as a part of post 2014 stabilisation effort. This payment also includes repair of old Soviet weapons. Interestingly, when Hamid Karzai made a request to India to supply weapons T-72 battle tanks, 105mn howitzer and some transport helicopters India was non-committal. At present, India's decision to finance sale of weapon from Russia to Afghanistan has been suspended which many people believe is a change of policy of the new Afghan Government. India is committed to Afghan stability and would not like to see an emergence of radical elements which will have security implications for India.

India's role as security provider in the region does not include Pakistan due to the state of bilateral relations between the two countries. As an affirmation to not use force to settle disputes, Nehru had proposed a no-war pact to Pakistan in 1949 to keep Islamabad and the sub-continent away from the cold war politics.⁵⁴ Subsequently, other political leaders like Indira Gandhi and Morarji Desai also offered 'no war' pact and peace and friendship treaty. Pakistan also proposed no war and non-aggression pacts to India in the early eighties only to silence Delhi over U.S. arms supply to it in the aftermath of Soviet intervention in Afghanistan.⁵⁵ In 2005, the then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh again evoked the desire that both countries can think of signing a Treaty of Peace and Friendship. Without mutual trust and confidence such treaties are just letters lacking the spirit which is the soul of any treaty.

Both the countries have signed the Simla Agreement and Lahore Declaration as a framework of bilateral relations which has components to enhance bilateral relations.⁵⁶ Simla Agreement prevents hostile propaganda targeting each other, territorial integrity and non-interference. Article one also prevents organisation, assistance or encouragement of any acts detrimental to the maintenance of peaceful and harmonious relations.⁵⁷ Lahore declaration of 1999 makes it contingent

upon the two countries to recognise, “that the nuclear dimension of the security environment of the two countries adds to their responsibility for avoidance of conflict between the two countries.”⁵⁸ The two countries agreed to reduce the risk of nuclear accident and unauthorised use of nuclear weapon and make a joint effort to combat terrorism. The MoU also envisages bilateral consultations on security concepts and nuclear doctrine for peace and stability.

Pakistan in the past, under Musharraf regime in 2004, promised that it would not allow its territory to be used by terrorists targeting India. Yet, India has remained a target of Pakistan based terrorists often supported by the ISI. Both the countries established a Joint anti-terror institutional mechanism, “to identify and implement counter-terrorism initiatives and investigations” in 2006 which is defunct now.

In India’s overall strategy and foreign policy, arms export do not constitute a major part of India’s strategic planning except in few cases where India “has resorted to “gifts” and minor exports to promote its foreign policy”.⁵⁹ During the Eelam war IV, India provided 24 L-70 guns, 24 battle-field surveillance radars, 11 USFM radars, four Indra-II radars and 10 mine-protected vehicles, among other things, to the Sri Lankan forces. It is now training around 800-900 Sri Lankan Military officers in India.⁶⁰ Helping to build the capabilities of the armed forces in the region through training and joint military exercises now forms an important component of India’s role as a security provider. High level visits and holding regular talks with the armed forces in the neighbouring countries has now become a norm.⁶¹ Institutionalising military ties would help to remove any mistrust and also help in evolving synergy and better understanding between the armed forces. The counter-terrorism exercise with Bangladesh in Jorhat, Assam in 2009 has remained the only example of such cooperation. However, both the countries have annual army staff talks. The three services of India and Sri Lanka also hold annual staff talks. India and Nepal held first battalion level joint exercise in 2013 known as ‘Surya Kiran’. India is supplying Dhruv advanced light helicopters (ALH) to Maldives and its Dornier reconnaissance aircraft undertakes maritime patrol and surveillance operation in Maldives.⁶²

India also pursues regional and sub-regional cooperation to bolster its economic and strategic interests in the region. SAARC provides a forum to India to pursue cooperation in South Asia and also addresses the common concern of terrorism. Both the convention on terrorism signed in 1988 and later the additional protocol ratified in 2003, provide a framework of cooperation in the region. India is now playing a leadership role in SAARC and takes regional initiatives, while providing unilateral concession.

India has established a technical and economic cooperation with other countries, known as ITEC, a flagship program to further India’s foreign policy

objectives. This budget head caters to India's multilateral and bilateral aid and assistance programmes to neighbouring and other developing countries. This assistance is provided to immediate neighbouring countries and also to the countries in Africa, Central Asia, South East Asia and Latin America. It also caters for Aid for Disaster Relief and humanitarian aid. The provision also includes a plan component for providing aid assistance to Bhutan, Myanmar and Afghanistan.⁶³

Countries	Actual 2012-13			Revised 2013-2014			Budget 2014-15		
	Plan	Non-Plan	Total	Plan	Non-Plan	Total	Plan	Non-Plan	Total
Afghanistan	5.00	485.96	490.96	50.00	475.24	525.24	126.00	550.00	676.00
Bangladesh		281.20	281.20	-	580.00	580.00	-	350.00	350.00
Bhutan*	1538	1872.98	3410.98	2520.00	1589.00	4109.00	4724.00	1350.00	6074
Nepal	-	292.55	292.55	-	380.00	380.00	-	450.00	450.00
Sri Lanka	-	248.20	248.20	-	410.00	410.00	-	500.00	500.00
Maldives*	-	16.43	16.43	-	168.00	168.00	-	183.00	183.00
Myanmar	59.50	62.37	121.87	180.00	75.00	255.00	150.00	180.00	330.00

Source: Union Budget, 2014, Notes on Demand for Grants, 2014-15, No 32/Ministry of External Affairs, p.110,

*The figure for Maldives and Bhutan includes Advances to Foreign Governments apart from assistance under Technical and economic cooperation which other countries of the region receive.

Can India Play a Role in Non-Traditional Security?

While traditional security threats limit India's role; cooperation on the non-traditional threats opens up new opportunity for India to play a regional role. Since security is a comprehensive concept; India's core strength should be to focus on economic development through investment, building infrastructure network and provide leadership role in regional multilateral organisations through capital investment. Its geographical location can be used to facilitate regional connectivity and trade. Such engagements would provide socio-political capital in form of generating good will for India across the region which would help India to play a positive role in the region. Its leadership role would require that it provides its neighbours economic benefits, technological and scientific support in terms of weather forecast, climate change and disseminating data obtained through satellite, which can be shared. While some countries may look at India with mistrust and suspicion due to the domestic political dynamics, there would those that continue to look at India as a security provider. For example, Afghanistan and Bhutan are likely to look at India as a major strategic and economic partner. India is also engaged in South Asia Sub-regional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) for establishing cross border multimodal transport network.

While political instability, disaffection between the ethnic/religious groups, increasing Chinese interest in the region would bring new challenges to India's role in the region, it cannot remain immune to issues of terrorism, smuggling of contrabands, small arms that impinge on its border management and security of the region. Moreover, issues of environmental degradation, river water sharing etc. will affect India's relationships with its neighbours as these are trans-border issues of mutual concern. There are as well some new security challenges that may change India's role in the region.

India can play a role in disaster management and relief, wherein, New Delhi can emerge as a net provider of security. India's role in tsunami relief demonstrated that in the South Asia region given the geographical proximity, India can act faster than other countries and is capable to provide relief and evacuation in the time of natural disaster. For example, in Kashmir earth quake in 2005, India offered army helicopters to help in evacuation. Pakistan, though accepted twenty-five tons of food, medicine, tents, blankets and plastic sheets from India, it rejected India's offer of military helicopter manned by its personnel. In 2010 India provided \$ 25 million as flood relief to Pakistan which was channeled through the United Nation as requested by Islamabad. It announced INR 30 million to Nepal as a part of flood relief in August 2014. In the recent 'water crisis' in Malé, the capital of Maldives, India was quick to send water when 150,000 residents were without water. Two naval warships, the INS Sukanya and the INS Vivek were pressed into action to purify water through Reverse Osmosis (RO) systems while ten plane loads of water were dispatched to deal with the crisis and its help reached faster in comparison to other countries.

To augment its role in non-traditional security sphere, India also needs to have a separate department in the foreign ministry that deals with disaster management and relief and such relief needs to be readily available whenever India's help is sought. Failure to deliver relief material announced by New Delhi in the time of natural disaster can hamper India's regional role, even though the failure to provide rice to the cyclone Sidr affected people in Bangladesh could have been avoided.⁶⁴ The parliament committee has also found that, "in several cases, the MEA has not been able to provide funds for the projects committed and announced by the Head of States/Government/Ministry of External Affairs on strategically important visits to the foreign countries due to budgetary constraints."⁶⁵ India can share the flood data with the lower riparian countries of the region to help mitigate impending disaster that could cause havoc in the countries. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has already announced that India will provide help in disaster relief and launch a satellite that would benefit South Asian countries, "in areas like education, telemedicine, disaster management, resource management, weather forecasting and communication."⁶⁶ These are areas where India enjoys significant advantage.

Maritime and coastal securities are emerging concerns in the region. Piracy is a global concern and India is emerging a major player given its maritime capability. While countries of the region face several threats including the possibility of terrorists using the sea routes to transit arms and ammunition; effective cooperation is yet to be put in place. India needs to devise mechanism to engage Bangladesh in the maritime sphere. It already has institutionalised trilateral maritime cooperation with Sri Lanka and Maldives. It also conducts annual Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) of which Pakistan and Bangladesh are members. Cooperation on coastal security and collaboration between the navies would help the four littoral states of South Asia, which are also members of Indian Ocean Rim Association.⁶⁷ Already India has initiated Coordinated Patrol (CORPAT) with Myanmar and there is a navy to navy staff talks between India and Bangladesh. Sri Lanka and India have also initiated annual naval exercise known as SILINEX. India and Sri Lanka had close maritime cooperation including joint patrol and sharing of intelligence which helped Sri Lanka to defeat terrorism in 2009.

Bridging the Gap between India's Capability and Role

To optimise India's role in the region while taking into account various constraints, it would be important to bridge the gap between India's capability and its role. In this context, judiciously managing the resources by selecting priority areas, reducing bureaucratic bottlenecks to implement projects in time, utilising India's scientific advancement for common good of the region and wherever necessary providing unilateral concessions would to a large extent bridge the gap. Though India has now established Development Partnership Administration (DPA), it would be important to operationalise it. To complete projects in time, the MEA has suggested money needs to be provided at the budget estimate stage for better planning and implementation.⁶⁸ India's political and security stakes in the neighbourhood is very high, at the same time it needs to select projects that are of strategic relevance and also provides it visibility and connects it to the people in the neighbouring countries; for example, infrastructure projects in Afghanistan and Sri Lanka. Resource constraint would not allow India to invest in a massive manner as China has done in Sri Lanka. Moreover, China's pattern of economic engagement is different since it brings in its own labourers to work in many of its development projects. Such pattern of engagement is a strict no-no for India in the neighbourhood where vested interests look for opportunity to propagate anti-Indianism. India has chosen joint venture as a mechanism of cooperation, which also provides a stake to the host country with a motive to strengthen institutional cooperation. This, however, leads to the delay in the completion of projects since the files need to be cleared by relevant

departments in the two countries, this unnecessarily delays the projects and leads to the escalation in cost. This is also one of the reasons why Chinese investment is preferred even though the interest rates are high.⁶⁹ Security is also a major concern that hinders the completion of project in time, for example: the Salma dam project in Afghanistan.⁷⁰

India also needs to significantly improve its image on the account of the promises it makes and its implementation. This creates a huge blow to India's credibility and needs to be corrected.⁷¹ For example, in the context of Bangladesh, due to bureaucratic procedures the \$ one billion credit line that India has extended has not been fully utilised. Even, the grant of 200 million which was announced by the finance minister during his visit to Dhaka in May 2012 was not provided in time.⁷² Taking this into account the standing committee on external affairs in 2014 said that it believed, "commitments made at the highest political level with cabinet approval are an integral part of India's foreign policy and it should be mandatory for ministry of finance to honour such decisions and provide funds for such commitments." It suggested that "the MEA and ministry of finance must explore the possibility of creating separate head with specific mandate of fulfilling the commitments and agreements made for projects/aid signed at the highest level"⁷³ India's economic diplomacy is at a nascent stage and would need reinvigoration and has to be imaginative. Unlike, the western donors, Indian aid are channeled through the host government and the sectors for investment are identified by the host country which is generally appreciated by the aid receiving countries. Already there are changes in the manner in which India had engaged with its neighbours in the past. The political emphasis that Prime Minister Modi's visit to Bhutan and Nepal placed should be combined with bureaucratic synergy and reinvention of a mindset that is conducive to India's security requirement and the vital roles that the neighbours can play to accomplish that and also have a stake in it.

India needs to adopt a mechanism of single window clearance. The Development Partnership Administration (DPA) needs to be revitalised. The DPA was created in January 2012 to "effectively handle India's aid projects through the stages of concept, launch, execution and completion" but "the resource structure in DPA is still in the stage of development and augmentation".⁷⁴ The constitution of DPA as a separate department is a significant development. It has three separate departments known as DPA I, II, III. DPA I handles grant assistance projects in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka apart from other countries and scrutinises project through interministerial MEA and Department of Economic affairs Standing committee. DPA III implements grant assistance projects in Afghanistan, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal and Sri Lanka. Though there are mechanisms at place to get finance ministry sanction, Foreign Service officers to be placed at other

ministries, it is clear that such mechanism is not effective. While there is a coordination centre at the MEA to coordinate foreign students' affairs, there needs to be a separate mechanism that addresses the financial aspect of the funding and energising defence cooperation with the neighbouring country. Probably there is also a need to look at the structure of decision making and address the issue of delays in project implementation.

Some of the areas where India needs to work are, first, to emerge as a regional voice in multilateral forums to represent the interest of the countries of the region given India's international stature. Wherever possible it should consult its neighbours and synergize a common approach in multilateral negotiations. It also needs to help in providing cooperation in the field of science and technology. India's role as a security provider includes economic, natural disaster and military security. Its extensive cooperation on security and defence matters has not graduated to assume the role of a security provider in South Asia.

India's role as a security provider would be shaped by how it manages six major challenges. First, its capacity to tackle internal security issues at home. Second, its capacity to meet the challenges of terrorism sponsored by Pakistan. Its lack of well-defined objective in Op Parakram mobilisation, its inability to deal with the Mumbai attack where it failed to respond effectively to Pakistan sponsored terrorism do not evoke awe for a country of India's size, capacity and international standing. Third, is the lack of political resolve and will to take some of the nagging bilateral issues to appropriate conclusion and the compulsion of domestic political imperatives which handicaps its external policy as one saw in the case of India's Bangladesh and Sri Lanka policies. Its Nepal policy also has several stakeholders with conflicting interests that curtail the emergence of a coherent policy; fourth, India's inability to stand by political leaders in the neighbourhood who share India's vision of democracy and pluralism and its soft corner for political favorites some of who do not enjoy popular support suggests a greater malaise in India's approach. Fifth, lack of synergy between the various agencies engaged in protecting India's security interest and the foreign policy mandarins. For example, inauguration of *Moitree* Express between Dhaka and Kolkota was delayed given the excessive emphasis on security. In the past, providing transit to Nepal and Bhutan to use Bangladesh ports got embroiled in unfounded apprehensions. Sixth, India needs to strengthen multilateral structures and revitalise their functioning. Though India is no more trapped in excessive bilateralism; its transition to multilateralism is cautious and slow. India's role as a regional leader cannot be fulfilled with state-centric approach or courting only the political elites in the neighbourhood; it also needs to take into account the simmering domestic conflicts which have potential cross border implications and engage the broader civil society.

Conclusion

India has been a provider of security in the neighbourhood. Its treaty with Nepal and Bhutan signed in 1950 and 1949 respectively provided these two countries a security umbrella against external powers. In spite of several constraints marked by competing elite interests, ethnic factor, mistrust and suspicion, India's ability to facilitate agreement and mediate in resolving various conflicts in the neighbourhood is enormous. Whether it is facilitating the return of Chakma refugees in 1997 after the CHT Accord was signed or trying to negotiate a peaceful resolution of ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka in 1987; or its support to Sri Lanka's war effort to defeat terrorism in 2009 by providing intelligence and engaging in joint maritime surveillance; or its ability to bring the political forces in Nepal to the negotiating table in 2005, its contribution to the process of democratisation has been significant. Its efforts to stabilise its neighbourhood are significant. Providing economic stakes to its neighbours in terms of providing market access and grant and aid to build infrastructure aims at boosting economic activities in the neighbourhood reflect India's role in contributing to growth and stability. It is also engaged in capacity building and training of armed forces in the neighbourhood.

The most immediate challenges are the security transition in Afghanistan, the forthcoming UN investigation in Sri Lanka, the expansion of Tehrik-e-Taliban violence to the urban centers of Pakistan that may worsen regional security scenario. India tried to block the UN investigation of human rights in Sri Lanka by voting against the UN sponsored resolution in 2014. It is likely to support the new government's effort resolve the long standing conflict. It seriously lacks an approach to ensure stability in Afghanistan. The growing differences between the civil and the military in Pakistan and the specter of terrorism that one is witnessing there would affect not only India but also impinge on the larger regional stability. In Bangladesh, semblance of stability may be marred by the growing strength of radical Islamists. Democratic consolidation and political stability would remain a problem. Since the government is elected without the participation of main opposition party it is likely that the opposition will engage in violent protest creating situation of political instability. Conclusion of war crime trials and implementing the verdicts would be an uphill task. There is a possibility of increased attack on the minorities and consolidation of fundamentalist elements; in such situation, violence that one witnessed before the election can be repeated. Political stability would be a problem in Maldives which is a new entrant to democracy in the region. All these create conditions for external power intervention.

In military and strategic terms there is an absence of a common approach in the region. Yet, there are many common challenges that the region faces which

require close collaboration and cooperation between the countries in which India can play a major role. This includes working-out measures to protect the region from devastating consequences of flood and cyclone, environmental degradation, common threat of terrorism and terror finance etc., which would prima facie require mutual cooperation. However, such cooperation sometimes is subjected to domestic nationalist discourse which eludes a common approach and severely reduces India's capacity to play a role.

India's neighbours also need to look afresh to their relationship with India and not from the perspective of zero sum game based on cold war mentality. The balancing India strategy needs to be replaced with engaging India strategy. They need to exploit their vast socio-cultural commonality and geographical contiguity with India. How India deals with these countries, where it seeks to closely engage as the security stakes are high would set the tone for India's role as a country that is confident to provide a leadership role in terms of security, economic development, political and social stability. New Delhi's capacity to engage by loosening its purse and discarding the stranglehold of bureaucratic and statist approach to connect with the common people and provide them with a sense of belonging would help India in optimising its role of a security provider.

ENDNOTES

1. Indira Gandhi, "India and the World", *Foreign Affairs*, October, 1972, p.68.
2. S.D. Muni, *India's Foreign Policy: The Democracy Dimension*, Foundation Book, Delhi, 2009, pp. 8-18.
3. Vinay Kumar, "India well positioned to become a net provider of security: Manmohan Singh", *The Hindu*, May 24, 2013, at <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/india-well-positioned-to-become-a-net-provider-of-security-manmohan-singh/article4742337.ece> accessed on October 5, 2014.
4. Ministry of Defence, "Defence Cooperation with Foreign Countries", at www.mod.gov.in/writeraddata/AR_2013/Eng/ch14pdf, accessed on October 15, 2014.
5. Important high level international commitments had to be kept on hold, or partially implemented because of lack of budgetary support. The MEA in a written reply to parliament standing committee on external affairs noted, "Delay in honouring these commitments has implications in terms of India's international standing and prestige, and in some cases could adversely affect India's security and strategic interests..." Ministry of External Affairs, Sixteenth Lok Sabha, Demand for Grants, 2014-15, *Fourth Report*, Lok Sabha Secretariat, December 2014, p.47.
6. Ministry of External Affairs, "Notes on Demands for Grants", 2014-15, p.109. In the 2013-2014 budget the MEA was allocated, out of the BE 2013-14 of Rs. 11719 crores (\$ 1.94 billion), MEA has received Rs. 8719 crores (\$ 1.44 billion) under Non-Plan and Rs. 3000 crores (\$ 0.5 billion) under Plan sector.
7. Ministry of External Affairs, Standing Committee on External Affairs, Demand for Grants, 2013-14, *Twelfth report*, Lok Sabha Secretariat, April 2013, p.18.
8. Government of India, Ministry of Defence, Defence Services Estimates, 2014-15.
9. For India's changing Role in South Asia, see Christian Wagner, "From Hard Power to Soft Power? Ideas, Interaction, Institutions, and Images in India's South Asia Policy", *Heidelberg Paper*, Working paper No 26, 2005.

10. Indira Gandhi, no. 1, p.76.
11. See Article 1 and 5 of the letter exchanged with Indo-Nepal Treaty of Peace and Friendship 1950; Article 2 of new India Bhutan Treaty of Peace and Friendship, 2007; Article 2 (a,b,c) of the Indo-Sri Lanka accord 1987; Article 3 (ii) regarding training and military supply to the Sri Lankan Army as mentioned in the letter Exchanged between Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and President Jayawardane on Matter of Bilateral Interest.
12. India was the first to respond within 48 hours to Sri Lanka's call for military assistance. The assistance from India included equipment for 5,000 combat troops carried by five frigates which later assisted Ceylon to patrol its water against gun-running and hostile incursion from the sea. 150 Indian troops to guard Bandaranaike airport and six helicopters with pilots solely for reconnaissance were provided to Colombo. See *Asian Recorder*, July 16-22, 1971, Vol. XVII, no 29, p.10257. Five Alouette III/Chetak helicopters from the 104 Helicopter Sqn (HS) were deployed to Ceylon, at "COIN Operation in Ceylon", <http://vayu-sena.indianmilitaryhistory.org/other-coin-1971-ceylon.shtml>, accessed on October 21, 2014,
13. J.N. Dixit, *Assignment Colombo*, Konark Publishers, Delhi, 1998, p.169. In a lecture delivered by J.R. Jayawardene on "Sri Lanka's Foreign Policy, 1977-1988" to the Alumni Association of BCIS on November 23, 1993, he said "Very often, Sinhala Monarchs invited Indian Armies to help them to acquire a throne or to stabilize it", *JR Jayewardene Papers*, available at Jayewardene library, Colombo.
14. S.D. Muni, *India and Nepal: A Changing Relationship*, Konark Publishers Pvt, Ltd, Delhi, 1992, p.33,
15. The Defence Attaché in the Indian mission dealt with the training of Nepal Army in India and facilitated sales of military equipment Sangeeta Thapliyal, *Mutual Security: The Case of India-Nepal*, Lancer Publishers, Delhi, 1998, p.39.
16. See Press Conference by Indian Prime Minister Nehru on February 28, 1952 as cited in A.S.Bhasin, *Nepal's Relations with India and China*, Vol. I, Geetika Publishers, 1970, pp.220, 330 and 337.
17. A.S. Bhasin, Introduction, *Nepal's Relations with India China*, Vol. I, Geetika Publishers, Delhi, p.xxviii.
18. Dorji Penjore, "Security of Bhutan: Walking Between Giants", *Journal of Bhutanese Studies*, Vol. 10, Summer, p. 118. Sinchulumba in North West Bhutan shares border with Sikkim and is very close to Chumbi valley, and this particular territorial swapping which China has been proposing would seriously undermine India's security by shifting the Bhutan-China border to the south.
19. *Ibid.*, p.122 and pp.114-115.
20. Nepal became a member of UN in 1955 and Bhutan became a member in 1971. Nepal signed a separate Treaty of Peace and Friendship with China in 1960 to undermine the 1950 treaty which established special relationship. Also see Sujit Dutta, "China's Emerging Power and Military Role: Implications for South Asia" in Jonathan D Pollack and Richard H Yang ed., *Under China's Shadow Regional Perspectives on Chinese Foreign Policy and Military Development*, RAND, 1998, p.101.
21. China recognised Bangladesh in 1975 after Mujib's assassination and long after Pakistan recognised Bangladesh. China was also not happy with India Bangladesh Treaty of Peace and Friendship of 1972.
22. Statement of Prime Minister of India in the Parliament on Bangladesh Visit, March 20, 1992, see A.S. Bhasin, *India-Bangladesh Documents, 1971-2005*, Geetika Publication, Delhi, 2005, p.34.
23. The 1972 treaty was perceived to have undermined the institutional interest of the Bangladesh Army and to have restricted its foreign policy and security choices. After the military assumed power in 1977 formally; India was seen as a supporter of Awami League

- a threat to its interest and its brand of politics.
24. Lawrence Lifschultz, *Bangladesh: The Unfinished Revolution*, Zed Press, London, p.100 and pp.103-7.
 25. S.D. Muni, "India and the Post-Cold War World: Opportunities and Challenges", *Asian Survey*, Vol.31(9), 1991, p.864.
 26. Shyam Saran, "India and its Neighbours", February 14, 2005, at <http://mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/2483/>, accessed on November 17, 2014.
 27. For details regarding the factors behind India's look East Policy see S.D. Muni, "India's Look East Policy: Strategic Dimension", *ISAS Working paper*, No. 121, 1 February 2011, pp.1-25.
 28. According to North East Vision Document "Connectivity of NER with ASEAN would require opening up the sea route through the Chittagong port and the land routes through Myanmar and China. See Ministry of Development of North East Region and North Eastern Council, *North Eastern Region: Vision 2020*, 2008, p.3.
 29. China has always emphasised bilateral resolution of disputes between India and its neighbours even when Nepal sought China's help in getting supply of essential commodities during the 1988 crisis. China advised Pakistan to resolve the Kashmir issue bilaterally with India when Pakistan was attempting to internationalize the Kashmir issue. In 1996 Jiang Zemin also said that Kashmir must be put on the back burner. See Jian Yang and Rashid Ahmed Siddiqui, "About an All Weather Relationship: Security Foundation of Sino Pakistan relations since 9/11", *Journal of Contemporary China Studies*, 20(71), 2011, pp.566 and 567-68.
 30. Strobe Talbott, *Engaging India: Diplomacy, Democracy and the Bomb*, Viking 2004, pp.6-7.
 31. Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad), "Pawns of Peace: Evaluation of Norwegian peace efforts in Sri Lanka, 1997-2009", *Report 5/2011*, p.45. According to this report after New Delhi accepted their mediation, the Norwegian interlocutor met the Indian policy makers. "In meetings in Delhi with the Indian Foreign Secretary, the National Security Advisor and the intelligence agency (RAW), it becomes clear that India will keep an arm's length approach and will not take an active role in the process.", p.33. This report further states, "India's response to Norway's role was less committal and less optimistic. India did not object since they saw Norway as non-threatening and gave them (lukewarm) support in the absence of any obvious alternatives, p.73. During the Eelam War IV, Rajapakse government kept India in the loop. This is confirmed by Sri Lanka's Defence Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapakse. See his speech in a seminar on "Defeating Terrorism: Sri Lanka's Experience", at <http://www.businesstoday.lk/article.php?article=3478>, accessed on November 10, 2014.
 32. India felt that UNMIN is trying to expand its mandate. Indian envoy said that there is "a consistent effort to expand the definition of what Nepal sought in terms of support. He urged the Council to accept the Nepalese request in letter and in spirit; the continuation of UNMIN on a smaller scale, to engage in the remainder of the mandate for a period of six months." UN Security Council, *Press Release*, July 18, 2008, at <http://www.un.org/press/en/2008/sc9401.doc.htm>, accessed on November 9, 2014.
 33. Bruce Riedel, "Pakistan: The Critical Battlefield", *Current History*, November 2008, p.359.
 34. The 1950 treaty which was signed by Rana regime was undermined by Monarchy, 1972 treaty was undermined by regimes succeeding Mujib, 1987 Indo-Lanka accord has been successfully eroded by parties that assumed power after Jayewardene. In the context of the signing of the 1972 treaty with Bangladesh one Bangladeshi scholar wrote, India attempted to "transform this natural pre-eminence into an imposed pre-dominance", AKM Abdus Sabur, "Bangladesh-India Relations: Retrospect and Prospects", paper presented at the international Conference on *Bangladesh and SAARC: Issues, Perspectives and Outlook*, BISS, Dhaka, August 23-24, 1992, p.4.
 35. China in case of Nepal and Bhutan. Even Pakistan during Ayub Khan's rule offered joint

- defence against north to India in 1958.
36. In some of the border regions during the partition of British India it was difficult to draw a sharp and clear line demarcating the Muslim and the non-Muslim areas, leaving significant minorities on both the sides. Article 2, 3 and 5 of the Sugauli Treaty of 1816 also ceded the land to the erstwhile British India. Due to this the people living on both side of the open border share close socio-cultural and ethnic ties. In the context of Sri Lanka both the Sinhalese and the Tamils migrated from India. These are some of the instances of how ethnic relations cuts across geographical boundaries. See Urmila Phadnis *Ethnicity and Nation Building in South Asia* Sage Publication, Delhi, 1990, p.80.
 37. S.D. Muni, no.2, p.26, India's role to facilitate peace is illustrated from the fact that it tried to mediate peace between the Tamils and Sri Lankan government through Thimpu talks and the signing of the 1987 Indo-Lanka peace accord are cases in point. The minority ethnic groups like the Tamils in Sri Lanka expect a decisive intervention to protect the minority rights in majoritarian states. In 1997, it facilitated the return of Chakma refugees from India after Bangladesh signed a peace agreement which is known as the Chittagong Hill Tract Peace Accord.
 38. In spite of Monarchy's attempt to balance India by playing China card, New Delhi continued to support constitutional monarchy (twin-pillar theory) till 2006, Jana Andolan II.
 39. The relationship between the Monarchy and Nepali Congress was never good. In 1973 the King supported Chogyal and Nepali Congress supported the popular forces in Sikkim. See S.D.Muni, *India and Nepal: A Changing Relationship*, Konark Publishers, Delhi, 1992, p.70. Subsequently Nepali nationalism, resettling hill people in Terai and Nepal's attempt to wriggle out of the 1950 Treaty commitments contributed to India-Nepal tension. Zone of peace proposal proposed by Nepal in 1975 was an attempt to dilute the 1950 Treaty and to undermine India's role.
 40. In a lecture delivered by J.R. Jayawardene on "Sri Lanka's Foreign Policy, 1977-1988" to the Alumni Association of BCIS on November 23, 1993 he said "thousands of Indian soldiers died and more were injured in the conflict. Billions of rupees were spent before they were peremptorily send away in 1989, when they were about to achieve victory." *JR Jayawardene Papers*, available at Jayewardene library, Colombo. Also see the request for the presence of IPKF in SL in J.N. Dixit, *Assignment Colombo*, Konark Publishers Pvt Ltd, Delhi, 1998, pp.169-70.
 41. For example, India interest was not limited to the problems pertaining to the Indian Tamils which was settled through a series of negotiations between India and Sri Lanka; but the 1983 anti-Tamil pogrom saw a significant exodus of refugees to Tamil Nadu making India a factor. Its effort to mediate peace between the Tamils and Sri Lankan government through Thimpu talks and the signing of the 1987 Indo-Lanka peace accord are cases in point. The minority ethnic groups like the Tamils in Sri Lanka expect a decisive intervention to protect the minority rights in a majoritarian state.
 42. Interaction with some prominent members of current government in Nepal in New Delhi, December 2014.
 43. Interview with members of various political parties including opposition leaders and civil society members and intellectuals in Dhaka, interviews were held between December 2 and December 10, 2014 in Dhaka.
 44. Views are based on author's interaction with prominent members of the two political parties. Interviews held in Dhaka, December 2-9, 2014. All the interviewees would like to remain anonymous.
 45. Examples are India's support to Monarchy and twin-pillar theory, India's decision to cancel foreign secretary dialogue with Pakistan which made some to argue that it will weaken democratic regime in Pakistan.
 46. Exaggeration of Indian threat in the case of Pakistan, Bangladesh's imaginary grievances in

- case of water sharing that continues to be tied to historical narrative in which adequate attention is not given water management and encroachment of river basin that cause water scarcity and flood. Nepal's constant accusation about Indian interference when its politicians do not hesitate to court New Delhi, its extreme suspicion with regard to river water sharing citing the Kosi example vitiates political atmosphere conducive to deepen engagement.
47. In Pakistan commonality is frowned upon by those who define Pakistan's identity solely based on religion; in Bangladesh language and literature binds the people together whereas groups like the Jamaat Islami and other Islamists dismiss linguistic-cultural affinity as unislamic given the source of Bengali language and culture. The left political parties also in Bangladesh look at India from the perspective of capitalist exploitation and portray India's relations with Bangladesh from the perspective of class struggle and imperialism. In Sri Lanka, a majoritarian Sinhala Buddhist identity that makes the Tamils the 'Other' frames India in terms of ethnic ties that the Tamils share with Tamil Nadu. In Nepal, an emphasis on Hill identity and Hindu religion that was cultivated by the Monarchy as a policy of political insurance projected the people of Terai as the 'Other'. Since people of Terai share socio-cultural and ethnic ties with India, New Delhi's role was looked with suspicion and mistrust.
 48. <http://mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/5407/Framework+Agreement+on+Cooperation+for+Development+between+India+and+Maldives>, accessed on November 9, 2014.
 49. Ministry of External affairs, "NSA level meeting on trilateral Maritime Security Cooperation between India, Sri Lanka and Maldives", March 6, 2014, at <http://www.mea.gov.in/in-focus-article.htm?23037/NSA+level+meeting+on+trilateral+Maritime+Security+Cooperation+between+India+Sri+Lanka+and+Maldives>, accessed on November 9, 2014.
 50. *The Hindu*, "Apply for Civil Services prelims", June 30, 2014. According to this report, "Only Indian citizens will be considered for IAS, IFS, and IPS. For other services, citizens of Nepal, Bhutan, Tibetan refugees and specified categories of Indian migrants to certain countries can also apply, subject to the prescribed conditions." at <http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-miscellaneous/tp-others/apply-for-civil-services-prelims/article6161502.ece>, accessed on November 7, 2014.
 51. For the text of India Bhutan Treaty see mea.gov.in/Images/pdf/india-bhutan-treaty-07.pdf, accessed on November 12, 2014.
 52. India Bangladesh Development Partnership Agreement see, <http://mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/5218/Framework+Agreement+on+Cooperation+for+Development+between+India+and+Bangladesh>, accessed on November 14, 2014.
 53. Rajat Pandit, "India Averse to Give 'Lethal' Weapons to Afghanistan, but no Full Stops for Military Training", *Times of India*, Delhi, December 15, 2013.
 54. Such pacts were offered by Lal Bahadur Shastri in 1965, Mrs Indira Gandhi in 1968 and Mr Morarji Desai in 1977. "India's Position on No War Pact", cited in *Defence Journal*, Karachi, Vol.8(4), 1982, p.42.
 55. Pakistan had always linked a no-war pact to the resolution of Kashmir Issue. After 1972 it rejected such offer saying that the Simla Agreement itself is a non-aggression pact. Only to blunt India's criticism of US arms supply and aid in the aftermath of Soviet intervention, Pakistan for the first time offered a non-war pact. For an analysis of 1982 offer of no-war pact see A.G. Noorani, "Beyond the No-War Pact", *Defence Journal*, Karachi, Vol.8(4), 1982, pp.27-32 as reproduced from the Indian Express, February 14, 1982. Also see Editorial, "Pact or No Pact Let Pakistan Declare Peace", *Defence Journal*, Vol. 8(3), 1982,
 56. Other bilateral military CBMs include exchange of list of nuclear installation that should not be targeted in case of war. Information regarding ballistic missile tests, bilateral hotlines between the DGMO, regular meeting between the border forces and costal security forces etc. These are CBMs to avoid conflict.

57. Ministry of External Affairs, Article 1 of the Simla Agreement, at www.mea.gov.in/in-focus-article.htm?19005/Simla+Agreement+July+2+1972, accessed in October 25, 2014.
58. www.mea.gov.in/in-focus-article.htm?18997/Lahore+Declaration+February+1999, accessed on November 12, 2014.
59. Laxman Kumar Behera, "World Politics Review", September 5, 2013, at <http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/trend-lines/13196/global-insider-indian-defense-exports-constrained-by-lack-of-clear-policy>, accessed December 15, 2014.
60. Rajat Pandit, "With eye on China, India to step up military ties with Sri Lanka and Maldives", *Times of India*, October 20, 2014, <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/With-eye-on-China-India-to-step-up-military-ties-with-Sri-Lanka-and-Maldives/articleshow/44891651.cms>, accessed on December 15, 2014.
61. Ministry of Defence, *Annual Report*, 2013-14, pp.184-87.
62. *Ibid.*
63. Union Budget, 2014, Notes on Demand for Grants, 2014-15, No 32/ Ministry of External Affairs, p.111.
64. Joyeeta Bhattacharjee, "Has India Responded Adequately to Cyclone Sidr?", Observer Research Foundation, 12 December 12, 2007, at <http://orfonline.org/cms/sites/orfonline/modules/analysis/AnalysisDetail.html?cmaid=13081&mmacmaid=13082>, accessed on December 8, 2014.
65. Ministry of External Affairs, Demand for Grants, 2013-14, http://164.100.47.134/committee/committee_main.aspx, pp.20, accessed on November 20, 2014.
66. Government of India, Press Information Bureau, Speech by the Prime Minister at SAARC Summit, November 26, 2014, at www.pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx, Accessed November 29, 2014.
67. Navies of India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Maldives. Given the mistrust between India and Pakistan, it would not be viable to include it.
68. India ITEC program constitute 64 per cent of the budget. Parliament Standing Committee Report on External Affairs, 2014-15, Sixteenth Lok Sabha, p.5.
69. "India, China in Investment", interview with Saman Kelegama, *Echelon*, August 2013, pp. 50-56, Also "Sri Lanka's Surging Cash Reliance on China", *Al Jazeera Report*, August 26, 2014, at <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2014/08/sri-lanka-economy-reliance-china-infrastructure-20148256345589851.html>, accessed on December 9, 2014.
70. The original cost of Salma Dam project was Rs. 351.87 crore which was revised to Rs 1457.56 crore in January 2013. For the reasons for delay in project see Ministry of External Affairs, Sixteenth Lok Sabha, Demand for Grants, 2014-15, *Fourth Report*, Lok Sabha Secretariat, December 2014, pp.56-57.
71. In the context of cyclone Sidr, a senior Bangladeshi diplomat who would not like to be named pointed out, it would be better for India not to promise. But not delivering on its promises in time creates unnecessary misgivings that New Delhi can avoid. It strengthens old stereo types about India. Interview held in February 2008 in New Delhi.
72. Ministry of External Affairs, Demand for Grants, 2013-14, http://164.100.47.134/committee/committee_main.aspx, p.15. Aid absorption is also a problem. Bangladesh is yet to approve Detailed Project Report for Akhaura-Agartala Rail link.
73. Ministry of External Affairs, Sixteenth Lok Sabha, Demand for Grants, 2014-15, *Fourth Report*, Lok Sabha Secretariat, December 2014, p.20.
74. *Ibid.*, p.54.

ANNEXURE I
Transfer of Major Conventional Weapons by India to South Asia: Sorted by Supplier. Deals with Deliveries or Orders Made in Year Range, 2000 to 2013

<i>Supplier/ recipient (R) or licensor (L)</i>	<i>No. ordered</i>	<i>Weapon designation</i>	<i>Weapon description</i>	<i>Year of order/ licence</i>	<i>Year(s) of deliveries</i>	<i>No. delivered/ produced</i>	<i>Comments</i>
India							
R: Afghanistan	3	SA-315B Lama	Light helicopter	(2012)	2013	(3)	Cheetal version
Bhutan	(1)	MPV	APV	(2003)	2004	(1)	
Maldives	1	SDB Mk-5	Patrol craft	2006	2006	1	Second-hand (but only 4 years old); Maldivian designation Hurawee
	1	Druhv	Helicopter	2009	2010	1	Aid
	1	Druhv	Helicopter	(2013)	2013	1	Aid
Myanmar	(2)	Mi-8T/Hip-C	Helicopter	(1999)	2000	(2)	Second-hand; lease
	(2)	BN-2 Islander	Light transport ac	2005	2006	2	Second-hand; aid; delivered despite UK warning delivery may affect UK arms sales to India
	(10)	Light Gun 105mm	Towed gun	(2006)	2006	(10)	Probably Second-hand; aid for use against Indian Assamese rebels operating from Myanmar
	(10)	MPV	APV	(2006)	2006	(10)	Designation uncertain; possibly Second-hand; aid for use against Indian Assamese rebels operating from Myanmar; status uncertain

(10)	T-55	Tank	(2006)	2006	(10)	Second-hand; aid for use against Indian Assamese rebels operating from Myanmar; status uncertain
3	HUMSA	ASW sonar	2013			For 3 Aung Zeya frigates from China; designation uncertain (reported as hull-mounted sonar)
2	SA-315B Lama	Light helicopter	2001	2001	2	Possibly Second-hand Cheetah version; aid against Maoist rebels
10	SA-315B Lama	Light helicopter	(2001)	2003-2004	(10)	Lancer armed version; for police; for use against Maoist rebels
2	SA-316B Alouette-3	Light helicopter	2001	2001	(2)	Possibly Second-hand; aid against Maoist rebels
(3)	Casspir	APC	2002	2002	(3)	Second-hand; aid against Maoist rebels; no. could be up to 31
2	Druhv	Helicopter	(2003)	2004	2	\$12-18 m deal (including 70 per cent as aid); armed version
100	MPV	APV	(2003)	2004	(100)	Aid (Nepal pays 33 per cent of costs)
1	Druhv	Helicopter	2004	2005	(1)	Aid; probably armed version
24	MPV	APV	(2009)	2011	24	Possibly Second-hand; possibly aid; designation uncertain

(Contd.)

<i>Supplier/ recipient (R) or licensor (L)</i>	<i>No. ordered</i>	<i>Weapon designation</i>	<i>Weapon description</i>	<i>Year of order/ licence</i>	<i>Year(s) of deliveries</i>	<i>No. delivered/ produced</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Sri Lanka	(150)	Tata Diesel	Diesel engine	(1985)	1987-2006	(150)	For Unicorn and Unibuffel APC produced in Sri Lanka
	1	Sukanya	OPV	2000	2000	1	Second-hand; for use against LTTE rebels; plan for 1 more cancelled after Indian change in policy towards Sri Lanka-LTTE conflict; Sri Lankan designation Sayura
	2	Indra	Air search radar	2005	2006	2	Possibly Second-hand; aid against LTTE rebels
	2	Indra	Air search radar	2007	2007	2	Aid
	1	Vikram	OPV	2007	2007	1	Second-hand; aid; Sri Lankan designation Sagara
	1	Vikram	OPV	2008	2008	1	Second-hand

Note: The 'No. delivered/produced' and the 'Year(s) of deliveries' columns refer to all deliveries since the beginning of the contract. Deals in which the recipient was involved in the production of the weapon system are listed separately. The 'Comments' column includes publicly reported information on the value of the deal. Information on the sources and methods used in the collection of the data, and explanations of the conventions, abbreviations and acronyms, can be found at http://www.sipri.org/contents/armstrad/at_data.html. The SIPRI Arms Transfers Database is continuously updated as new information becomes available.

Source: SIPRI Arms Transfers Database, Information generated: December 25, 2014

ANNEXURE II
Transfer of Major Conventional Weapons by China to South Asia: Sorted by Supplier. Deals with Deliveries or Orders Made in year range, 2000 to 2013

<i>Supplier/ recipient (R) or licensor (L)</i>	<i>No. ordered</i>	<i>Weapon designation</i>	<i>Weapon description</i>	<i>Year of order/ licence</i>	<i>Year(s) of deliveries</i>	<i>No. delivered/ produced</i>	<i>Comments</i>
China							
L: Bangladesh	5	CSOC-50m	Patrol craft	2011	2013	(5)	
Myanmar	(3)	Anawrahta	Corvette	(1997)	2001-2005	3	
	(1)	Aung Zeya	Frigate	2006	2011	1	
	(1)	FAC-491 Type	FAC	(2009)	2012	1	
	(3)	Aung Zeya	Frigate	(2010)			Delivery from 2014
Pakistan	..	Red Arrow-8	Anti-rank missile	1989	1990-2013	(21850)	Pakistani designation Bakrar Shikan
	..	QW-1 Vanguard	Portable SAM	(1993)	1994-2012	(1650)	Pakistani designation Anza-2
	(65)	W-653/Type-653	ARV	(1994)	1995-2000	(65)	Incl assembly/production in Pakistan; Pakistani designation ARV-W/653
	(500)	Type-90-2/MBT-2000	Tank	(1998)	2001-2013	(328)	MBT-2000 (Al Khalid or P-90) version
	(50)	JF-17 Thunder/FC-1	FGA aircraft	1999	2007-2013	(50)	JF-17 Block-1 version; developed for Pakistan; including production of components and assembly in Pakistan; including 8 mainly for testing and first 42 production version ordered 2009 for \$800 million

(Contd.)

<i>Supplier/ recipient (R) or licensor (L)</i>	<i>No. ordered</i>	<i>Weapon designation</i>	<i>Weapon description</i>	<i>Year of order/ licence</i>	<i>Year(s) of deliveries</i>	<i>No. delivered/ produced</i>	<i>Comments</i>
	6	K-8 Karakorum-8	Trainer/combat ac	(2001)	2003	6	Including production of components and assembly in Pakistan
	4	F-22	Frigate	2005	2009-2013	4	\$500-750 m deal; F-22P version; including 1 produced in Pakistan; Pakistani designation Zulfiquar K-8P version
	27 (42)	K-8 Karakorum-8 A-100 300mm	Trainer/combat ac Self-propelled MRL	2005 (2008)	2007-2010 2011-2012	27 (42)	
	2	Azmat	FAC	2010	2012	1	Including 1 produced in Pakistan
R: Bangladesh	4	F-7M Airguard	Fighter aircraft	(1996)	1999-2000	4	FT-7BG version
	(21)	HN-5A	Portable SAM	(2000)	2001	21	HN-5JA1 version
	(114)	Red Arrow-8	Anti-rank missile	(2000)	2001	114	
	20	Type-83 122mm	Towed gun	(2003)	2004	20	
	1	Crotale	SAM system	(2004)	2007	(1)	FM-90 version; for DW-2000 frigate
	(250)	QW-2	Portable SAM	2004	2007	(250)	
	(10)	C-802/CSS-N-8	Anti-ship missile	(2005)	2008	(10)	For 1 Jianghu (Type-053 or Type-510) frigate
	(54)	D-30 122mm	Towed gun	(2005)	2006-2007	(54)	Type-96 version
	(100)	PL-7	SRAAM	(2005)	2005-2007	(100)	For F-7MG combat aircraft
	(14)	PL-9	SRAAM	(2005)	2006-2008	14	For F-7MG combat aircraft
	(20)	R-440 Crotale	SAM	(2005)	2007	(20)	FM-90 version; for DW-2000 (Bangabandhu) frigate
	16	F-7MG	Fighter aircraft	(2006)	2006	16	\$ 44-118 million deal; F-7BG version

1	F-7M Airguard	Fighter aircraft	2007	2007	1	F-7A(M) or FT-7A version; possibly loan
(300)	Type-59G	Tank	(2009)	2010-2013	(155)	Bangladeshi Type-59 and Type-69 tanks rebuilt to Type-59G in Bangladesh with kits from China
(2)	FM-90	SAM system	(2010)	2011	(2)	
(75)	FM-90	SAM	(2010)	2011	(75)	
(20)	C-704	Anti-ship missile	(2011)	2012-2013	(20)	For 2 LPC-1 corvettes
16	F-7MG	Fighter aircraft	2011	2012-2013	(16)	F-7BGI version
2	LPC-1	Corvette	(2011)	2013	2	
3	Type-654	ARV	2011	2012	3	
44	Type-90-2/MBT-2000	Tank	2011	2012-2013	(44)	BDT12 b (\$160 m) deal
(20)	C-802/CSS-N-8	Anti-ship missile	(2012)			For 2 Jianghu (Type-053 or Type-510) frigates
2	Type-53/Jianghu	Frigate	2012			Second-hand; delivery 2014
(2)	Type-035G/Ming	Submarine	(2013)			Probably second-hand but modernized before delivery; BDT16 b (\$203 m) deal; selected but possibly not yet ordered by end-2013; delivery 2019
Myanmar	EFR-1	Fire control radar	(1991)	2002-2003	(5)	For 5 Myanmar patrol craft produced in Myanmar
(5)	Type-76 37mm	Naval gun	(1991)	1998-2002	(5)	For 5 Myanmar patrol craft produced in Myanmar
(3)	Type-344	Fire control radar	(1996)	2004-2005	(3)	For 3 Myanmar FAC produced in Myanmar

(Contd.)

<i>Supplier/ recipient (R) or licensor (L)</i>	<i>No. ordered</i>	<i>Weapon designation</i>	<i>Weapon description</i>	<i>Year of order/ licence</i>	<i>Year(s) of deliveries</i>	<i>No. delivered/ produced</i>	<i>Comments</i>
	(8)	AK-230 30mm	Naval gun	2001	2004-2007	(8)	For 4 Myanmar FAC produced in Myanmar; supplier uncertain
	(30)	C-801/CSS-N-4	Anti-ship missile	(2001)	2004-2005	(30)	For Myanmar FAC; designation uncertain (could be C-802)
	(25)	Type-59D	Tank	(2002)	2004	(25)	Probably second-hand Type-59 rebuilt to Type-59D before delivery
	(2)	BT-6	Trainer aircraft	(2005)	2006	(2)	
	(60)	C-802/CSS-N-8	Anti-ship missile	(2006)	2011	(10)	For Aung Zeya frigates
	(6)	SH-1 155mm	Self-propelled gun	(2008)	2009	(6)	
	(5)	TH-5711 Smart Hunter	Air search radar	2008	2010	(5)	
	(10)	C-802/CSS-N-8	Anti-ship missile	(2009)	2012	(10)	For FAC-491 Type FAC
	(50)	K-8 Karakorum-8	Trainer/combat ac	2009	2011-2013	(50)	No. could be 60 or 72; assembled in Myanmar
	(50)	Type-90-2/MBT-2000	Tank	2009	2012-2013	(50)	
	(100)	WMA-301 Assaulter	AFSV	(2010)	2012-2013	(50)	
	(10)	ZFB-05	APC	(2010)	2011	(10)	
	(25)	HY-2/SY-1A/CSS-N-2	Anti-ship missile	(2011)	2012	(25)	Possibly second-hand; for Type-053 (Jianghu-2) frigates
	2	Type-53/Jianghu	Frigate	2011	2012	2	Second-hand; Type-053H1 (Jianghu-2) version
	(76)	WZ-551/Type-92	IFV	(2011)	2012-2013	(76)	
Nepal	(5)	WZ-551	APC	2005	2005	(5)	

Pakistan	(87)	Type-59-1 130mm	Towed gun	(1992)	1998-2000	87	F-7PG version; incl 6 or 9
	46	F-7MG	Fighter aircraft	(2001)	2001-2003	(46)	FI-7PG version
	11	F-7MG	Fighter aircraft	(2002)	2003	11	F-7PG version
	(6)	A-5C/Fantan	FGA aircraft	(2003)	2003	6	
	(20)	C-802/CSS-N-8	Anti-ship missile	(2003)	2006	(20)	For Jurrat FAC
	(143)	D-30 122mm	Towed gun	(2003)	2003-2004	143	
	2	Type-347G	Fire control radar	(2003)	2006	2	For 2 Jurrat FAC from Thailand
	1	YLC-2	Air search radar	(2003)	2003	1	
	10	YLC-6	Air search radar	(2003)	2005-2006	(10)	
	(6)	AS565S Panther	ASW helicopter	2005	2009-2010	(6)	Z-9EC version
	(70)	C-802/CSS-N-8	Anti-ship missile	(2005)	2009-2011	(50)	For Jiangwei (F-22P) frigates
	(100)	R-440 Crotale	SAM	(2005)	2009-2013	(100)	For Jiangwei (F-22P) frigates; HQ-7 (FM-80) version
	(800)	PL-12/SD-10	BVRAAM	(2006)	2010-2013	(200)	For JF-17 and possibly modernized Mirage-3/5 combat aircraft
	(1000)	PL-5E	SRAAM	(2006)	2009-2013	(360)	For JF-17 combat aircraft; PL-5E-II version
	(100)	C-802/CSS-N-8	Anti-ship missile	(2008)	2012-2013	(20)	For JF-17 combat aircraft
	(750)	LS-3	Guided bomb	(2008)	2010-2013	(275)	For JF-17 combat aircraft
	(1000)	LS-6-500	Guided bomb	(2008)	2010-2013	(250)	For JF-17 combat aircraft
	(750)	LT-2	Guided bomb	(2008)	2010-2013	(250)	For JF-17 combat aircraft
	(2)	SLC-2	Army locating radar	(2008)	2010	(2)	For use with A-100 MRL
	(200)	WMD-7	Aircraft EO system	(2008)	2009-2013	(50)	For JF-17 combat aircraft
	4	ZDK-03	AEW&C aircraft	2008	2011-2013	(3)	\$278 m deal
	(50)	FN-6	Portable SAM	(2009)	2010	(50)	
	(30)	C-802/CSS-N-8	Anti-ship missile	(2010)	2012-2013	(20)	For Azmat FAC
	(50)	CM-400AKG	Anti-ship missile	(2010)	2012-2013	(20)	For JF-17 combat aircraft

(Contd.)

<i>Supplier/ recipient (R) or licensor (L)</i>	<i>No. ordered</i>	<i>Weapon designation</i>	<i>Weapon description</i>	<i>Year of order/ licence</i>	<i>Year(s) of deliveries</i>	<i>No. delivered/ produced</i>	<i>Comments</i>
	(50)	JF-17 Thunder/FC-1	FGA aircraft	(2011)			JF-17 Block-2 version; delivery from 2014
	(50)	JF-17 Thunder/FC-1	FGA aircraft	(2012)			JF-17 Block-2 or Block-3 version; selected but contract not yet signed by end-2013
	(6)	Type-041/Yuan	Submarine	(2013)			Designation uncertain; selected but contract not yet signed by end-2013
Sri Lanka	3	Type-062/Shanghai	Patrol craft	(1996)	2000	3	Shanghai-2 version; Sri Lankan designation Rana BT-6A version
	10	BT-6	Trainer aircraft	2000	2000	10	
	6	K-8 Karakorum-8	Trainer/combat ac	(2000)	2001	6	
	(120)	WZ-551	APC	(2001)	2002-2007	(120)	
	3	K-8 Karakorum-8	Trainer/combat ac	(2004)	2005	3	
	(3)	Type-408C	Air search radar	2004	2004-2006	(3)	Designation uncertain; incl for civilian air traffic control
	(70)	WZ-551/Type-92	IFV	(2005)	2006-2007	(70)	
	(4)	F-7MG	Fighter aircraft	(2007)	2008	(4)	Possibly aid; F-7GS version; no. may be 6
	1	JY-11	Air search radar	(2007)	2007	(1)	Mainly for use against LTTE rebels
	(25)	PL-5E	SRAAM	(2007)	2008	(25)	
	2	Y-12	Light transport ac	(2009)	2010	2	For F-7GS combat aircraft

Note: The 'No. delivered/produced' and the 'Year(s) of deliveries' columns refer to all deliveries since the beginning of the contract. Deals in which the recipient was involved in the production of the weapon system are listed separately. The 'Comments' column includes, publicly reported information on the value of the deal. Information on the sources and methods used in the collection of the data, and explanations of the conventions, abbreviations and acronyms, can be found at http://www.sipri.org/contents/armstrad/at_data.html. The SIPRI Arms Transfers Database is continuously updated as new information becomes available.

Source: SIPRI Arms Transfers Database, Information generated: December 25, 2014

4

Defence and Security Partnership with Myanmar

Sampa Kundu

Introduction

India's domestic complexities (both political and economic), hostility with Pakistan and geopolitical tensions with China made Southeast Asia little sceptical about India's capability as a security provider for several decades.¹ However, since the early 2000s, developments like Indian Navy's proven efficiency in the wake of the Tsunami in 2004 in disaster relief and rescue operations, India's visible economic growth, its improving relations with China and its ability in counter-insurgency operations have helped it gain a manageable position in Southeast Asia if not as a security provider, then as a benign security partner.² In this given background, this chapter deals with India's bilateral defence and security cooperation with Myanmar and identifies India's role in Myanmar's security scenario. Myanmar is the only Southeast Asian country which shares both land and maritime borders with India. The importance of Myanmar lies in its geographic location and its rich natural resources which have helped it attain a strategic value in the region during the Second World War.³ Followed by its independence, the then Burma chose to maintain equal distance from its giant neighbours, India and China, and primarily followed the policy of non-alignment in its relations with the communist as well as the capitalist blocs.⁴ However, in the late 1980s and early 1990s China's increasing stakes in Myanmar and the latter's penchant towards the former raised some alarm in the entire regional security environment.⁵

On India's part, the concerns originate from the fact that its turbulent North East shares 1,643-km long border with Myanmar. However, Myanmar, which is mainly beleaguered by domestic security concerns, has assured India of not

allowing its territory against any anti-Indian activities several times. In return, India has defended Myanmar's position at the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.⁶ Even after the Depayin incident on May 30, 2003, when Daw Aung Saan Suu Kyi and her supporters were allegedly attacked by the Junta followers, India restrained itself from declaring anything against the Government of Myanmar at the official level.⁷ Myanmar too has expressed its affability towards India by fully supporting the latter's bid for a permanent seat at the United Nations Security Council.⁸ However, despite these significant gestures of good neighbourly relations, India's role in Myanmar's security scenario is still vague and unclear. In order to understand India's position in Myanmar's security state of affairs, this chapter would deal with five key aspects namely; Myanmar's security situation, both internal and regional; implications for India; what India has been doing to augment its bilateral relations with Myanmar and what more is expected and what are the challenges and constraints.

Security Situation in Myanmar

Followed by the political transition in the country in 2011, Myanmar remains exposed to certain challenges in the fields of administration, corruption, governance, social welfare and economy and security issues.⁹ Security threats jeopardising Myanmar's peace and stability include domestic and regional aspects. The domestic security threats emanate from ethno-nationalism, religious fundamentalism, communalism and political factors. On the other hand, to a large extent, regional security threats primarily come from maritime disputes and other issues like trans-national organised crime. Before discussing the security challenges faced by Myanmar or the changes taking place in its security situation, a brief background is in order on its national security and defence policy for a broader perception.

Myanmar's National Security Policy and Priorities for Defence: National sovereignty, territorial integrity and national unity have always been priorities for Burma/Myanmar.¹⁰ Tin Maung Maung Than has argued that Myanmar's national security policy has mostly been influenced and shaped by domestic issues and threats originating from intra-state conflicts rooted in violent ethnic faultlines, and not by any regional or international concerns.¹¹ Another distinguished facet of Myanmar's security establishment is the superior position enjoyed by its military in the politics and society of the country. Though the Burma Armed Forces, the predecessor of Myanmar Defence Service (MDS), was basically a group of unskilled and unprofessional soldiers, they were bound together in their nationalistic idealism, and this history has helped the MDS gain a higher place in the politics and society of Myanmar.¹² As a continuation of that legacy, the

2008 Constitution gives some extra privileges to the *Tatmadaw* (or the Myanmar Armed Forces), including a right to play leadership role in the politics, autonomy to manage its own affairs, the right of nominating 20 per cent members in the parliament, advising the president to declare an emergency in the country which permits the Commander-in-Chief of the MDS to enjoy all legislative, executive and judicial powers.¹³ The defence budget allocation in Myanmar is another example of the government's policy of focusing on national security than many other aspects. The Ministry of Defence has proposed US\$ 1.2 billion as the country's defence budget for the year 2014-15, which is around 12.26 per cent of the national spending for the same financial year.¹⁴ Andrew Selth mentioned that Myanmar's spending on defence is almost double its total spending on education and health.¹⁵

Ethnic Insurgency, Religious Fundamentalism and Other Domestic Security Concerns of Myanmar: Most of the 135 ethnic groups living in Myanmar do not believe in the concept of Burmese nationalism, as practised by the majority Burman group, which has resulted in violent ethnic insurgency in the country, beginning right after its independence.¹⁶ However, by the time of President Thein Sein's accession to power, 115 armed ethnic groups have signed ceasefire deals with the government with an exception of 12 major groups.¹⁷ The government-appointed 11-member Union Peace-Making Central Committee and 52-member Union Peace-Making Work Committee have been working closely with the Nation-wide Ceasefire Coordination Team (NCCT) to sign and implement a national ceasefire deal with all existing armed insurgent groups.¹⁸ Besides the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) with whom the bilateral ceasefire agreement broke in 2011, the United Wa State Army (UWSA) and the Ta'ang National Liberation Army are having clashes with the *Tatmadaw* periodically. The UWSA is not even a part of NCCT which includes 16 armed ethnic group leaders.¹⁹ However, the Myanmar Government is hopeful to complete the nation-wide ceasefire programme before the national level election to be held in late 2015.

Besides the sporadic clashes between the *Tatmadaw* and some of the armed ethnic groups, another challenge obstructing the national interest of the country is infrequent attacks on the foreigners. A total of nine small-to-medium-scale explosions struck Myanmar in October 2013, which included the attack on Traders Hotel, a preferred accommodation of foreigners in Yangon along with attacks on a parking lot, bus-stops and pagodas.²⁰ The State police initially accused the ethnic Karen businessmen for the attack on the Traders Hotel. However, Islamic extremists being involved in the bombings could not be ruled out, primarily because they have often attacked the State apparatus as a symbolic revenge for Myanmar's discriminatory behaviour against the Rohingya Muslims. In May

2013, the Indonesian authorities traced a plot to bomb Myanmar's embassy in Jakarta by a local Islamic fundamentalist group.²¹

Ethnic, religious and political insurgency and violence are not the only security concerns for Myanmar. The nexuses between ethnic insurgency, narcotics trafficking, human trafficking, HIV/AIDS and illegal arms trade are widespread.²² Reports indicate that groups like UWSA, Shan State Army-South (SSA-S), Shan State Army-North (SSA-N) and Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DBKA) have close connections with the narcotic traffickers in the region.²³ Many insurgent groups indulge in poppy cultivation, narcotic production and trafficking as a means to earn money.²⁴

The increasing religious fundamentalism circling around Buddhism is another matter of concern for Myanmar. The Rohingya Muslims have been attacked several times in the Rakhine state of Myanmar. In 2013, violence erupted in Central Myanmar encompassing cities like Meikhtila, Okkan, Hpakant and Lashio.²⁵ In mid-2014, another riot between the Muslims and the Buddhists broke out around Mandalay. A German professor, Bassam Tibi, has suggested that imposition of religious laws can be a prominent force behind the anti-Rohingya conflicts.²⁶

Myanmar's Regional Security Concerns: Besides these domestic issues, Myanmar has to face limited regional and international security concerns. For instance, Thailand accuses Myanmar of illegal influx of refugees and drug trafficking across the border. With Bangladesh, Myanmar shares a maritime border dispute. However, both Bangladesh and Myanmar have accepted the judgment of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) passed in 2012 and 2014. But, Bangladesh too is worried about large-scale illegal movement of people across the border. The Rohingya issue remains another irritant in their relations. Relations got another setback with the recent firing by the Border Guards of Myanmar on Bangladeshi patrolling officials and Bangladesh Border Police in May 2014. However, despite these irritants, Myanmar shares cordial relations with both its neighbours. Thailand is one of the largest foreign investors in Myanmar and right now is helping Myanmar establish an Exclusive Economic Zone in Dawei Deep Sea Port. With Bangladesh, Myanmar conducts regular talks on border security and management in an effort to stop further escalation of the situation.

Implications for India

India's forward engagement policy towards Myanmar was not a familiar phenomenon in the 1980s and early 1990s. After the democratic crackdown in the late 1980s, India provided full support to the pro-democratic leaders from Myanmar. The policy change towards Myanmar was a consequence of factors

like China's strong presence in Myanmar, India's renewed interests in enhancing cooperation with Southeast Asia and security of Northeast India.

Though India's Myanmar policy has gained momentum after the initiation of Look East Policy, there were few Indian strategists who were convinced about Myanmar's geo-political importance in India's foreign policy from an early phase. K.M. Panikkar stressed that India should not underestimate the aspects of Burma's location and resources and in its own interest, India should maintain security partnership with the later.²⁷ He further mentioned that Burma is not able to protect itself from foreign dominance which gives India a good reason to keep an eye on the developments taking place there in order to safeguard own interests.²⁸ In 1947, during a speech in the Legislative Assembly in New Delhi, the then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru mentioned about a closer association between Burma and India as a new spirit of Asia was emerging and that wanted the Asian countries coming close to each other in "their own defence and to promote world peace".²⁹ Panikkar's advice was followed by the Indian leaders as some developments took place in Myanmar in its relations with China since late 1980s. After the attack on democracy in Myanmar (then Burma) on August 8, 1988 and in Tiananmen Square in China in 1989, both Myanmar and China started coming together as close neighbours. As early as in 1994, during the visit of China's the then Premier Li Peng to Myanmar, the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) of Myanmar declared China as its 'most trusted friend'.³⁰ In 1994, General Jhao Nanqui, who was then a high-ranking People's Liberation Army (PLA) official, said that China would not allow India to convert Indian Ocean into India's Ocean.³¹ In its efforts of ensuring an easy access to the Indian Ocean, China sought to reach Myanmar and create its own clout over the country. To quote Karl Jackson,

Myanmar has become increasingly reliant on China for weapons, official development assistance, and direct foreign investment. If Myanmar were to become a full-fledged client state of China, this would change the regional strategic balance.³²

More than the Sino-Myanmar military cooperation, what fuelled New Delhi's apprehensions were the continuous reports about China constructing a naval base in the Haingyii Island and a radar at the Coco Island, and India began to watch the developments in Myanmar more closely as both these islands are very close to the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.³³ Besides military and security cooperation, China has been helping Myanmar in various infrastructure projects. In the opinion of Mohan Malik, at least till late 1990s, China's ambition was to connect Yunnan province with coastal Myanmar and get an access to one of the ports of Myanmar in order to use that as a gateway to export cheap Chinese products to other regions.³⁴ As China started broadening its expectations from

its closer association with Myanmar, New Delhi got afraid because the so-called Chinese String of Pearl strategy could expose India to serious challenges. Hence, India made several attempts to cultivate its relations with Myanmar.³⁵

Apart from counter-balancing China's influence in the region, ensuring security of Northeast India was one of the major factors that motivated India to pursue a friendly relation with Myanmar. In addition, followed by decades of bilateralism, India finally embarked on a regional perspective towards Southeast Asia through initiating Look East Policy in early 1990s in an attempt to rejuvenate its relations with all Southeast Asian countries and not just with the selected ones.³⁶ In the words of India's former Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh,

...in 1992 our Government launched India's "Look East" policy. This was not merely an external economic policy; it was also a strategic shift in India's vision of the world and India's place in the evolving global economy. Most of all it was about reaching out to our civilisational Asian neighbours.³⁷

As India was embracing the Look East Policy, Myanmar became an imperative part of it by virtue of its geographic location between India and Southeast Asia. Both India and the Association for Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) adopted an engaging policy towards Myanmar since early 1990s; on the other hand, Myanmar too, reciprocated positively to its neighbours, with the intention of getting economic cooperation from them as well as obtaining an indirect acceptance for the then Junta rulers of the country. Myanmar also understood that too much dependence on China may be perilous for its national security and interest.³⁸ To cite one *Far Eastern Economic Review* report, "As influx of the Chinese in many northern Myanmar towns have increased, the country's own citizens face trouble as they are forced to leave their own homes, businesses and other local activities explicitly dominated by the Chinese immigrants."³⁹ Reports of Chinese involvement in the narcotic trade and their help to the ethnic insurgents in Myanmar are also very frequent. Bertil Lintner pointed out,

The unprecedented heroin explosion in Myanmar's north and China's increasing political and economic influence over the entire country ... threatens the stability and social fabric of the entire region.⁴⁰

Henceforth, it became important for Myanmar to cooperate with its neighbours in the ASEAN, build and/or re-build relations with India and other regional and extra-regional powers and reduce its dependence on China.⁴¹ In this context, Myanmar's efforts to diversify its dependence on Chinese military cooperation by partnering with countries like North Korea, Singapore, Israel, India, Serbia and Ukraine can be understood.⁴² Partnership with India is also important for Myanmar as both of them share platforms in various regional forums like the

Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multisectoral Technical Economic cooperation (BIMSTEC), Mekong Ganga Cooperation (MGC), Bangladesh, China, India, Myanmar Forum (BCIM) and various ASEAN gateways. Myanmar is an observer in the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). Further, India is one of the few countries with whom Myanmar shares a positive trade balance. Besides, from India, Myanmar has got a support for political developments. India's cooperation with Myanmar in security is mentioned below.

Bilateral Security Cooperation between India and Myanmar

Security cooperation between India and Myanmar started as early as 1950s.⁴³ The peace and friendship treaty was signed between India and Myanmar in July 1951, and the next was land border delimitation in 1967.⁴⁴ However, security cooperation came to the forefront of Indo-Myanmar bilateral relations only in 1994 along with other aspects of cooperation. The stalemate in Indo-Myanmar security relations was broken by the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for Maintenance and Tranquillity in Border that was signed on January 29, 1994.⁴⁵ The MoU resulted in India and Myanmar conducting regular annual meetings at the home secretary and joint secretary levels. General B C Joshi, the then Chief of Army Staff, visited Myanmar in May 1994, and finally, Operation Golden Bird was launched in the same year, raising each other's expectations.⁴⁶ To the surprise of many, Operation Golden Bird was soon halted as India decided to honour Daw Aung Saan Suu Kyi with the prestigious Jawaharlal Nehru Award. The decision of the Myanmar Government to withdraw its troops from Operation Golden Bird was a signal of Myanmar's preference for independent foreign policy.⁴⁷ However, the Myanmar Army launched several other anti-insurgency operations along the borders in the 2000s. One such operation was launched in November 2001, and 192 rebels were apprehended including Rajkumar Meghen, chief of the United National Liberation Front (UNLF). But most of these rebels including Meghen were soon released by the Myanmar Army.⁴⁸ India and Myanmar started holding regular border meetings since 2000, when General Maung Aye visited India.⁴⁹ In the same year, General V.P. Malik, then Chief of the Indian Army, paid a visit to Myanmar and both sides reinforced commitment to military cooperation.⁵⁰

The year 2006 can be termed as an earmark in Indo-Myanmar bilateral security relations, as it was then that India started sharing intelligence information, providing training and supplying equipment to Myanmar in order to boost the military capability of *Tatmadaw* to facilitate their fight against cross-border ethnic insurgency.⁵¹ In 2008, India and Myanmar signed an MoU on intelligence exchange cooperation during the visit of Senior General Maung Aye. In December 2010, India and Myanmar ratified the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT).

Besides, from 2012, India and Myanmar have been conducting regular meetings at Border Liaison Office level. Both countries have also set up a Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism (JWG). On May 8, 2014, India and Myanmar signed an MoU on border cooperation.⁵² The MoU has provisions for establishing a framework for security and exchange of information between the respective security agencies. Both sides have agreed to work on coordinated patrols along the border as well as safeguard the maritime boundary in order to prevent activities like insurgency, arms smuggling, wildlife trafficking, narcotics trafficking, etc.⁵³

In 2006, when the Chief of the Indian Air Force visited Myanmar, he offered help in improving the avionics in Myanmar's fighter inventory.⁵⁴ India also expressed its willingness to establish a naval aviation training centre in Myanmar in the same year.⁵⁵ India had to face international criticism as it tried to supply and transfer military equipment to Myanmar when the later was facing international sanctions. India tried to transfer two BN-2 'Defender' Islander maritime surveillance aircraft and deck-based air-defence guns to Myanmar. But as the UK imposed some restrictions on the military government in Myanmar, India had to abandon the plan.⁵⁶ In 2012, India planned to assist Myanmar in building offshore patrol boats and also expressed its willingness to increase participation in military training.⁵⁷ Myanmar also participates in the multilateral confidence-building exercises, MILAN and Coordinated Patrol (CORPAT).⁵⁸ India has also agreed to support Myanmar with its expertise in handling and operating Russian equipment like MiG-29s.⁵⁹

While in the cases of military training and supply of equipment, India's cooperation with Myanmar seem to have achieved significance, more commitments have been assured in fighting the cross-border insurgency. In 2003, Myanmar's then Foreign Minister U Win Aung assured that anti-Indian groups will not be permitted to work from Myanmar.⁶⁰ In his 2004 visit, General Than Shwe also promised the same thing.

In 2013, during the visit of India's then Defence Minister, A K Antony both sides mentioned about augmenting the existing mechanism to improve joint ventures along the border, cooperation between the navies to prevent the use of water for trans-national illegal activities, commitments for non-use of each other's territory for activities which are harmful to the national security of both countries, providing extra seats to Myanmar defence personnel in Indian training facilities and finally, assisting Myanmar in repairing the Russian military equipment and providing training to operate them.⁶¹ The series of important visits continued even after. In 2013, General Bikram Singh, then Chief of the Indian Army visited Myanmar, met the Commander-in-Chief of MDS, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and both sides reaffirmed that peace and stability are important for the border regions.⁶²

In the same year, when Myanmar's Navy Chief Vice Admiral Thura The Swe came to India, the later agreed to help Myanmar in building offshore patrol boats which will be built in Indian shipyards.⁶³

Prospects for Greater Cooperation

There are several ways to improve the bilateral security relations between India and Myanmar. The MDS is technologically not advanced. Myanmar Air Force suffers from problems like lack of skilled pilots, air-to-air combat training, and so on.⁶⁴ Moreover, its Navy uses old and obsolete weapon systems. Inadequate manpower, limited deployment and restricted service capability are some of the regular features of Myanmar Navy.⁶⁵ Therefore, India could help Myanmar in making the MDS technologically more sound and effective. The fact that India and Myanmar share both land and maritime borders should be used as a backdrop to enhance defence and security cooperation between them. An improved Myanmar defence system will be able to tackle issues of trans-national illegal activities including cross-border terrorism and insurgency more effectively. On October 31, 2013, when then Chief of Army Staff, General Bikram Singh met the Commander-in-Chief of MDS, Min Aung Hlaing in Nay Pyi Taw, the later said, "Thanks to decade-long amity and mutual trust between the two countries, border regions enjoy more peace and stability than any other regions."⁶⁶ In October 2014, the Union Home Secretary Anil Goswami was expected to visit Myanmar for talks on Myanmar's help in controlling movements and activities of the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) and National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Isak Muivah (NSCN-IM) along the border.⁶⁷ Myanmar has tensions on its common border with China too. Around 50,000 ethnic Han Chinese were forced to leave Myanmar and flee to China in the past 10 years due to the domestic upheaval in the Kokang region, which has been a predominantly Han Chinese-dominated area for a long period of time.⁶⁸ In 2010, China was therefore forced to deploy forces in this region in order to ease the border tension.⁶⁹ The truth is China's influence in Myanmar is often ostentatious, and the nationalistic Myanmar leaders are unlikely to take instruction from China or anyone else.⁷⁰

The recent political transition in Myanmar has made the country more confident and independent in thinking. Now most of the influential nations of the world including the US, UK, Australia, Japan and few other countries from around the world want to invest in Myanmar. Simultaneously, on several occasions, Myanmar has expressed its willingness to augment bilateral cooperation with India. In one of his interviews with the Press Trust of India (PTI), Myanmar's Information Minister, U Ye Htut mentioned that his country is aware of India's concerns regarding cross-border terrorism and insurgency, and that it would like to help India tackle these issues provided exact information is given to Myanmar

relating the whereabouts of those insurgent groups.⁷¹ In this changed scenario, India should not worry about China's overwhelming presence in Myanmar; rather, it should concentrate on building a meaningful relation with Myanmar. In addition, reports of China's alleged connection with groups like UWSA and helping them by providing assault rifles, machine guns, rocket launchers, man-portable air defence systems, combat vehicles, tank destroyers, etc. have definitely created some amount of trust deficit between China and Myanmar, while the latter has been trying to bring peace and stability in the country through negotiations with the insurgents.⁷² A report by *Janes Defence Weekly* suggested that even after signing of bilateral ceasefire agreement with the UWSA, China supported the group by providing Mi-17 transport helicopters and TY-9-air-to-air missiles.⁷³ Henceforth, Myanmar's urge to balance its dependence on China can be understood, which gives India ample chance to foster its relations with the former.

Constraints and Shortcomings

Given the security challenges to which Myanmar is exposed and the nature of bilateral security cooperation between India and Myanmar, India's role as a security provider for Myanmar remains in doubt. India, despite all of its openness and efforts, is still competing with China for a better position in Myanmar. China, on the other hand, despite having raised concerns in Myanmar because of its reported connections with certain insurgent and trafficker groups, its connections with the rebels within Myanmar and the policy of dominating local businesses and other activities, it has been one of Myanmar's dependable friends. In the past, Mohan Malik has mentioned about PLA officials' personal rapport with the *Tatmadaw* officials.⁷⁴ In June 2010, China's North Industries Corporation (NORINCO), the largest arms manufacturing unit of PLA, has signed for a copper mining project in Myanmar.⁷⁵ Chinese presence is very strong in the Myanmar Air Force, which is comfortable in using Chinese-made MiG 21s and MiG 19s.⁷⁶ China's Navy conducts periodic joint exercises with Myanmar Navy. During his June 2014 visit to China, President U Thein Sein mentioned China as Myanmar's "good friend, neighbour and partner".⁷⁷ In 2013, General Min Aung Hlaing mentioned, "Myanmar's military is ready to make unremitting efforts to deepen cooperation with China."⁷⁸ There are reasons which explain China's influence in Myanmar. At the time, when Myanmar was absolutely isolated by most of the nations in the world, China's friendly behaviour towards the Junta has created its own aura. China has supported Myanmar by not only supplying military equipment, but by also facilitating bilateral trade and investment in almost every infrastructure project—ranging from airport building to road and port building—and most importantly, by protecting the Junta from

UN resolutions proposed for its gross violation of human rights.⁷⁹ In 1988, China had signed a border trade agreement with Myanmar.⁸⁰ This border trade agreement along with many other developments helped Myanmar sustain its economy when most of the western countries were practising sanctions against the country.⁸¹ Henceforth, it seems little difficult for India to take a prominent role in Myanmar's security scenario even though the democratic government of Myanmar is willing to accept India as one of the most important neighbours.

Another challenge comes from the closer alliance between Northeast Indian insurgent groups and those from Myanmar. The ULFA, Nationalist Socialist Council of Nagaland-Khaplang (NSCN-K), PLA and People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (PREPAK) have bases in Myanmar.⁸² The KIA reportedly has linkages with ULFA. NSCN too has an affiliation with the Nagas from Sagaing division, Myanmar. The coasts of Myanmar and Bangladesh have been used as transit points for shipment of smuggled goods.⁸³ The nexus between the NSCN and Karen National Union in smuggling small arms from Southeast Asia and Yunnan Province of China has been reported, and the list continues.⁸⁴ The terror attack on Mahabodhi Temple in Bodhi Gaya on July 7, 2013 is believed to have a linkage to the violence against the Rohingyas in Myanmar.

Conclusion

After several decades of bilateralism and irregular engagements between India and Southeast Asian countries, the region is now ready to accept India as a benign security partner as India has been successfully proved its intention of not being a hegemonic power.⁸⁵ Therefore, it is expected that India would work towards creating a balanced role in the region, and before that will identify and define its own strengths and weaknesses, or explore its potential. In the case of Myanmar, as seen in the previous paragraphs, there are at least three options for India's enhanced security partnership with the former. First, India's own experience of handling domestic insurgency is one aspect where it can help Myanmar by providing training. Second, India can offer help to MDS's advancement. Third, safeguarding the borders is another crisis to be handled together. During the ninth Foreign Office Consultation in Yangon in 2008, both countries called for 'greater vigilance' to secure the border. The recent improvements in terms of regular bilateral meetings at the border level indicate that both India and Myanmar are aware of the security issues and need enhanced cooperation between them. However, the complexity remains on whether India should involve itself in the domestic concerns of Myanmar the way China participated and tried to manage a negotiation between the KIA and Government of Myanmar in early 2013.⁸⁶ Finally, to conclude, it can be said that Myanmar's independent foreign policy choices, its compliance to diminish its dependence on China and India's

desire to play a major role in the region should be enough to facilitate India's elevation as a benign security provider in Myanmar.

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5

Afghanistan Post-2014: Can India Emerge as a Key ‘Security Collaborator’?

Rajeev Agarwal

Introduction

One of the most significant landmarks in the evolving security paradigm of South Asia is Afghanistan’s transition. With the U.S. led international combat mission now withdrawn, Afghanistan looks forward towards a new future where it will be able to ensure its own security amidst promises of good governance and economic reconstruction. The challenge however is enormous, particularly in the security sphere. The Taliban has demonstrated time and again that it is still a formidable force and remains militarily a potent threat.

India is closely watching and monitoring Afghanistan’s transition. The return of a belligerent Taliban, with the threat of spill over into India (especially in Jammu & Kashmir) could be disastrous for India which is riding on a wave of four consecutive years (2011-14) of reduced militancy in the Kashmir valley. The threat to Indian security has been highlighted time and again through demonstrated acts of violence against Indian assets in Afghanistan. The two attacks on Indians in May 2014¹ as well as the open pronouncement by Al-Qaeda through a video blog released on June 15, 2014² calling to carry forward *jihad* in Kashmir, is a stark reminder of real threats faced by India through Afghanistan. Also, the threat of violent religious extremism unleashed by the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) since June 2014 has presented a new and grave challenge not only for West Asia but South Asia as well. Reports and intelligence inputs on the Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP) leaders pledging support to the ISIS,³ which has also called for establishing a caliphate in Afghanistan and Pakistan,⁴ and inputs on collaboration between the Al-Qaeda and the ISIS to launch attacks against India,⁵ too pose a live and eminent threat to Indian security interests.

Amidst all of this, the security of Afghanistan post-2014 is absolutely critical not only for Afghanistan's future but also for the fight against terrorism in the region. Towards this, the respective capabilities of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) and the Taliban are perhaps the two most critical factors effecting Afghanistan's future security concerns. While there is an all round acknowledgement that the ANSF is developing well, critical gaps and deficiencies still remain in their capacities and operational capabilities. On the other hand, Taliban has shown no signs of being subjugated or marginalised. In fact, trends suggest that it is focussed on regaining influence in territories lost in the past few years, especially in the southern provinces of Helmand and Kandahar. Also, its ability to conduct strikes in Kabul and elsewhere remains potent.

Taliban has continued to attack at will throughout 2014. Its leader Mullah Omar, claiming success in his message celebrating the end of holy month of Ramadan on July 28, 2014, stated: "*the military situation is in favour of [the] mujahedeen because the blanket of invasion has rolled back from vast areas. The mujahedeen are now more well-organised, active and unified in contrast with the past and vital centres of the enemy have come under successful attacks in cities.*"⁶ There is thus, a sense that with the departure of western combat forces, the security of Afghanistan could take a hit, a situation which would not only be detrimental to Afghanistan but the entire region including India.

In the given backdrop, this paper attempts to answer the following questions:

- (a) What are India's interests, concerns and vulnerabilities in Afghanistan, especially in a post-2014 scenario?
- (b) What is the likely impact of drawdown of western forces post-2014 on the security situation in Afghanistan? How is it likely to affect Indian interests in Afghanistan?
- (c) Is the current security engagement between Afghanistan and India adequate to address mutual security concerns?
- (d) What role can India play in Afghanistan's security post-2014?

PART: I: INDIAN INTERESTS AND CONCERNS AS REGARDS SECURITY IN AFGHANISTAN POST-2014

Afghanistan is a key country for India in its neighbourhood. India and Afghanistan have a shared history and strong cultural and trade linkages. Traditionally it has been the route through which raiders entered into India until the arrival of the Mughals in the 16th century. In the 19th and 20th century, it was the buffer between the British and Russian empires. Before independence and partition in 1947, British India and Afghanistan shared common borders too. Post-independence as well India and Afghanistan continued to have close

relations both at the governmental level as well as in terms of people-to-people contact. In fact, in most surveys, India is considered the country that can be trusted most by the Afghan nation. Post 9/11, the U.S. military campaign in Afghanistan and India's engagement in reconstruction and development activities in Afghanistan has contributed even further to reinforce an overall positive image of India among the Afghan people. According to an opinion poll conducted in 2010, India was one of the foreign countries of which the Afghans had the most favourable perception.⁷ The challenge is, however, to convert this goodwill into concrete engagement which would assist in Afghanistan's security as well as in securing Indian interests in Afghanistan without disturbing the fragile balance in the region. Vishal Chandra, a noted Indian analyst on Afghanistan, in his latest book has aptly stated:

“India has emerged as a major ‘development partner’ of the Afghan people since the overthrow of the Taliban regime in November 2001....However, when it comes to securing its core interests in an increasingly adversarial security environment in Afghanistan, India is often found lacking in terms of having necessary leverages to sustain and broaden its engagement beyond a point.”⁸

Security Threats

Post-independence and especially in the past two decades, it is the security issues that have been India's concerns as regards to Afghanistan. These concerns have manifested in Pakistan-based and trained Afghan militant groups attacking Indian interests both in India as well as Afghanistan. The security of its assets and personnel in Afghanistan has also been of serious concern for India.

In modern times, the threat of security emanating from the Afghan soil dates back to 1988-89 when the Soviet occupation in Afghanistan was winding down and the militancy in Kashmir was taking shape. With the Soviet withdrawal, the Afghan *mujahideen* were no longer required in Afghanistan. While the U.S. abandoned them, Pakistan found it opportune to use them in fuelling instability in Kashmir. Throughout the early and mid-1990s, Afghanistan-born militants were prominently present in the fight in J&K against the Indian security forces. Estimates suggest that 22 per cent of terrorists operating in J&K during the Taliban regime were either Afghans or Afghan-trained.⁹

While terrorists of Afghan-origin were a point of focus in the Indian security establishment, the Indian public in general awoke to the threat from Afghanistan only when Indian Airlines Flight IC 814 en route from Kathmandu to Delhi was hijacked on December 24, 1999 by Harkat-ul-Mujahideen, a Pakistan-based terrorist group.

Alive to the threat from the Taliban, India supported the United Front (also

known as the Northern Alliance) led by Commander Ahmed Shah Massoud in its fight against the Taliban. It was reported that Indian defence advisors, including air force helicopter technicians, provided tactical advice in operations against the Taliban; and, about 25 Indian Army doctors and male nurses treated Northern Alliance troops at a 20-bed hospital in Farkhor, close to the Afghan-Tajik border.¹⁰ Despite the assassination of Massoud on September 09, 2001, two days before the 9/11 attacks, India maintained close contacts with the Northern Alliance.

Concerns in Afghanistan

On more than one occasion, Indians have been attacked and targeted in Afghanistan, most of them at the behest of Pakistan. Prominent among them was the attack on the Indian Embassy in Kabul in July 2008¹¹ in which 41 people were killed. Among the killed were the Indian defence attaché and political counsellor. Investigations pointed towards Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) for orchestrating the attacks in conjunction with the Lashkar-e-Taiba and the Haqqani network. In October 2009, a car packed with explosives blew up besides the Indian Embassy killing 17 people. The Haqqani network was blamed for the attack.¹² In February 2010, six Indian construction workers and doctors working at Indian Medical Missions were killed in attacks on two Kabul guesthouses.¹³ Saeed Ansari, spokesman for Afghanistan's National Directorate of Security (NDS), stated, "The militants who attacked the Indian guesthouse were speaking Urdu, Pakistan's official language. We are very close to the exact proof and evidence that the attack on the Indian guesthouse ... was carried out by Lashkar-e-Taiba network, which are dependent on the Pakistan military."¹⁴

There have been a number of threats and planned attacks on Indian assets in Afghanistan thereafter. In 2014 too, on May 23, just days before the swearing-in of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, gunmen armed with machine guns and RPGs attacked the Indian Consulate in the Western Herat Province.¹⁵ Voicing concerns over security threat to India from the Taliban and other terrorists groups in Afghanistan, an analyst is aptly quoted:

"The Taliban and the Haqqani Network are organisations that if they come to power are likely to go back to their old ways and would in all probability provide moral, material and logistical support to the terror groups operating from bases inside Afghanistan and Pakistan. Of late the situation in Jammu and Kashmir has been stabilised and India would not be comfortable with a slide backwards."¹⁶

The Pakistan Factor

While, on one hand, the security of Indian mission and assets in Afghanistan

are endangered, on the other, the threat of Taliban cadres and Afghan fighters being redirected towards India especially in J&K remains potent. Both the concerns have one factor in common—Pakistan. For long Pakistan has harboured a fear of Indian interests and designs in Afghanistan. These fears have been reflected in a number of writings and highlights two basic concerns of Pakistan; ‘Fear of Encirclement by India’ and ‘Need for Strategic Depth’.

Pakistan’s goals in Afghanistan have always been India-centric (although there is a strong Afghanistan-Pakistan dynamic too; quite independent of India factor) and focused primarily on undermining India’s influence in Afghanistan while promoting its own. It has sought to maximise Taliban influence in a weak Kabul Government, maintaining “strategic depth” against an Indian invasion, and facilitate training and operations by Pakistani-backed extremist groups. Islamabad perceives India’s efforts to gain influence in Afghanistan as a deliberate strategy of encirclement that is aimed at trapping and ultimately destroying Pakistan between hostile fronts.¹⁷ Thus, close ties between Afghanistan and India are viewed by Pakistan as extremely dangerous to its very survival. As early as the 1950s, Pakistan’s first military ruler, General Ayub Khan, argued for a federation between Afghanistan and Pakistan. He also championed a regional confederation of like-minded territorially-linked Muslim countries, i.e., Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran and Turkey.¹⁸ The belief was that this would help Pakistan stand up to India as it would provide strength in numbers and enormous resources. Pakistani strategists often cited British historian Fraser Tytler, who wrote not long after Pakistan’s independence: “*history suggests that fusion [of Afghanistan and Pakistan] will take place, if not peacefully, then by force.*” Even a Pakistani foreign secretary once remarked, “Pakistan and Afghanistan have a symbiotic relationship.”¹⁹ Ahmed Rashid, author of ‘Descent into Chaos’, too highlights Pakistan’s obsession with India’s interests in Afghanistan when he says, “*Islamabad viewed its Afghan policy through the prism of denying India any advantage in Kabul....Kabul had suddenly become the new Kashmir—the new battleground for the India–Pakistan rivalry.*”²⁰

Pakistan also believes that it deserves the right to be a partner with Afghanistan while India does not deserve the same right. In 1988, then Pakistan President General Zia-ul Haq had said, “*We have earned the right to have [in Kabul] a power which is very friendly to us. We have taken risks as a frontline state, and we will not permit a return to the pre-war situation, marked by large Indian and Soviet influence in Afghan claims on our own territory.*” More than 25 years later, this quote still defines how Pakistan views its relationship with Afghanistan.²¹

With the ISAF withdrawn in 2015, the ANSF still struggling to take over the responsibilities and with the symbiotic relationship between the Afghan Taliban and Pakistan still strong, things could become worse for India in Afghanistan post-2014. The challenge therefore would be to secure and consolidate mutual

(Indian and Afghan) security interests in post-2014 scenario. The completion of the western combat mission makes it even more imperative and urgent for both India and Afghanistan to work together on the security front.

PART-II: DRAWDOWN OF WESTERN FORCES AND ITS IMPACT ON SECURITY SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN

The drawdown of Western forces from Afghanistan is now complete as the combat mission of the ISAF ended on December 31, 2014. President Barack Obama earlier announced on May 27, 2014 that the follow-on mission will have 9,800 U.S. forces, mostly in Kabul and at Bagram Airfield, before winding down to a smaller force (about 1,000) after 2016, engaged mostly in handling military sales to Afghanistan.²²

An important factor thought critical to the post-2014 security was Afghanistan signing a Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA) with the U.S. Although former President Karzai was reluctant to sign the BSA, the newly-elected President Ashraf Ghani as well as the CEO Abdullah Abdullah in the National Unity Government had both indicated clearly in their respective election campaigns and manifestoes of their willingness to sign the BSA. The BSA²³ was therefore promptly signed on September 30, 2014,²⁴ a day after President Ghani was sworn-in as the new president. Afghanistan signed a separate Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) with NATO²⁵ too on the same day which would entail positioning of 3000-4000 troops in a role similar to that of the U.S., thus taking the overall troops level beyond December 31, 2014 to up to about 14,000.

Despite the signing of BSA and SOFA, the drawdown of western forces is likely to significantly impact the security situation in Afghanistan. The ANSF is still developing in terms of its capacities and capabilities, the Taliban is still strong and resilient and frequent security incidents indicate Taliban capability to virtually 'strike at will' in some cases. A brief insight into the current status of the ANSF and the Taliban could therefore be useful to draw reasonable conclusions on the security situation post-2014 in Afghanistan.

ANSF: Not Ready Yet

Although the ANSF has taken over the lead role in providing security as also in operations against the Taliban across the country, most assessments still doubt their ability to provide security in Afghanistan independently once the western troops leave. The U.S. Congressional Research Service Report of October 09, 2014 stated, "Recent events also indicate the difficulties the ANSF faces as they try to keep the Taliban at bay with decreasing international support."²⁶ Another analysis, summing up the state of ANSF, observed that, "Although their recent

performances exceeded expectations, ANSF's readiness to confront autonomously the challenges posed by insurgency and their ability to rely on their own capacity remain dubious.²⁷ Similarly, another report stated that, "the reality on the ground is quite different. Despite official claims of Afghan readiness to take the lead, doubts persist in both Western and Afghan minds about the ANSF's actual capacities."²⁸

Key to assessing the ANSF capabilities are, firstly, its strength in terms of numbers, and second, capability acquired to operate independently and in providing security against the Taliban. There are of course two other important factors; financing the ANSF as well as building up camaraderie and morale.

The Numbers

As of August 2014, the ANA manning was 165,000 personnel (slightly below its 195,000 cap), including 6,000 Afghan Air Force (AAF) personnel.²⁹ The ANA is nearing completion of fielding its programmed 309 Kandaks (battalions). As regards the Afghan National Police (ANP), in March 2014, it was at 152,678, or 96 per cent of its 157,000 authorised strength. The ANP has already completed fielding both units and equipment across its three major pillars—the Afghan Uniformed Police (AUP), the Afghan Border Police (ABP), and the Afghanistan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP). The overall strength is thus at 3,40,632 against a sanctioned strength of 3,52,000.

While the numbers are almost there, major challenges remain mainly in two areas—Sustainment and Logistics. Most ANA brigades are capable of sustaining themselves at the tactical level for a short duration (between 48 and 96 hours) only. The lack of trained technicians and necessary logistics hampers the re-supply to units in the field, adversely affecting the operational capability of the ANSF.³⁰

A high attrition rate, particularly in the ANA, continues to pose a major challenge to its overall development. It seriously affects the recruitment and development efforts of the ANSF as more than the numbers recruited during a period, under-training or trained personnel desert the forces, thus hampering the development of the ANSF both quantitatively as well as qualitatively. The ANA has averaged 2.6 per cent attrition.³¹ The main causes of attrition are assessed to be high operational tempo, sustained risk, soldier care/quality of life, and leave issues. The ANP's average monthly attrition rate too remained high, being 1.6 per cent during the first quarter of 2014, which is well above its acceptable limit of 1.4 per cent. Low literacy levels and 'insider attacks' are some of the other challenges facing the ANSF in its development.

Operational Capabilities of the ANSF

Although the ANSF have mustered up the numbers, its operational capabilities are still evolving. The fact that the ANSF is in lead in almost 99 per cent of

operations and in operational control of most of Afghanistan's territory, is encouraging. A report from the U.S. Department of Defence (DoD) in April 2014³² concluded that 61 of the 85 key headquarters and units of the ANSF were assessed as capable or fully capable. The most significant progress was reported in the Afghan National Army Special Operations Command (ANASOC), with its units leading in 99 per cent operations.³³

The Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) in its report of February 2014³⁴ carried out an audit³⁵ of the ANSF assessment provided by the ISAF. According to the report, the number of ANA units rated as, "independent with advisors" increased from 20 to 93 between January 2012 and July 2013.

A separate and independent assessment of ANSF was also carried out by Centre for Naval Analyses (CNA), Alexandria. Its report of January 24, 2014, assessing the operational capabilities of the ANSF concludes that, "in the likely 2015–2018 security environment, the ANSF will require a total security force of about 373,400 personnel in order to provide basic security for the country and cope with the Taliban insurgency and low-level al Qaeda threat. The ANSF will continue to have significant gaps in capability. International support will be required to address the gaps in mobility, logistics, air support, and intelligence gathering and analysis though at least 2018."³⁶

The U.S. Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA) Annual Threat Assessment too states that operationally, Afghan forces have adapted to the reduction of the ISAF support by making better use of their own capabilities and showing tactical competence in planning and conducting security operations. However, they struggle due to the lack of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) capability, as well as expertise in, and technology for, counter-improvised explosive device (IED) programmes.³⁷

The Taliban in 2014—A Resilient Force

Although the ANA and ANP are evolving and slowly acquiring greater capabilities, there is no evidence to suggest that Taliban are 'down and out'. Most analysts suggest, that the Taliban is regrouping and biding its time waiting for the complete withdrawal of the ISAF.

Taliban commenced 2014 with the attack on a famous Lebanese restaurant in Kabul on January 18 which killed 21 people including 13 foreign nationals.³⁸ Right through February and March, Taliban targeted the ANSF, presidential campaigns, election officials and key civilian and foreign. Taliban even attacked the convoy of Abdullah Abdullah, prominent presidential candidate, on February 18,³⁹ killing three of his body guards in the Surobi District of Kabul. As the presidential election drew nearer, Taliban intensified its activities. A suicide bomber

blew himself up outside a market in Faryab Province on March 18, killing 13 civilians.⁴⁰ Two days later, on March 20, Taliban killed 11 people and wounded 22 in a suicide bomb attack at a police station in Jalalabad city.⁴¹ It followed up with more high profile attacks including at the Serena Hotel in Kabul on March 20,⁴² resulting in the death of eight people including two foreign nationals, and an attack at the Independent Election Commission (IEC) HQ in Kabul on March 29,⁴³ days before the first round of presidential election on April 05, 2014.

Shortly after the first round of election, Taliban announced its 'Spring Offensive' on May 12, naming it "Khaibar" after the Battle of Khaibar⁴⁴ calling for targeting of "the invaders and their spineless backers" and vowing to target coalition military forces and civilians, as well as the Afghan Government, military, intelligence services, and tribal militias.⁴⁵ Commencing it with a strike on May 12 on the office of provincial justice department in Jalalabad,⁴⁶ Taliban carried out several high profile attacks in various parts of the country. Presidential election front-runner Abdullah Abdullah escaped an assassination attempt on June 06 when his motorcade hit a mine in Kabul.⁴⁷

Continuing its momentum, the Taliban launched an assault with 800 to 1,000 fighters on June 19, targeting police and military checkpoints in the Sangin District of the southern Helmand Province,⁴⁸ in an effort to regain their strongholds in the south. An attack on July 15 when a suicide bomber blew up an explosives filled car near a market and a mosque in Urgan District in the Paktika Province, killing at least 89 people, was the deadliest insurgent attack on civilians since 2001.⁴⁹

These attacks in large numbers, especially in Helmand and Kandahar,⁵⁰ clearly indicated their resolve to regain control over their traditional spheres of influence while their capability to attack Kabul frequently is a question mark on the capability of security forces to guard the 'fortress of Afghanistan'. The *International Crisis Group* in its report of May 2014 stated that the overall trend is one of escalating violence and insurgent attacks. Ongoing withdrawals of international soldiers have generally coincided with a deterioration of Kabul's reach in outlying districts. The increasing confidence of the insurgents, as evidenced by their ability to assemble bigger formations for assaults, reduces the chances for meaningful national-level peace talks in 2014-2015.⁵¹

Security Situation

The security post-2014 does not present an optimistic picture. Echoing this, former Afghan Interior Minister Mohammad Umer Daudzai stated on September 17, 2014 that over the past six months 1,523 police officers have been killed in blasts and clashes with insurgents. The attacks have also claimed the lives of 800 ANA soldiers.⁵² The India Policy Group of the German foundation *Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES)* in their policy brief too stated,

“The present security situation in Afghanistan may be described as a stalemate at both the strategic and tactical levels. The ISAF strategy to ‘clear-hold-transfer-exit’ is likely to fall short of achieving its political and military goals. The fledgling Afghan National Army (ANA) and the Afghan National Police (ANP) which are expected to assume full responsibility for security from the ISAF by the end of 2014, are not yet equal to the task.”⁵³

Reports from the field suggest that the Taliban are making early gains in several strategic areas near Kabul while finding success beyond their traditional strongholds in the rural south and are now dominating territory near crucial highways and cities that surround Kabul, in strategic provinces like Kapisa and Nangarhar.⁵⁴ Between March and May 2014, there was an increase in Taliban initiated incidents in the south, south-east and east of Afghanistan accounting for 3,917 of the total 5,864 security incidents recorded during the period. Particularly notable has been the increase in incidents in the east, where several Al-Qaeda affiliates, including Tehrik e-Taliban Pakistan, Lashkar-e-Tayyiba, Lashkar-i-Jhangvi and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan regularly carry out attacks on Afghan security forces in parallel to the efforts of the Taliban and armed wings of the Hezb-e Islami.⁵⁵ The killing of the U.S. General Harold Greene by an Afghan soldier at a British-run military academy near Kabul on August 05,⁵⁶ and killing of six Afghan policemen by their colleague at an outpost in Trinkot city of the Urozgan Province on August 06,⁵⁷ highlight the fragility of security situation not only within Afghanistan but also the menace of ‘insider attacks’ adversely affecting the confidence and growth of the ANSF.

As far as India is concerned, Indian assets and projects in Afghanistan have long been under threat. The attack on the Indian Embassy in July 2008 or the Indian Medical Mission in Kabul in February 2010 are stark reminders of the nature and scale of threat India faces. Also, well established past links between Pakistan’s ISI, LeT and the Afghan Taliban and their role in mounting attacks against Indian assets in Afghanistan could pose grave threat in the future. In such a situation, there is a need to take a deliberate relook at the ongoing security cooperation between India and Afghanistan and work out future options to ensure that Indian security interests are well protected.

PART III: INDIA-AFGHANISTAN SECURITY COOPERATION AND OPTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

India was the first country with which Afghanistan signed the Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) in October 2011. This is the first such agreement that post-Taliban Afghanistan formally entered into with any country to help or augment its security as the western troops withdraw and was designed to address

the challenges of transition. 'Mutual understanding and long-term trust' forms the backdrop of the SPA and highlights India's pledge to assist, as mutually determined, in the training, equipping and capacity building programmes for Afghan National Security Forces.⁵⁸ Assuring Afghanistan, former Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh stated, "*India will stand by the people of Afghanistan as they prepare to assume the responsibility for their governance and security after the withdrawal of international forces in 2014,*" while President Karzai, in an effort to allay fears in Pakistan, said, "*Pakistan is our twin brother, India is a great friend. The agreement we signed with our friend will not affect our brother.*"⁵⁹

India-Afghanistan Security Cooperation

India has so far been steady in its security assistance and cooperation with Afghanistan. Since the signing of the SPA, India has increased training of ANA officers as well as small contingents in India. Former President Karzai had, however, urged the Indian Government to do more in terms of military assistance. In his visits in May 2013 as well as December 2013, he asked India to provide 'lethal' military equipment in addition to training and small arms. His 'wish list' included tanks, artillery, mortars, a transport aircraft and medium-lift helicopters. Some reports suggested that Kabul had placed request for 150 battle tanks, 120 (105 mm) field guns, a large number of 82 mm mortars, one medium lift transport aircraft (AN-32), two squadrons of medium lift (24) and attack helicopters (24), and a large number of trucks.⁶⁰ In addition, Afghanistan wanted India to help train its troops and air force personnel at Indian defence establishments. During a media interaction after his visit in May 2013, President Karzai suggested that India should help set up a "Sandhurst-type" of military academy in Afghanistan and help equip the army to ensure the security of the country.⁶¹

Although India declined to provide 'lethal military aid', the two governments announced they would deepen their defence ties, with several initiatives designed to increase the capabilities of the ANSF as NATO combat forces left the country. India thereafter raised the number of Afghan military officers and personnel it trains each year to around 1,000. It included 60 Afghan Special Forces personnel who would receive training at military facilities in the Rajasthan desert. According to Afghanistan's ambassador to India, about 350 Afghan Army officers now receive annual training in India, with a total of 1,400 trained since 2003. An Indian defence spokesman said, that the "focus of the training is on conduct of counter insurgency and counter terrorism operations, with special emphasis on operations in built-up areas and rural areas in a realistic environment."⁶² India, also agreed to give two transport helicopters to Afghanistan to boost logistical support, a pledge which was again confirmed by India's then Foreign Minister Salman

Khurshid during a visit to Kandahar in February 2014 to inaugurate the agricultural university built with Indian aid.⁶³

As the transition and the drawdown of western forces progresses in Afghanistan, there is a fear that the ANSF would require 'some lethal military equipment' for its basic operational needs. Also, accepting the fact that India will not provide any lethal military equipment, India has been in consultation with countries in the region to overcome this hurdle. Moving in this direction, India and Russia reached a deal in February 2014 wherein India will pay Russia to supply arms and equipment to the Afghan military. Under the deal, small arms such as light artillery and mortars will be sourced from Russia and moved to Afghanistan. But it could eventually involve the transfer of heavy artillery, tanks and even combat helicopters that the Afghans have been asking India for since 2013.⁶⁴ An Indian foreign ministry official justified the deal stating, "We can't commit troops on the ground, we can't give them the military equipment that they have been asking us for, for all sorts of reasons including the lack of surplus stocks. Involving a third party is the next best option."⁶⁵

For Afghanistan, India's deal with Russia is a welcome step as Kabul is running out of options for sourcing the much-needed military equipment. The country has been seeking more lethal and modern equipment to help fight off the Taliban. Most of the military hardware brought to the country by the ISAF is being repatriated along with the troops. Pakistan is already laying claim to some of the hardware that will be left behind. With many decisions still in the balance, Afghanistan has to look for other alternatives. According to India's former Director-General of Military Intelligence General Ravi K. Sawhney, "The equipment profile of the Afghan army is almost zero. But the U.S. is withholding equipment, even though Afghanistan means to use it only for defense."⁶⁶ To meet these added responsibilities and future challenges, Afghanistan has turned to India and Russia for assistance. The provision of military equipment and training may not suffice as Afghanistan looks ahead towards security challenges post-2014. India too has to step up its security engagement as it is likely to be as adversely hit as Afghanistan in a failing security situation. Towards this, there is a need to look at better, fresh and more robust options to boost security engagement between India and Afghanistan.

Options to Boost Security Cooperation

Unlike reconstruction and economic aid, India has so far not been a major player in the ongoing security transition and transformation of Afghan conflict, though its contribution towards the training of the ANSF has increased in the past few years. But India has never been a major contributor in Afghanistan's security largely due to the fact that the security issues have been solely driven by the

U.S.-led western coalition. However, as discussed in earlier sections, any adverse situation in Afghanistan, especially in the context of security would greatly impact India. There is thus a need to constantly monitor developments in Afghanistan, and also re-evaluate India's current levels of cooperation with Afghanistan, and come up with an engagement which is more robust, better integrated and gives India more control over the security of its assets in Afghanistan as well as safeguards against spill-over effects in India, especially J&K.

Obstacles to India's Role in Afghanistan's Security

In this regard, key questions are, What is it that India can do to secure its national security interests in Afghanistan? How can India help Afghanistan secure its security interests? Can India emerge as a net security provider for Afghanistan?

Before attempting to answer some of above crucial questions, it might be prudent to take a look at some obstacles to a greater Indian role in Afghanistan, especially in the field of security. One of the most prominent obstacles is the lack of direct connectivity through land and sea. With this in mind, India developed the crucial 219-km long Delaram-Zaranj Road linking Afghanistan's national highway to the Iranian border. India's investment in the Chahbahar Port of Iran and in developing rail and road link up to the Afghan border from the port are a part of its strategy to access Afghanistan more easily than in the past.

The second important obstacle is Pakistan itself. As discussed at length in previous sections, Pakistan's mistrust of India and insecurities about India's engagement in Afghanistan are a major impediment. In fact, a recent report from the Pentagon was scathing in its criticism of Pakistan's approach stating, that "Afghan and India focused militants continue to operate from Pakistan territory to the detriment of Afghan and regional stability. Pakistan uses these proxy forces to hedge against the loss of influence in Afghanistan and to counter India's superior military."⁶⁷

China and its ambiguous stand on Afghanistan's security is another obstacle to greater Indian involvement. While China is clear that no strain of terrorism emanating from Afghanistan should cross over into China, it is still not ready for a more robust role directly in Afghanistan's security. In fact, many a times it is felt that China sees Afghanistan through the prism of its relations with Pakistan and therefore would not support a greater Indian role. Vishal Chandra, in his latest book, stated that, "There has also been a strong Pakistani influence on its Afghan policy, especially since the late 1990s. In fact, it could be debatable whether China at all has had an independent approach or policy towards Afghanistan particularly since the establishment of the Pakistan-backed Taliban regime in Kabul."⁶⁸

The U.S. and its dependence on Pakistan too has been a dampener in India's

greater involvement in Afghanistan's security. While there have been occasions when the U.S. military officials have urged India for a more direct role in Afghanistan (especially after the attack on Indian Medical Mission in February 2010 in Kabul), most of the times, the U.S. has paid heed to Pakistan's concerns and quietly advised India against any direct military involvement.

Prospects of Indo-Afghan Security Cooperation: Four Levels

India and Afghanistan's security cooperation needs to be worked out at four levels, at the level of Afghanistan, at the level of India, at the regional level and at the bilateral level with Pakistan. While working on each of them, India will have to be mindful of the unfolding scenarios in Afghanistan which could range from a 'Highly Destabilised Afghanistan' to 'Fragile but Relatively Stable Afghanistan', and the worst of all, 'A Balkanised Afghanistan.'⁶⁹

India has virtually no security footprint in Afghanistan except for the ITBP personnel guarding the Indian Embassy in Kabul. As was witnessed during attacks on the Indian Embassy in July 2008, October 2009 and February 2010, there is a need for India to secure its own assets against any Taliban or extremist attack. The withdrawal of western forces makes it even more imperative now that the incidental security would not be present. Afghanistan too has been prodding India to do more in the security sphere for long. As an Afghan diplomat stressed, "We have asked India to play a more active role, [to change] from a donating friend to a strategic friend [but the Indians] are taking their time."⁷⁰ In the present circumstances, sending Indian troops even to guard the embassy in Kabul may not be considered and could invite concerns from all stakeholders in Afghanistan, especially Pakistan. However, in case of another major attack on its diplomatic mission or reconstruction projects, India might have to seriously consider sending at least a small paramilitary unit or Rashtriya Rifles purely in defensive role to secure its assets. Of course, this would require coordination with the Afghanistan Government, which should be more than willing to cooperate.

Intelligence cooperation is another very essential field of enhancing engagement. Presently, India has to rely on the ISAF or Afghanistan on sharing intelligence inputs. With the ISAF now withdrawn and ANSF capabilities itself developing, this could be another sphere of intensifying cooperation. India could offer expertise in conventional intelligence tools, cyber intelligence as well as satellite coverage through Indian satellites. Intelligence cooperation could provide the required support to the ANSF to deal with the Taliban and its various allies operating from Pakistan.

President Karzai has already expressed desire for India to develop a 'Sandhurst' type military academy in Afghanistan. While such an academy is already being established in Kabul by the NATO and an additional requirement may be

considered by India over time, India could consider providing instructors in the academy in Afghanistan or even consider establishing a comprehensive 'Training Team' akin to Indian Military Training Team or IMTRAT in Bhutan.

The next step for security cooperation is India itself. Here, India has already stepped up the training of the ANSF contingents. India could increase the numbers even further as feasible. The important issue however, is not of numbers but professional competence and regular upgradation in training. For this, India could maintain a database of all ANSF officers or officer cadets trained in India and periodically review their performance in ANA. Of course, it would require ANSF HQ to agree, but that again would not be a hurdle. Also important is to keep inviting such officers and some soldiers on periodic 're-unions' to keep the Indian contribution alive in them. In a battle of 'hearts and minds' and perception, which is as good a tool towards national security as physical battle, these steps could serve Indian security interests well. 'Reunions' and 'Alumni Associations' are a well-accepted norm in most developed foreign armies and therefore would not be something new for India too.

India has so far refused to provide lethal military equipment to the ANSF. While a relook at this position could be taken in the future, there are several other ways India can help the ANSF to become self-reliant. India could help with equipment like night vision devices, electronic warfare sets to monitor terrorist transmission, mine protected vehicles, explosive detection equipment, IED jamming devices, bullet proof jackets and even light helicopters for casualty evacuation. Also, India could conduct periodic military exercises at the bilateral or multilateral level involving the ANSF within India.

India and its efforts towards ensuring security in Afghanistan and in the region would require strong regional support too. Regional forums like the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) or the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) could be explored as most regional countries are members or observers in them. Between the two, SCO could prove more effective due to the presence of Russia and China apart from other Central Asian countries. The fact that the SCO has a Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS)⁷¹ which conducts periodic training and exercises could be helpful in the ANSF's fight against the Taliban. Also, unlike SAARC where India and Pakistan are the two major players and tend to weigh every issue against bilateral issues, SCO with Russia and China as major nations can effectively downplay Pakistan's influence in the regional forum. Given Russia's concerns over the affiliation of various terrorist groups operating in Chechnya and Dagestan with the Taliban, as also Russia's refusal to get directly involved in Afghanistan's security, SCO could be a viable option. Russia and India already have an agreement on the supply of military equipment to Afghanistan. This arrangement could be scaled up to include cooperation through SCO.

China too is concerned about increasing unrest in its western Xinjiang region and the threat from armed groups operating with support from the Taliban as most of the Uighur militants are operating from within Pakistan and are more closely linked to Pakistani Islamist groups. In 2014 alone there were three major terrorist strikes within China, in March when a knife-wielding group of ten people attacked passengers at the railway station in Kunming, the capital of China's south-western Yunnan Province, killing 28;⁷² thereafter, in May, killing 31 people in Xinjiang's capital Urumqi;⁷³ and, in July, when masked militants attacked civilians, police and officials in Shache county in Xinjiang's far south, leading to almost 100 deaths including 59 "terrorists."⁷⁴ China appointing Sun Yuxi, a Chinese diplomat, as its special envoy to Afghanistan in July 2014⁷⁵ too indicates China's growing interests in Afghanistan.

The Central Asian Republics (CARs) are equally concerned of the possible spill over of the Taliban threat.⁷⁶ Whether it is the threat from IMU or other groups, the CARs, from their experience of past attacks know that the threat is real.⁷⁷ India with its strong ties with CARs could explore collaborative security options with them. In this context, one of the key pillars of India's 'Connect Central Asia' Policy⁷⁸ is regional security. In addition, Tajikistan could form an important link in India's efforts towards security cooperation in Afghanistan. India already hosts an Indian Air force training team there which could be used for not only training Afghan Air Force but also as emergency response to any security situation in Afghanistan. Its proximity to Afghanistan makes it an ideal asset for India's indirect military overview over Afghanistan's security. Also, in conjunction with Tajikistan and Afghanistan, India could set up a training team to train both Afghan and Tajik soldiers.

Iran is the next important component of India's regional engagement towards Afghanistan's security. Iran and Afghanistan not only share borders but a long history, shared cultures and ethnicities. Iran has stakes in Afghanistan's security and could be an important partner to India and the region in this effort.⁷⁹ In fact, Iran and India could well emerge as a 'Plan B'⁸⁰ in case Afghanistan-U.S. security cooperation flounders post-2014.

India is therefore well placed to enhance cooperation with regard to Afghanistan's security bilaterally as well as through regional forums like SCO with each of the member countries. In case of a serious security situation, upon Afghanistan's request and approval of the UN Security Council, the possibility of deploying a SCO peace keeping force under the UN flag could be explored, in which India too could participate. As has been experienced in Africa,⁸¹ regional organisations could be better suited and utilised to bring peace in a disturbed country and the region.

The last important piece of the puzzle is Pakistan. As discussed earlier, Pakistan

harbours major reservations on India's role in Afghanistan. There is, however, a realisation of late at least in some circles in Pakistan that their fears about India have done them more harm than good. . India needs to encourage this perception through social media and Track II dialogues. As a confidence building measure, India could offer additional concessions and transit fee to Pakistan for Afghan goods coming to India under Afghanistan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement (APTTA) and further additional revenue in case it permits Indian goods too to get across to Afghanistan. Joint military training for the ANSF in Afghanistan could be another confidence building measure.⁸² In case Pakistan still refuses to move forward on Afghanistan, India has to understand that it cannot remain hostage to Pakistani concerns when it comes to its own national security concerns.

Conclusion

Afghanistan post-2014 poses a major security threat. Trends clearly indicate that the ANSF is not yet ready to take on the mantle of securing Afghanistan on its own. The western forces after withdrawal are likely to be present in smaller numbers. On the other hand Taliban is still resilient and in fact in process of regaining lost ground in its traditional strongholds in Helmand and Kandahar. The spring offensive of 2014, "Khaibar" as well as major attacks on international forces including killing of U.S. General Harold Greene in an insider attack in August are a stark reminder of the potential and reach of the Taliban.

For India, Afghanistan is a major security concern. As in the past, in 2014 too, Indians have been targeted in Afghanistan. A noted analyst has stated "*Of all the regional actors involved in Afghanistan, India possesses what is likely the greatest stake in the status quo, the greatest fear of deteriorating security after 2014.*"⁸³ The call by Al-Qaeda to carry forward global jihad into Kashmir is a worrying sign too. India thus has to remain vigilant to developments in Afghanistan. It has to undertake a multi-pronged approach to address these concerns. India-Afghanistan security cooperation needs to be enhanced. While putting boots on the ground or providing lethal military equipment may be off the table for the present, India can explore many other options towards fulfilling security needs of Afghanistan. Enhanced training, military exercises, intelligence cooperation including satellite data sharing, cooperation with regional countries including possible involvement of SCO in Afghanistan could be a viable options. Military cooperation with Tajikistan and enhanced security cooperation with Iran could be the trump cards in securing Indian security interests.

While it would be too much to expect for India to emerge as the 'net security provider'⁸⁴ for Afghanistan in the near future, the role of a 'security collaborator' is a more realistic role that India can seek for itself in Afghanistan post-2014. As stated by India's Foreign Minister Salman Khurshid in January 2014 at a meeting

of the International Contact Group on Afghanistan held in New Delhi, “*people may have many strategies and we will need to work on strategies but one strategy that we reject here in India is an exit strategy from Afghanistan.*”⁸⁵ Clearly, India has no option but to remain interested, invested and engaged as Afghanistan seeks to rebuild itself.

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6

Mutual Assured Security: India-Nepal Security Cooperation to Mitigate Common Threats

Nihar R Nayak

There has been a major shift in India's foreign policy with the change of government in New Delhi in 2014. India's neighbourhood is now the prime focus in its foreign policy dispensation. The Modi Government took India's neighbourhood policy to a higher level by inviting all SAARC leaders to the prime minister's oath taking ceremony, thereby clearly sending a message that neighbours are more important than others. Modi's foreign visits to the two Himalayan countries within six-months in office indicated a shift in India's priority, mainly from Pakistan. His acknowledgement of 'B4B' (Bharat for Bhutan) reflected that India is equally dependent on its smaller neighbours as far as security and unhindered search for energy and development are concerned. This is a stark departure from earlier thinking in India's neighbourhood policy debate that the Himalayan countries-Nepal and Bhutan-are more dependent on India than others.

This departure can be attributed to India's quest for development and energy needs. India now considers its smaller neighbours as partners in its economic growth and its peaceful rise to the level of a super power. Moreover, India's strategic thinking of Himalayas as natural barrier has been transgressed, once again after 1950, with rapid infrastructure development on the Himalayan region, the construction of trans-Himalayan railways by China close to India's northern security framework and increased Chinese economic, cultural and political engagements with Nepal. Most importantly, China's open declaration of use of railway lines for strategic purpose further increased the importance of Nepal and Bhutan. China has declared that its Lasha-Xigazê rail would be connected to the border areas of Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan. From the Chinese point of view, this

railway line would facilitate tourism, transportation of minerals to mainland and transportation of military equipment to the border regions. As a result, the cis-Himalayan region seen as the first line of India's defence could lose its relevance.¹

In this context, this paper examines the nature of relationship between India and the Himalayan countries—Nepal and Bhutan—in the changing geopolitical environment. The primacy of the India-Nepal security cooperation evolved due to geopolitical set up in 1950s by identifying China as a common enemy. Over the period of time, the relationship between China-India and China-Nepal has changed. Until 1950-1962 India was under the impression that China might walk through Nepal. However, the security perception changed after 1962 and further after 1971. There has been rapprochement in India-China relations since 1990s. There are also changes in political landscape in the Himalayan region. New non-traditional threats are emerged as major challenges to both India and Nepal. Therefore, what should be the level of security cooperation with Nepal? Due to space constrains and differences in nature of relations, this paper exclusively discusses on India-Nepal security cooperation.

The paper argues that India's northern border would be secured only by an economically and militarily strong Nepal. Any confident, politically stable and independent country would never allow its territory to be used by external forces. In that scenario, instead of only northern Nepal and Bhutan border, the entire region will be used as first line of defence of India. However, despite Nepal being a sovereign and independent country, India cannot afford to let Nepal alone manage its security issues given its limited capability, resources, open border and geo-physical location.² Both historical and contemporary evidences suggest that aggressive nations have undermined the sovereignty, territorial integrity and existing UN conflict prevention resolutions during war situations. In fact, UN has remained a mute spectator of this gross violation and failed to protect the sovereignty of neutral countries. In this context, who would take guarantee that the same might not happen with Nepal in case of any conflict between China and India in future. India cannot afford to take risk given its experience in 1962 and Chinese aggressive campaigning in the past. The Nepalese Army (NA) doctrine assumes that, "nuclear showdown between neighbouring countries as a potential security threat."³ Therefore, India should support the military and economic capacity building of the Himalayan countries along with strong security sector—military, intelligence and police level—cooperation with Nepal.

Geo-Politics in 1950's

The Geo-political dynamics in the sub-central Himalayan region changed with the withdrawal of British Empire from the subcontinent in 1947 and Communist victory in China. The British withdrawal resulted in the collapse of its agreements

(Himalayan Frontier Policy) with smaller Himalayan countries, including Nepal. The smaller countries in the region felt insecure in absence of a protector against China. The foreign policy of the then newly independent India was unclear to them. The insecurity doubled in October 1949 when Communists assumed power under Mao in China. As late as 1939, Mao Tse-tung observed that, "different imperialistic powers have swallowed the parts of China...if Tibet was the palm, Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim, Ladakh, and NEFA were its five fingers."⁴ This Chinese strategy thinking on Himalayas unnerved India too. From India's point of view, although Himalaya was considered a natural frontier against any adventurism from Chinese side, it wanted to draw a 'second line of frontier' by entering into Peace and Friendship Treaties with Bhutan, Sikkim and Nepal along the British line after the Communists assumed power in China. India wanted these Himalayan countries including Tibet to be sovereign and independent countries as a 'principal barrier' on its northern frontier, which would have been difficult for China to take claim. Therefore, India advised these countries, especially Nepal, to bring revolutionary changes in its political system. India urged Nepal to become a member of the UN in the backdrop of changed geopolitical reality and due to the resistance against the then Rana regime within the country.

Articulating India's concerns and interests in Nepal, Prime Minister Nehru on March 17, 1950 in Parliament emphasised two issues. As a friendly neighbour he advised Nepal Government to follow the line of freedom and bring changes in the existing political system. He again stated that any aggression or external threat to Nepal will affect safety of India. In this regard India does not need any military alliance with Nepal or other countries. Rather India needs to adopt a policy to protect both Nepal and its own security interests.⁵ Therefore, the then militarily-weak India attempted to create a chain of informal allies against China. This worked as a deterrent against China. In return, India assured the smaller neighbours their territorial integrity, sovereignty and economic support.⁶

Chinese invasion of Tibet in October 1950 altered India's strategic calculations. The status of its second line of defence turned into first line. The mid and southern Himalayan countries became buffer between China and India; therefore, India redefined its policy towards Nepal. Articulating India's foreign policy towards Nepal, Nehru on December 6, 1950 stated that in all practical purposes, Nepal was not very independent internally during British regime and its foreign relations were strictly limited. However, independent India went one step ahead and acknowledged Nepal as an independent country both internally and externally. Nehru was worried about the political system in Nepal as he felt that the communists might take undue advantage of the unpopularity of monarchy and Nepal might come under Chinese influence. That is why he wanted Nepal

to realise its problems and correct those accordingly; although he did not want to interfere directly to bring changes in Nepal's polity which he pointed out around 1947. While the Rana regime did not pay much heed to Nehru's suggestions, India was forced to interfere in the internal affairs of Nepal after the Chinese invasion of Tibet in October 1950. Nehru always felt that given the geographical reality of India, any foreign presence in the Himalayan region was unsafe for India. Until 1950, Himalaya was the "principal barrier" to India against external aggression. After the Chinese invasion on Tibet, that barrier had weakened. Since India's friendly advice was not realised by the then Rana regime, India had to adopt a middle path of not uprooting the old system completely but bringing peace and democracy in Nepal. Nehru was concerned about developments in Tibet, which he reflected as, "regardless of our feelings about Nepal, we were interested in our own country's security, in our own country's borders."⁷ Since time immemorial, Himalayas stood as a barrier to cross over to south. That barrier might not be as strong as it was earlier. Moreover, the Himalayas start from the north of Nepal. "Therefore, much as we appreciate the independence of Nepal, we cannot risk our own security by anything going wrong in Nepal which permits either that barrier to be crossed or otherwise weakens our frontier".⁸

Although India recognised Nepal as an independent country, it felt that later it might not remain a strong country against the communist China due to its internal political situation and race for power between Rana and Shah families. India therefore considered that despite showing its martial power and bravery against China, Tibet and British Empire, Nepal secured its independence by entering into various peace and friendship treaties with its neighbours. It also lost battles against both China and British Empire and conceded some of its territories. In absence of British empire, Nepal tried to fill up the power vacuum by establishing diplomatic relations with the U.S., which was impractical as it was impossible for the U.S. to protect Nepal in case of any invasion from China. Since the British handed over the legacy to a democratic and republic India, Nehru felt that the mantel fell on India to protect the territorial integrity of the smaller Himalayan countries, who could not withstand China's aggressive territorial interests. Therefore, Nehru while acknowledging the independence of Nepal linked India's external security with Nepal. He also indirectly advised Nepal to update its political system with changing geo-political dynamics.

1950 Treaty: Context and Content

India entered into Peace and Friendship agreements with the Himalayan countries—Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan. Although the content of the treaty was different for each of the country given their relationship with British India, the context of the treaty was very much similar to all. Historically, all these three

Himalayan countries lost war against British India.⁹ The issue was settled by entering into agreements and conceding some territories to British India.¹⁰ While in case of Sikkim and Bhutan, the British administration controlled both internal and external policies, it allowed Nepal to formulate its internal and external policy independently. India might have followed dual policy given the territorial size of the country, geographical location, historical linkages and capability to defend against foreign aggression. Sikkim and Bhutan were comparatively smaller than Nepal. In fact, the 1923 treaty acknowledged Nepal as an independent country, but it remained silent about the sovereignty of Nepal. In the post independent period, while India tried to strengthen its relations with Nepal through the 1950 Treaty of Peace and Friendship, they both acknowledged each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity. During the agreement, both the countries also exchanged a letter, which remained secret till 1959 by a mutual understanding that "certain matters of details to be regulated".¹¹ The letter focused on the operational aspect of the Treaty.

Although the 1950 Treaty covered a wide range of issues, including sharing of information before any kind of conflict with other countries, it was not a military agreement or any effort to form alliances. However, the content in the exchange of letters (EL) was somehow different. According to clause 1 of the EL, "Neither government shall tolerate any threat to the security of the other by a foreign aggressor. To deal with any such threat, the two governments shall consult with each other and advise affective counter-measures." It talked about consulting each other in case of any external threat. But the treaty was silent about joint military actions against the external threats. Moreover, according to the international practice, the UN had to be informed in case of any treaties and agreements signed between two sovereign nations. Unfortunately, EL was not shared with the UN. It was made public after nine years of the agreement. Therefore, it can be argued that some sort of negligence of the provisions might have happened from both the countries' side.

The secret letter exchanged between both the countries during the agreement specified that both the governments have to inform each other regarding security and foreign policy issues. However, some Nepalese perceive that the content in the secret letter in fact gave limited space to Nepal to conduct its foreign and defence policy independently. Whatever rights were given in the 1950 treaty was taken away in the secret letter. Most importantly, while the content of the letter was applicable to both the countries, India found breach of the treaty from Nepal side when the latter tried to diversify its foreign policy and asserted its sovereignty on economic and defence policy. India expected Nepal to consult her before establishing diplomatic relations with other countries. It felt that the treaty was breached when Nepal tried to diversify its foreign policy under King Mahendra in 1955 and tried to establish diplomatic relations with China.

Small State Syndrome

These smaller countries tend to find India as a new protector against the possible communist aggression as a result, the agreements that these countries entered into with India gave a sense of security to them against India itself as they felt that a friendly relationship would reduce the possibility of aggressive policy from southern neighbour too.¹² However, despite this, there was trust deficit against India especially from Nepal side, due to asymmetric realities, regime incompatibility and also because of India's then policy of integration of former princely states. The mutual security concern was addressed by India only on the request of the government of Nepal "to send a military mission to assist in the training and reorganisation of the Nepalese army"¹³ on February 23, 1952. Around 20 officers and some soldiers were part of the mission. The number later increased as per the request of the government of Nepal. By the end of 1953, the mission had a total of 197 personnel, including officers.¹⁴

The mission was deployed mostly close to the northern border of Nepal and Kathmandu. Since the mission was established immediately after the Indo-Nepal 1950 Treaty, external forces interpreted the arrangement as a military alliance between India and Nepal. While Nepal in fact tried to diversify its foreign policy under King Mahendra, and pursued non-alignment policy to maintain equidistance between India and China, the presence of the Indian military was interpreted as military alliance with India. Many saw this arrangement as against Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) principles. In 1961, the NAM summit in Nepal opposed military alliances and blocks. In an effort to show the international community that Nepal did not belong to any military alliance, King Mahendra asked India to withdraw its mission from Nepalese territory. There was also pressure from the Chinese side to withdraw Indian military mission camping near the northern border.

Although these Himalayan countries suspected the intentions of India due to latter's emphasis on the continuation of a 'special relationship' and guiding their foreign and defence policies,¹⁵ these countries' perception of China (the so-called common enemy) also changed with India's recognition of Tibet as part of China in 1954 and India-China agreement. Unfortunately, India's contradicting foreign policy—that of maintaining good relations with China and at the same time advising the Himalayan countries to maintain distance with China; of including these countries in its northern security frame work, while both China and India had more than 4000 kms of common border—forced the rulers of these countries to diversify their relations in search of international recognition as alternative security guarantee from both against India and China. Unfortunately, India treated this action as violation of treaties, especially in case of Nepal which led to periodical friction in bilateral relations. The external forces like the U.S. and China took advantage of this unhealthy bilateral atmosphere.

Collapse of Mutual Security

India-Nepal bonhomie on security understanding did not last long. Five years after the treaty was signed, India was perceived as a threat to Nepal's sovereignty. In the post-King Tribhuban regime, Nepal's perception towards India changed. This change happened largely due to the insecurity of the regime (s) against India's support to the democratic movement. There were also personal factors. King Mahendra had differences with his father, king Tribhuvan, and the then Nepali Congress chief B.P. Koirala. He, therefore, deliberately, tried to reverse the decisions that were taken by this father.

The ruling elite also defined threat perception by equating regime security with state sovereignty. The royal regime and in late 1990s, the Maoists projected threat from its southern neighbour because of power and ideological reason.¹⁶ As a first step towards preserving and protecting Nepal's sovereignty and independence, King Mahendra discontinued the 'special relations' with India. Second, he diversified Nepal's foreign policy by extending friendly relations with China.

As China completed the Tibet occupation in 1959, India felt that China might exert a claim on cis-Himalayan region. Therefore, November 1959 Nehru asserted that in case of "aggression against Nepal, India would send help." The then Nepalese PM, B P Koirala, opposed Nehru's statement and made it clear that Nepal did not feel any threat from any quarter. Expressing displeasure over India's unilateral concern over Nepal's security, he indirectly hinted that India should not be worried about Nepal's security and it should not link Nepal to its northern security policy. Koirala also indicated that as an independent country Nepal was capable of defending its territory on its own strength. But, defending his statement, Nehru said that both the countries have agreed to "consult each other" in case of foreign aggression on the agreeing party as a result, concern of Nepal became the concern of India. Although India thought to tackle the challenges as a common problem, Nepal repeatedly rejected that and conveyed, there has not been any military alliance with India, rather it was a mutual assurance between friendly countries. No country can take unilateral decisions to mitigate any threat. The intention, as mentioned in clause 2 of the EL, was basically to have knowledge of all happenings in Nepal so that counter-measures could be taken accordingly. What Indian policy makers were expecting from Nepal as first line of defence was that the latter should share information with India in case of any threat Nepal receives from any forces and India would prepare itself for securing its territory.¹⁷ Third, Nepal and China signed peace and friendship Treaty in 1960 and successfully resolved their border dispute. This marked the end of mutual suspicions between both the countries and emboldened Nepal's confidence as a sovereign country. Four, in absence of any direct threat and due to India's poor

performance in the 1962 war against China, Nepal was encouraged to ask India to withdraw its military mission in 1963. Nepal perhaps wanted to send a clear message to its neighbours and the international community at large that it did not have any existing military alliance with any country.

The 1962 war between India and China further changed the geopolitical dynamics in the central Himalayan region. India, which was seen as the legitimate protector to the smaller Himalayan countries, lost its credibility after the end of war. The impact of the war was so severe that India had to compromise its 'democratic project' and supported monarchy. Interestingly, while the People's Liberation Army (PLA) did not use Nepalese soil in the 1962 War, India signed Arms Assistance Agreement with Nepal. During the 1962 war, Nepal had also declared to remain neutral. China, in fact, protested over the use of Gurkhas in the war before the Nepal Government. China however wanted to 700 Gurkha prisoners of wars (POW) as agents against India. Therefore, China had reportedly treated the Gurkha POWs differently and indoctrinated them "against their Indian officers and told that Chinese and Nepalis are 'brothers'."¹⁸

In the post war period, although India endorsed the then King's policy in Nepal's domestic and foreign policy and kept distance from the internal matters of Nepal, the regime insecurity continued in the 1970's. The Indo-Nepal relationship was affected due to political developments in the region. It reached its lowest when Nepal unilaterally declared non-reciprocity in treatment of Indians on its soil. Nepal considered that Indian citizens' presence in the Terai region was the biggest threat to its sovereignty for it being the Indian design to integrate Nepal with it. This perception was developed after India played a foremost role in the formation of Bangladesh in 1971 and integrated Sikkim within its territory. Anticipating any such actions from India, Nepal deployed the Royal Nepal Army in the mid-1970's in the Terai region by identifying some amount of threat from the South. In fact, subsequently, Nepal declared itself as a 'zone of peace' in 1975 to neutralise India's influence in its domestic politics. The proposal was reportedly recognised by around 112 countries, including Pakistan, China and the U.S. India considered the proposal a breach of security understanding with Nepal. India thought that the then King Birendra's proposal of the 'zone of peace' undermined its security interest in its northern frontier due to growing influence of external actors' presence in Nepal.

This development forced India to bring back its democratic project to Nepal. It supported the democratic forces by putting pressure on the King to promulgate a new constitution. The democratic movement in Nepal geared up with the change of government in Delhi in late 1980s. As India's support to the democratic forces increased, India was portrayed as the single biggest threat to Nepal by the then Royal Nepalese Army (RNA). The 1988 RNA strategic review report identified

that a war with India would last for 15 days whereas it would last 20 days with China given the inhospitable Himalayan terrain. In case of China, the strategy would be to delay the war and seek UN assistance for mediation. According to the 1988 RNA strategic review report, the RNA was expected to fight both external and internal security challenges.¹⁹ In accordance with the report, India was identified as such a threat to Nepal that the latter went to the extent of purchasing air defence guns from China in late 1980s.

Therefore, the RNA felt imminent threat from the South and prepared itself accordingly by procuring air defence guns from China in 1988 despite an Arms Assistance Agreement Treaty with India of 1965. According to the Nepalese Army doctrine, the following acts constituted threats which would prompt a military response:

- incursion into Nepali territory by any hostile foreign armed force
- armed assault against the Nepali population or the Nepali armed forces by any organised armed group
- armed insurgency aimed at undermining the authority of the state.²⁰

India-Nepal Defence Cooperation and Maoist Insurgency

After the Arms Assistance Agreement in 1965, India has been the only major supplier of arms and training equipment to the then RNA. An Indian Military mission was established in Kathmandu, which stayed there till 1969. RNA officials were trained in the Indian Military academy. In 1963, King Mahendra asked India to re-equip the RNA; however, the arrangement did not last long. In October 1969, Nepal Government took two important decisions regarding defence cooperation with India. The government cancelled the 1965 Arms Assistance Agreement and demanded withdrawal of the Indian Military liaison group in Kathmandu.

Despite the cancellation of the Arms Assistance Agreement by Nepal, later, in principle, it agreed to import arms from India under the 1950 Treaty. India undertook the modernisation of the force with Rs. 500 crore equipment package in 1990. India provided weapons in subsidised rates against the Maoist insurgency that began in 1996.²¹ After the Maoists attacked the RNA barrack in Dang in 2001, the package was revived with sophisticated arms, intelligence sharing, training and support in tactical deployment of the RNA in Maoist affected areas. The Indian Army's support and the formation of the India-Nepal bilateral group on security played an important role to transforming the RNA from a ceremonial army into a counter insurgency force. India was supplying INSAS 5.56 mm rifles, ammunitions, training ammunition for artillery guns and more mine sweeping vehicles. India granted Rs. 100 crores to RNA to buy from it arms, such as, INSAS rifles, ammunition, advanced light helicopters, and mine

protection vehicles in 2004.²² After 1962, for the first time, India stopped supplying lethal weapons to the Nepalese Army after the then King took over in February 2005.

Table 1: Military Equipment Supplied by India to Nepal between 2007-2010

<i>Year</i>	<i>Item</i>
2007-08	Tent Extendable
2008-09	Demolition Stores, Spare parts 5.56mm
2009-10	Demolition Stores

Source: Laxman Behera, IDSA.

According to a small arms survey report, Nepalese Army had 160,000 firearms as on 2012.

Table 2: Small Arms Inventory of the Nepalese Army as on 2012

<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Supplier</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Sources</i>
M4	Automatic carbine	United States	1,070	MoD (2011); Watters (2012d)
AKM	(Type 56) Automatic rifle	China	300	MoD (2011)
AR15/M16	Automatic rifle	United States	2,000	MoD (2011)
Galil	Automatic rifle	Israel	2,000	MoD (2011)
INSAS	Automatic rifle	India	23,000	Asia News Agency (2005)
M16A2/A4	Automatic rifle	United States	15,000	Watters (2012a, 2012b, 2012c)
Lee-Enfield	Bolt-action rifle	UK or India	30,000	Walter (2005, pp. 94–95)
Bren L4	Light machine gun	Belgium	200	Ezell (1988, p. 274)
M249	Light machine gun	United States	300	MoD (2011)
FN Minimi	Medium machine gun	Belgium	5,500	Crivellaro (2002)
9mm FN or HP	Semi-automatic pistol	India	15,000	Ezell (1988, p. 274)
SAR (FAL or L1A1)	Semi-automatic rifle	India	30,000	Eger (2006); Ezell (1988, p. 274)
MSG90	Sniper rifle	Germany	100	MoD (2011)
Sterling	Sub-machine gun	United Kingdom	25,000	MoD (2011)
MP-5	Sub-machine gun	Germany	200	MoD (2011)

Source: Legacies of War in the Company of Peace, Small Arms Survey, Geneva, *Issue Brief*, no. 2, May 2013.

Tables 1 and 2 indicate that other than India, Nepal procured arms and ammunitions from China and some western countries as well. India-Nepal relation was again affected on defence issues in 1988 when Nepal purchased weapons from China. India treated the move as violation of the 1950 Treaty and the EL. India interpreted Nepalese action as a compromise with the mutually assured security arrangement. The nature of Indian weapons supply to the RNA was mostly confined to small arms and ammunitions. Although India was committed

to supply timely sophisticated weapons and other technical support, security forces in Nepal felt that insufficient to counter the well equipped Maoists. Most importantly, India also reportedly supplied substandard weapons to Nepal. Moreover, there were perceptions in Nepal that Indian arms supply was dependent on securing its political and security interests. This could be another reason Nepal looked for third country option. Interestingly, no major regular joint exercises were undertaken until 2011.

India and Nepal agreed on a defence agreement known as the Indo-Nepal Defence Cooperation Framework in December 2009. The objective of the framework could have been to supplement the existing Indo-Nepal Treaty of Peace and Friendship of 1950, and also to further insure deepening of Indo-Nepal relations, especially marked by close defence ties, against any fallout from the simmering tensions in Nepal.²³ Given the uncertainties surrounding the 1950 Treaty, India might have wanted to have a separate defence agreement with Nepal. This could also be due to growing Chinese military aid to the Himalayan country and its growing influence in Nepal. Besides the fresh defence cooperation, India is lately moving towards re-supplying the Nepalese Army with weaponry such as the INSAS rifles, mortars, howitzers and Armoured Personnel Carriers and is also assisting in setting up airstrips, besides ensuring increased number of seats for Nepal Army officer cadets at Indian military training institutions.

The Nepalese request for supply of lethal weapons was accepted by India after the successful completion of the Peace Process in 2012. India was willing to resume the supply of both lethal and non-lethal weapons to Nepal after the latter requested the same during the meeting of the Bilateral Consultation Group (BCG) on security Issues in 2011. The Nepalese side sought immediate supply of weapons worth Rs. 1 billion, including military education exchanges, joint exercises and supplies of military store and equipment. Some of the equipments were supplied as a loan with 60 per cent payment and 40 per cent subsidy as agreed at the tenth BCG in Bangalore in April 2013. As agreed, the Nepalese Army would purchase cartridges and bullets, small weapons and mortars in the first phase. Mines, detonators, safety fuses and time pencils from India would also be bought subsequently. Payment terms were bilaterally agreed and as usual, India agreed to provide grants and loans. It was also agreed that the armies of both the countries would conduct joint exercises, along with having military educational exchanges.²⁴

As per the seventh BCG agreement, an India-Nepal joint military training titled "Exercise Surya Kiran-V" was conducted at Pithoragarh on September 23, 2013. The objective of this training was not only training of troops in counter terrorism operations but also to enhance defence cooperation and military relations between the two nations. It provided an opportunity for the personnel of the two

countries to share their experiences on counter terrorist operations, especially in mountainous terrain, and also on aspects of disaster management. The two countries earlier commenced joint training at platoon level (30 men from each side) in 2011. The first two joint exercises focused primarily on jungle warfare and counter-insurgency operations.²⁵

Both the armies again started a joint military exercise titled 'Ex-Surya Kiran-VII' in Pithoragarh of India on August 18, 2014. The two-week long joint exercise focused on jungle warfare, anti-insurgency, disaster management (pandemic/epidemic disaster), disaster relief and casualty evacuation under rescue operations using helicopters.²⁶

Geo-politics, Technology and Security

In 1950s and 60s, India had signed the Peace and Friendship Treaty and established military mission by bringing Nepal into its security umbrella while China entered the Himalayas, the first line of India's defence. These agreements failed to create a joint front during India-China war in 1962 and Chinese consolidation in the south of Himalayas. Now, China has crossed the Himalayas again through massive economic investment in Nepal and infrastructure development in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR). There is a view in Nepal that Nepal's status at the regional level may be changed once Chinese railway lines reach Nepal border at Rasuwa/Kerung (China). This would emerge as an alternative trade route for Nepal and Bhutan. The trans-Himalayan railway will support Chinese policy of revival of South and south-west silk route. "The link allows the PLA to respond quickly and transport supplies to south-western Tibet in a contingency. The other link, the Lhasa-Nyingchi line, is set to begin construction before the end of this year and to be completed by 2018. The line will be 433 kilometres in length and trains may reach speeds of 160 km/hr, will transport both passengers and goods and be used by civilians and the military. It will form a reverse V-shape defense with the Lhasa-Xigaze Railway in southern Tibet and enhance the PLA's mobility in the Himalayas."²⁷

One Indian security analyst observed that, "Extension of the railway from Lhasa to Kathmandu and onward to Lumbini, which is being discussed, will have serious strategic implications for India. If China's plans for the development of Lumbini and building an airport materialise, that will add to India's discomfiture as will the establishment of any Chinese settlement on India's borders."²⁸ Moreover, historically, Himalayan passes played important role in battles between Tibet and Nepal. During the 1792 Tibet-Nepal War, the Manchus troops called by the Tibetan Government to defeat the Gurkhas used Kyirong route to invade Nepal. Therefore, the objective of the railway line extension till Nepal border and setting up of new ports could be to enhance Chinese monitoring capacity at the major

vulnerable entry points to TAR. China also believes that, “the Kyirong Port will serve as a link between China and the South Asian countries. It is expected to bring a big number of visitors into Tibet and boost its tourism.”²⁹ China will have certain advantage by having the railway line across the Himalayas. First, this will increase the mobility of the PLA in case of emergency situation. It will give access to the remotest areas of the TAR. The presence of railway will help in transporting heavy military armaments. Second, this will facilitate to restore the old trading routes and open new alternative trading routes between Nepal and China. Thus, reduce Nepal’s dependence on India. Third, the presence of railway line till the newly opened trading point-Kyirong and Rasuwagadhi-may open a new emergency route for Nepal by connecting gas and fossil fuel pipelines from the nearest oil depot in Tibet. Last, but not least, this will further strengthen people to people contact between Nepal and China by tourism, business and non-political visits.

Interestingly, the developments coincide with the ongoing debate over the future of the 1950 Treaty itself and the issue of the modernisation of the Nepalese Army to prepare for the fifth generation warfare and the differences of views between India and Nepal on the UN Arms Trade Treaty, which was passed in the UN in April 2013. The debate over revision or abrogation of the 1950 Treaty indicates that Nepal does not feel any threat from any country.

Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Threat

With rapid changes in geo-political dynamics in the 21st century, Nepal is more worried about the new non-traditional threats. In the post-conflict period, Nepal’s threat perceptions have changed. The ‘Nepali Army Doctrine 2014’, the first official doctrine of Nepali Army (NA), has emphasised to develop and update Nepal’s military strategies as per the fifth generation warfare (5GW) to tackle violent extremist organisations. It further says that the NA should follow the ‘Threat-Cum-Capability-Based Model’ approach. The document has identified nine threat perceptions: political, economic, social, religious, idealism, production of lethal weapons, rapid population growth, climate change and global energy crisis. The doctrine states that, “in case of chemical and biological war, as well as the conventional war, defensive measures should be adopted”.³⁰

However, although there are several bilateral arrangements—Home Secretaries, Nepal-India Bilateral Consultative Group on Security Issues (NIBCGSI), Joint Working Group on Border Management (JWG) and Border District Coordination Committee (BDCC)—between India and Nepal to address these issues, some of the issues continue to remain as a major security threat to Nepal, especially in the post-conflict period. While the governance system is weak in absence of constitutional provisions, Nepal still feels that India could have

taken more actions against Terai-based criminals and armed groups, who use Indian territory for safe haven. Moreover, during Maoist insurgency, Nepal Government felt that India did not reciprocate on security issues by not arresting Maoist cadres and leaders, who were taking shelter in India.

Given the geo-cultural linkages, major events in India and the Tibetan region have impact on Nepal. During the Home Secretary level meeting in 2014, Nepal asked India to cooperate in taking action against Terai-based illegal armed groups which were taking shelter in Bihar and eastern Uttar Pradesh, sharing information on movements of religious radical groups and preventing narcotics and small arms trafficking from India to Nepal side. It also expressed concern over misuse of open border by unscrupulous elements posing security threats.

As part of the capacity building program to tackle the NTS effectively, India provided logistic support, including 764 different types of vehicles costing Rs. 800 million to the security agencies of Nepal in November 2013. During Prime Minister Modi's visit to Kathmandu in August 2014, both the countries had agreed to sign an extradition treaty and mutual legal assistance to prevent illegal activities by anti-State elements on the both sides of border. Both the countries also agreed to expedite the signing of MoU on Police Academy and strengthen coordination and consultation to deal with the problem of floods and inundation.

Of late, natural disasters like floods, landslide and earthquake have become a major concern to both the counties. Any natural disaster in Nepal can have impact in India and *vice-versa*. This has security implications too. Therefore, like India has integrated its security with the security of Nepal, India has also considered all disasters in Nepal as disaster befalling on India. For example, India announced a relief assistance of Rs. 48 million (NR), for the victims of the 2014 floods and landslides that hit different parts of Nepal, claiming over 240 lives. India has also arranged three helicopters and one airplane on standby at the border for disaster relief operation.³¹ Again India had declared high alert in low lying areas of Koshi river while a massive landslide on August 3, 2014 created an artificial lake in the Sunkoshi river. The bursting of that artificial lake would have submerged a large part of Bihar province of India; therefore, India declared unilateral technical and material assistance to Nepal to bring back the natural flow of river Sunkoshi.

In February 2014, India and Nepal agreed to cooperate on flood management and flood control, particularly on rivers that originate in Nepal and reach the Ganga river basin and others. The eighth meeting of the India-Nepal Joint Committee on Inundation and Flood Management (JCIFM) was held in Kathmandu in which both sides agreed to expedite work related to flood control and inundation. In this regard, since 2008, India has been providing assistance to Nepal for strengthening and extending embankments along rivers originating

in that country like Lalbakeya (61 km), Bagmati (40 km), Kamala (66 km) and Khado. According to the available statistics, the total grant assistance already disbursed for embankment construction along these rivers stands at Indian Rs. 1.86 billion or Nepali Rs. 2,917.68 million (nearly \$30 million) between 2008 to December 2013.³²

However, despite having common challenges emerging from NTS, there are a limited number of bilateral or institutional arrangements on mitigating common disasters, except joint army operations, between India and Nepal. India has just included disaster management program in the army joint exercise after the U.S. introduced joint training programme on disaster management with the Nepalese Army.

Conclusion

India's Nepal policy has been guided by strategic issues pertaining to preventing external forces' presence in the south of Himalayas. It has mostly been a continuation of the British 'northern frontier' policy with only minor changes. Instead of strengthening Nepal to defend its territory independently against any possible Chinese adventurism, India created vassal states in its periphery, which has created the image of India as an interventionist power.³³ In the post-1947 period, India did not face any serious threats on its northern frontier, especially along its border with Nepal. Nepal remained neutral during the 1962 war between India and China. However, given the ongoing border disputes between India and China, Chinese Military infrastructure in Tibet and growing Chinese interest in the southern Himalayas, the same might not happen with Nepal in future. Further, the presence of western powers and Pakistan sponsored terrorist groups on Nepalese soil would also undermine India's internal and external security.

Most importantly, the Nepalese security discourse has been mostly influenced by its ruling elites, who felt highly insecure due to geo-political changes in the post-Cold War period. On the other hand, India's security cooperation with Nepal was guided by India's security policy. India considered Nepal as its second line of defence rather than as a security partner. India's policy in the post-1950 treaty period made Nepal dependent on India as the latter did not support the capacity building of Nepal in security sphere. India's over-possessive security policy forced Nepal to make its own security arrangement by diversifying its foreign policy with other countries, including China, and by becoming a member of the UN. Therefore, Nepal treated the 1950 treaty as a political document signed for protection of the then Rana regime against India's democratic project. Nepal never felt that the 1950 treaty would provide safety from Indian aggression or would be a shield against China.

In the post conflict period, Nepal is vulnerable internally than facing external

challenges given its geo-ethno-social structure. Since political instability and any territorial threat on Nepal would have serious implication for India, it would be in the interest of India to keep Nepal as a sovereign, independent and powerful country to prevent other external powers and elements from posing common threat to the region to exploit their geopolitical vulnerability.

Policy Recommendations

There is ample evidence in history and in the post cold war period of transgressing sovereignty of the smaller countries by big powers. Since India has already witnessed humiliating situation in 1962, it should not take risk again by neglecting its principal barrier to protect its national security. Therefore, from India's point of view, following steps should be taken while considering Nepal's political and security sensitives:

1. Nepal should be divided as two lines-yellow and red. Terai should be treated as a red line of any kind of external presence. And north of Terai should be treated as part of the yellow line; in addition, no major strategic engagements in the Terai region should be encouraged.
2. According to NA doctrine 2014, NTS possesses major threat; therefore, strengthen military-to-military, paramilitary-to-paramilitary and intelligence level of cooperation. Further on, special emphasis needs to be given to strengthen cooperation at the army level; supply good qualitative arms and ammunitions on time and never take any decisions to affect the interest of Nepalese Army.
3. Need to highlight the strategic connections like Gurkha's contribution towards Indian security, role of ex-servicemen in strengthening bilateral relations and unique arrangement of honorary position to army chiefs of both the armies.
4. India's presence in Nepal should be more visible in comparison to China. This can be achieved by streamlining Delhi's efforts to timely delivery of projects. The relationship should be strengthened further by focusing on economic and social issues.
5. Both the countries need to expedite to signing of the extradition treaty.
6. Need more institutional cooperation on disaster management.

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7

Assuring Security to Sri Lanka

Gulbin Sultana

Security situations in Sri Lanka since its independence have evolved with the perceptions of the ruling class as well as with the shifts in the regional and international security environment. At the time of independence, Sri Lankan policymakers perceived political and military threats from external sources, particularly from India and to some extent from the communists. The first Prime Minister of independent Sri Lanka, D.S. Senanayake¹ and the subsequent United National Party (UNP) leaders till 1955 perceived communism as a threat to Sri Lanka's security.² However, after 1955 the anti-communist feeling started receding due to the Soviet recognition of Sri Lanka as a sovereign country. Ideologically, too, the new government of Sri Lanka led by the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP), which came into power in 1956, was friendly towards the Soviet Union. So no threat was perceived from communist countries since then.

A strong suspicion of the possibility of aggression from India was the dominant strand in D.S. Senanayake's external policy.³ The 'India fear' continued to dominate the subsequent UNP leaders, Dudley Senanayake and John Kotelawala too. John Kotelawala, the third Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, talked about aggression from "quarters closer home" and absorption of the island by India if the British bases were withdrawn.⁴ India, after becoming an independent State, never hinted at military aggression. In fact it talked about peaceful co-existence. Yet, Sri Lankan leaders harboured the India fear for two factors: (1) Historical memories of the invasions particularly from South India and suggestions made by some of the Indian strategic thinkers and political leaders to bring Sri Lanka under Indian federation for mutual defence;⁵ (2) India's regional security policy during the Cold War period. During this period, India considered the South Asian region as its sphere of influence and opposed to its neighbours' seeking any external involvement in the region. If a South Asian country genuinely required any help,

it should ask help from India.⁶ This was seen by Sri Lanka and other smaller countries of the region as Indian domination and restriction on their strategic autonomy. The UNP leaders at that time were also not very happy with the presence of persons of Indian origin as they voted against the UNP.

The SLFP leaders did not have the acute sense of 'India fear' like the UNP leaders. SWRD Bandaranaike had the best of relations with Jawaharlal Nehru. Sirimavo Banadaranaiké also shared friendly relations with India. However, she did not ignore the 'India factor' in Sri Lanka's security policy. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, according to M.S. Kulandaswamy, "While appearing to be sensitive to India's strategic interests and aspirations...she revealed her government's desire and efforts to maximise the islands manoeuvrability vis-à-vis India by cultivating China and Pakistan."⁷

In 1971, Sri Lanka faced real security challenges from internal source. Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP), a revolutionary group of rural Sinhala educated-unemployed youth in the South, launched an insurrection against the Sri Lankan Government. It was thought that there may be an external hand behind the insurrection, but later it was realised that it was just an internal threat. The insurrection was quelled with the help of foreign assistance particularly with the help of India. Though the insurrection was suppressed, the country faced another challenge from the Tamil militant groups since late 1970s, which subsequently engaged the Sri Lankan forces into a full-fledged war for almost 26 years. The JVP movement also revived in 1988-89. So the island in 1980s was facing challenges from within—the Tamil militant groups in the North and Sinhala militant group in South—as well as from an external source—India, who was trying to intervene in the Sri Lankan affairs by providing assistance to the Tamil militants and air dropping food for the people in the north. Along with the Tamil militants, therefore, India too was seen as a threat to the integrity and sovereignty of Sri Lanka. India however, was not trying to divide the island. By providing training to the Tamil militant groups or air-dropping food items in Jaffna, India tried to remind Sri Lanka that it would not tolerate an extra regional power in its backyard and that Sri Lanka should immediately withdraw all the facilities provided to the US in the Trincomalee harbour.

In the post-Cold War period, India redefined its regional policy. It projected itself "to be a reasonable and liberal minded power that is conscious of the rights and autonomy of its smaller neighbours to promote their security in a manner that is suitable and best according to their calculations..."⁸ Since 1990s, India maintained distance from the Sri Lankan ethnic conflict. At the same time, it did not stop Sri Lanka from acquiring assistance from Pakistan, China and Israel. However, despite assistance from Pakistan and China, Sri Lankan forces had to face severe challenges from the Liberation of Tamil Tigers Eelam (LTTE). Both

Chandrika Kumaratunga and Ranil Wikremesinghe during their respective tenures sought Indian assistance to fight the LTTE, but the Indian Government refused to provide military assistance in Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict, except providing an Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV) in 2002. It was only during the fourth Eelam war under Mahinda Rajapaksa that India provided military assistance (non-lethal) to the Sri Lankan Government. With the assistance of India and other countries, Sri Lanka annihilated the LTTE—the biggest threat to Sri Lanka since 1980s—in 2009.

In the post-LTTE period, Sri Lanka is facing new sets of challenges. Former Secretary of Defence and Urban Development Gotabaya Rajapaksa articulated the potential threats for Sri Lanka in his article, "Sri Lanka's National Security", published in *Prism* in 2014.⁹ According to him, the main concerns for Sri Lanka in the post-LTTE period are: the possibility of re-emergence of terrorism or emergence of other extremist groups; the worsening of ethnic divisions and communal violence; the challenges of maritime security and border control; the growth of organised crime; foreign interference in domestic affairs; and non-traditional technology-driven threats, including social media. In the post-LTTE period, India has been accused of interfering in the internal affairs of Sri Lanka by directing the Sri Lankan Government to implement the 13th Amendment. However, in the current scenario, more than India, Western powers like the US, UK and European Union are seen as threats. Sri Lankan Government though is disappointed with India because of its stand on the Tamil questions and war crime issues; given India's size, location, military strength and capability, it has acknowledged and sought the Indian leadership to deal with the current threats.

In this background, it is argued that in the changed security situations of Sri Lanka, India has emerged as a security provider from a security threat. Sri Lanka has an inherent fear for Indian domination, and tries to deal with this fear by getting close to the extra-regional powers as well as regional countries who are inimical to India. However, time and again it has been established that India is the only country which can provide real security to Sri Lanka.

Areas of Security Concerns and India's Help to Sri Lanka

External Security Concerns

Sri Lanka as a small country had the fear¹⁰ that India which was aspiring to be the regional power would dominate Sri Lanka. To protect its own sovereignty, and particularly to deal with India, Sri Lanka signed the 'defence agreement with the UK'¹¹ on November 11, 1947 under which it agreed to provide security assistance to the country.¹² At least until 1956, the UK played the role of security provider to Sri Lanka. Sri Lankan Government during that period did not feel the need to develop and modernise the armed forces. Even after the British

withdrew from Sri Lanka, the Mahajana Eksath Peramuna (MEP)¹³ government led by the SLFP regime did not give much attention to develop its armed forces as it did not perceive any military threat from either India or any other power. Moreover, after the failed coup attempt by Sri Lankan Military in 1962,¹⁴ whatever little plan government had to modernise the army was also stopped. Thus, Sri Lanka lacked a credible armed force to protect the country. Therefore, it was in Sri Lanka's interest to keep the region free from military aggression.

Sri Lanka under Sirimavo Bandaranaike expressed concerns about superpower naval presence in the Indian Ocean. This concern was dealt with by garnering the support of like-minded countries at the multilateral forum like the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and the Commonwealth. India provided diplomatic support to Sri Lanka's proposal to declare 'Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace'. India strongly supported the Sri Lankan initiative at the Lusaka Summit in 1970 as well as in the UNGA when the proposal was adopted as a Resolution at its 26th session in 1971.¹⁵

Internal Security Threat and Indian Assistance

When Sri Lanka suddenly faced the security threat from the JVP in 1971, its armed forces were not capable to handle the threat. As violence spread, military was called out but the situation had worsened. The then Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike in her broadcast to the nation on April 24, 1971, admitted that the government was not prepared to face an armed insurrection from the youth. She declared, "We found that we had inadequate weapons, ammunitions and aircrafts to meet a sustained threat over a long period of time by the terrorist insurgents."¹⁶ Sirimavo Bandaranaike sent a distress signal to Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India. K.P.S. Menon, the then Indian High Commission, was sent to New Delhi, to personally convey the message. Indira Gandhi, when she received the urgent message, hurriedly summoned her cabinet to discuss the desperate appeal and within a few hours large quantity of small arms and ammunition, six helicopters with crew, 150 Gurkha soldiers were dispatched.¹⁷ A flotilla from the Western Fleet of the Indian Navy went out of the Cochin harbour to patrol the Ceylon maritime areas to intercept, in cases of any foreign vessels entering to assist the insurgents.¹⁸ Sirimavo Bandaranaike also appealed to the US, UK, China, Soviet Union and Pakistan to come for Sri Lanka's assistance. Pakistan delivered two helicopters to Colombo for the Ceylon Air Force. England, America, Yugoslavia and Egypt too rushed assistance to Ceylon. However, their assistance was limited.¹⁹ India played a major role in that situation, which was greatly acknowledged by Sri Lankan Government as well. It is obvious that the good rapport between Indira Gandhi and Sirimavo Bandaranaike prompted the Indian support. An important factor that influenced India's decision

to provide naval assistance during the crisis in 1971 was anti-India comments made by the JVP in its indoctrination lectures.²⁰

Indian assistance to Sri Lanka during the JVP insurrection in 1971 did not change UNP's perceptions of India. The UNP regime which came into power in 1977 perceived India with suspicion. It was thought that by providing training to the Sri Lankan Tamil militant groups, India was trying to form another Bangladesh. President Jayewardene ensured Sri Lanka's security from Indian domination by deepening its relations with the West, particularly the US. In 1981, Colombo lifted the nine-year old ban on foreign warships at Trincomalee.²¹ In 1983, it signed an agreement with the US under which the Voice of America was allowed to expand its activities in the Island. Sri Lanka provided these facilities to the US, hoping security assistance to deal with the Tamil militants as well as with India. Other than the US, Sri Lanka also approached the UK, China, Pakistan and Malaysia for military and political support. Sri Lanka managed to get assistance from Pakistan, Israel, China, South Africa, Malaysia and Singapore, but the US and the UK expressed their reluctance to render direct military support to Sri Lanka.²²

Following the communal riots in 1983, Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India, expressed her grave concerns and offered India's good offices to resolve the ethnic conflict through dialogue. She sent G. Parthasarathy to Sri Lanka as her special envoy to work out a solution. Rajiv Gandhi, after becoming Prime Minister of India in 1984, also offered India's good offices and pressed for negotiated political settlement of the ethnic conflict. From 1983 to 1985, the Sri Lankan Government held dialogues with the political parties in Sri Lanka (APRC) and the Tamil groups (Thimphu Talks in 1985) to find out solutions to the ethnic problem, but without success. At the same time, violence continued, particularly in Jaffna. On May 26, 1987, the Sri Lankan security force initiated its mission to liberate Jaffna according to the order of then President Jayewardene, which cost thousands of Tamil lives. There was the apprehension of an increased flow of refugees into India, too. Then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi asked then High Commissioner J.N. Dixit "to make it clear to Colombo that New Delhi would not let down the Tamils at the hour of their crisis. Should Sri Lanka persist with her military machine to eliminate the LTTE altogether, New Delhi would have no alternative but to provide the necessary logistical support to it..."²³ India also decided to send relief supplies across the Palk Strait for the Tamils in North by unarmed fishing boats and sought Sri Lankan Government's cooperation. However, Sri Lankan Navy did not allow those unarmed fishing boats to enter into Sri Lankan waters. Feeling humiliated at this, India airdropped relief supplies into Jaffna. Sri Lanka condemned this act and described it as an "unwarranted assault" on its "sovereignty and territorial integrity".²⁴

Following the Indian intervention, the Jayewardene government faced challenges within Sri Lanka from all directions. Jayewardene's opponents both within and outside the government criticised Jayewardene for not able to stop the Indian intervention. "While the opposition parties led by the SLFP launched an anti-government stir, the JVP organised student strikes and armed attacks on government establishments, creating a situation of utter chaos."²⁵ At the same time, due to divisions within the armed forces, Jayewardene feared a coup attempt with military assistance. In such circumstances, the then Sri Lankan President Jayewardene was compelled to seek Indian military assistance. He signed an Indo-Lanka Accord with India in 1987 and gave his commitment to devolve power to Tamils and address the language issue. Also with an exchange of letter, annexed to the agreement, Sri Lanka agreed to respect India's strategic interests by not allowing any third countries to have facilities in Trincomalee. India on the other hand agreed to provide military assistance to Sri Lanka during emergency.²⁶ Accordingly, Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) was sent to Sri Lanka at the request of President Jayewardene.

However, both Tamils and Sinhala including some of Jayewardene's own party members were against the Indo-Lanka Accord and the IPKF mission. The then Prime Minister Premadasa was against the presence of Indian peacekeeping force in Sri Lanka. He contested the 1988 Presidential election as the UNP candidate. During his election campaign, Premadasa announced that he would make the IPKF soldiers to leave the island if he became President. He mentioned this in his letter to then Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi on June 2, 1989 requesting complete withdrawal of the IPKF by July 31, 1989.²⁷ Withdrawal of the IPKF and reduction in India's role was the point of convergence between Premadasa and the LTTE. After becoming President, Premadasa through his Foreign Minister Ranjan Wijeratne invited the LTTE for talks. Government extended its invitation on April 13, 1989, and by April 15, LTTE responded to the government's call and the first round of talk between the LTTE and the Premadasa government held on May 4, 1989.²⁸ According to the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF) Secretary-General, R. Padmanabha, LTTE had agreed for talks on the basis of three demands: the withdrawal of the IPKF, dissolution of the North-East Provincial Council headed by the EPRLF and amending the Constitution along the Canadian model.²⁹ Then President Premadasa, on the other hand, was keen to have dialogues with the LTTE, because the Indian Government pledged to withdraw the IPKF only after the restoration of normalcy in the North East. On June 1, 1989, Premadasa in a public declaration called India to withdraw the IPKF by July 1989, referring the peace talks.³⁰ The intelligence sources of the IPKF found out that Sri Lankan Army had supplied arms and equipment to the LTTE to fight against the IPKF soldiers, under the specific orders of the President.³¹ On July 28, 1989, India agreed to start the

withdrawal of the IPKF from July 29, 1989. The last contingent of the IPKF withdrew from Sri Lanka on March 24, 1990.

IPKF could restore law and order in the north east province, disarm the non-LTTE groups and bring about temporary cessation of hostilities between the Sri Lankan Government and the LTTE.³² However, in the process, India lost around 1,100 soldiers. Rajiv Gandhi too was assassinated by the LTTE for signing the Indo-Lanka Accord. Following the withdrawal of the IPKF mission and the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi, India decided to maintain a distance from Sri Lankan ethnic conflict and not to send its troops to Sri Lanka.

However, the Indian Navy and Coastguard continued their patrolling in the Palk Strait to prevent Tamil militant activities as committed in the Indo-Lanka Accord. The 2.16 (B) of Indo-Lanka Accord says, "The Indian Navy/Coast Guard will cooperate with the Sri Lanka Navy in preventing Tamil militant activities from affecting Sri Lanka."³³ Accordingly, the Indian coastguard carried on its Operation Tasha. Since the withdrawal of the IPKF, one coastguard ship ex-Chennai and one IB/IC ex-Mandapam remained on continuous patrol in the Palk Strait. Also, a Dornier aircraft ex-Chennai carried out air surveillance in Palk Strait and Gulf of Mannar.³⁴ Operation Nakabandi was launched on August 13, 1996 by India to check the influx of refugees from Sri Lanka to India and to curb smuggling and other clandestine activities in Palk Bay and Gulf of Mannar.³⁵

In the letter exchanged by the President of Sri Lanka and the Prime Minister of India, annexed to Indo-Lanka Accord in 1987, India gave commitment to provide training facilities and military supplies for Sri Lankan security forces. Accordingly, India continued to provide training to the Sri Lankan security forces. India has trained thousands of Sri Lankan personnel at its military institutions: from Counter-insurgency and Jungle Warfare School at Vairengte (Mizoram) to School of Artillery at Devlali (Maharashtra). India has also imparted training to the Sri Lankan personnel by providing specialised naval courses in gunnery, navigation, communication and anti-submarine warfare. The premier Indian Military Academy at Dehradun has even run special courses to train hundreds of cadets from Sri Lanka.³⁶

However, India did not provide any military supplies during the Eelam War II and III. In 2000, Sri Lanka made a desperate call to India for help when Sri Lankan forces lost the Elephant pass to the LTTE.³⁷ But India refused to assist. It is interesting to note that after withdrawal of the IPKF, when India decided to disengage itself with the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka and India's non-interference in the internal affairs of Sri Lanka was reiterated by all the Indian prime ministers since 1991, including I.K. Gujral, Sri Lankan leaders³⁸ and media³⁹ wanted India to interfere and undo the damage it inflicted by training and arming the LTTE.

The India-Sri Lanka defence ties strengthened only after the signing of the ceasefire agreement between the Sri Lankan Government and the LTTE in 2002. Defence cooperation in the fields of defence training has expanded manifold since then. The Sri Lankan armed forces comprised the largest number of foreign trainees in Indian armed forces' training institutions.⁴⁰ A Sukanya class OPV was gifted by the Indian coastguard to the Sri Lankan navy in 2002. An understanding was reached between India and Sri Lanka wherein India committed to not objecting to the involvement of extra-regional powers provided India was kept in the loop by regular consultations.⁴¹

Ironically, Sri Lanka opposed the Indo-Lanka Accord in 1987, but in the new millennium, it pushed for Defence Cooperation Agreement (DCA) with India after India dropped Sri Lanka from its negative lists of defence supplies. In late October 2003, then Sri Lankan Prime Minister, Ranil Wickremesinghe and then Indian Prime Minister, A.B. Vajpayee issued a joint statement indicating mutual interest in working towards a DCA.⁴² Mahinda Rajapaksa, the then Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, also expressed an interest to have a defence cooperation agreement during his state visit to India in 2004. However, after negotiating the DCA for two years, India refused to sign it. Two arguments are put forward for India not signing the defence agreement, first, because of the pressure from Tamil political parties in India and second, Sri Lanka's refusal to provide exclusive rights to India on the Palaly airbase.⁴³ Though India did not sign the Defence Agreement, yet India played a major role in maintaining Sri Lanka's security by not interfering in the PA government's war against the LTTE,⁴⁴ non-involvement in the ethnic conflict and by naval cooperation in containing Tamil militant activities.

When Mahinda Rajapaksa came to power and made a conscious decision to defeat the LTTE, he and his brother and advisor Gotabaya Rajapaksa decided to take India on board, realising that India is the only country which can influence the military campaign. Gotabaya Rajapaksa mentioned:

In 1987, the enormously successful Vadamarachchi Operations had pushed the LTTE to the brink of defeat. However, these operations could not be sustained because the Indian Government intervened. The primary problem in 1987 was that the relationship between the two countries had not been managed very effectively.... In contrast, from the time of his election, President Rajapaksa went out of his way to keep New Delhi briefed about all the new developments taking place in Sri Lanka. He understood that while other countries could mount pressure on us through diplomatic channels or economic means, only India could influence the military campaign.⁴⁵

Through regular interaction and exchange of information, Sri Lanka convinced India of the need to take the military option to its logical conclusion. India

agreed to provide military assistance to the Sri Lankan Government while making it clear that it would not supply lethal weapons. India offered its 'Indra' air search radar to Sri Lanka. It has been reported that in early 2006, responding to the Sri Lankan team's request for military help, India gifted five Mi-17 helicopters to the Sri Lankan Air Force to be flown under Sri Lankan Air Force insignia.⁴⁶ These helicopters played a major role in rescuing Sri Lankan Army's Deep Penetration Units whenever they were surrounded by LTTE's counter-infiltration units or and also airlifted injured soldiers from deep inside LTTE-held territory.⁴⁷ In 2007, India offered a US\$100 million loan to buy Indian equipment, including vehicles and air defence systems (non-deadly or non-offensive). India played a crucial role in defeating the LTTE by providing naval intelligence to the Sri Lankan Navy. It provided critical information about the Sea Tigers' movements and vessels, and 'mother boats' in the high seas which stored LTTE weapons. Sri Lankan forces could destroy eleven of such 'mother boats' in the high seas by 2008 with the help of Indian naval intelligence.⁴⁸ As a result, LTTE's military capabilities started shrinking fast, which led ultimately to its collapse by May 2009. However, India was not appreciated by Sri Lankans as much as it deserved.

Moreover, the Indian Government decided to support the Sri Lankan Government's military operation against the LTTE, because it also wanted to get rid of LTTE's menace in the region. Apparently, India decided to provide air search radar to Sri Lanka to stop it from getting the Chinese radar system. It was feared that by providing radars to Sri Lanka, China would easily overreach into the Indian air space.⁴⁹ So it can be argued that not only strategic interests, but also the security interests compelled India to support Sri Lanka's war against the LTTE.

India-Sri Lanka Defence Cooperation in the post-LTTE Period

In the aftermath of the war in Sri Lanka, both India and Sri Lanka felt the necessity to have a more comprehensive defence relationship. The institutional mechanism of a yearly defence dialogue was decided by then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and then Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa during their summit meeting in Delhi in June 2010.⁵⁰ India and Sri Lanka agreed to commence staff-level talks between the navies and armies of the two countries, and conduct a joint naval exercise between the two navies in 2011. Accordingly, Sri Lanka and India began first Army-to-Army staff talks on June 28, 2011 to bolster bilateral military cooperation with joint exercises and training programmes. Both countries also held the inaugural round of Annual Defence Dialogue on January 31, 2012. SLINEX, which was not carried out after 2005 due to war, resumed since 2011.⁵¹ The Sri Lankan and Indian navies conducted a joint naval training exercise from October 6-8, 2009 in the Western seas of Sri Lanka. INS 'Shardul' of the Indian Navy and INCGS 'Varuna' of the Indian Coast Guard

with Indian Cadets on board and SLNS 'Sayura', SLNS 'Samudura' and 'A 521' of the Sri Lanka Navy participated in the exercise Code-named 'Cadex 2009'.⁵² Casting off Procedures, Seamanship, Coastal Navigation, FLYEX and Fire Fighting and Damage Control exercises, and searching a suspicious vessel using small boats of the Special Boat Squadron were some of the areas which came for evaluation. India has also agreed to provide assistance to Sri Lanka's newly formed coastguard. India has also agreed to train 1,400 defence personnel annually.

In the post-LTTE period, maritime security and maintenance of peace and stability are the common security challenges for both India and Sri Lanka. There are intelligence reports that terrorist attacks will be carried out in India by using the Sri Lankan maritime route.⁵³ This convergence of interests made the naval forces of the two countries to cooperate despite the occasional tensions between the two navies on the issue of attacks on fishermen.

Sri Lanka accepted India to play a lead role in ensuring maritime security in the Indian Ocean region. A trilateral cooperation agreement on maritime security was signed by India, Maldives and Sri Lanka on July 8, 2013.⁵⁴ By signing the agreement, the three countries agreed to collaborate in the areas of *inter alia* Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA); strengthening coordination of maritime Search and Rescue (SAR); promoting marine oil pollution response cooperation; expanding 'DOSTI' (friendship) exercises; and sharing information on illegal maritime activities and piracy. Both Sri Lanka and Maldives urged India to lead in this endeavour. India will provide MDA training to Sri Lankan and Maldivian officials, set up Maritime Rescue Coordination Centres (MRCCs) in Sri Lanka and Maldives and provide expertise and technical assistance in the field of SAR. Indian Coastguard conducted the International Maritime Organisation oil pollution preparedness, Response and Cooperation level 1 and Level 2 courses in Mumbai under the Indo-Maldives-Sri Lanka trilateral cooperation programme from November 25 to December 6, 2013. Five participants each from Maldives and Sri Lanka participated in the training.⁵⁵ During the third NSA-Level meeting in Delhi on March 6, 2014, new areas of cooperation including Hydrography; training in Visit, Board, Search and Seizure Operations; training on board Indian Sail Training Ships; exchanges between think tanks; and joint participation in adventure activities were also discussed.⁵⁶

During the eighth meeting of the India-Sri Lanka Joint Commission on January 22, 2013, both the countries signed agreement on Combating International Terrorism and Illicit Drug Trafficking.⁵⁷ The first Director-General levels talks between the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) of India and the Police Narcotics Bureau (PNB) of Sri Lanka was held in New Delhi in August 2014, wherein the two sides agreed to adopt a coordinated strategy to prevent drug trafficking between the two countries. The two countries also agreed to continue sharing of actionable intelligence in this regard.⁵⁸

Both India and Sri Lanka agreed to strengthen bilateral cooperation in the uses of civil nuclear technology for peaceful purposes for the mutual benefit of the people of the two countries. In this context, both the countries had two rounds of talks. The first round of talks was held on October 12, 2012 in New Delhi and the second round on May 5-6, 2013, where the draft text of a comprehensive Agreement on Bilateral Civil Nuclear Cooperation was discussed. Both the countries initiated the talk on the civil-nuclear cooperation following the protests in Sri Lanka against the Koodankulam Nuclear power plant in Chennai. Sri Lanka has raised concerns over the commissioning of the Kudankulam Nuclear Plant in Tamil Nadu's Tirunelveli district, which is only 250 kilometres from Sri Lanka's north-western coastal town of Mannar. The Sri Lankan Government had informed India in May 2011 about the need to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the two countries based on Article 9 of the second Convention on the early notification of nuclear accidents. Responding to concerns, India discussed nuclear applications, technological assistance, technological transfers, capacity building of officials in Sri Lanka about nuclear safety and response to nuclear accidents.⁵⁹

India's Humanitarian Assistance to Sri Lanka during Natural and Man-made Disasters

Sri Lanka is prone to natural disasters like floods, landslides, cyclones, droughts, wind storms and coastal erosion. These natural disasters cause loss of life, and enormous damage and destruction to property. The most severe challenge Sri Lanka faced in the recent history was in 2004 due to tsunami. Thousands of people died and millions have been displaced from their homes. In addition to these natural disasters, the country also incurs heavy toll on account of man-made disasters such as pollution, sand mining, etc. Indian armed forces provided humanitarian assistance to Sri Lanka both during natural and man-made disasters, as discussed below.

Flood Relief Operations

Consequent to unprecedented floods afflicting the districts of Ratnapura, Kalutara, Matara and Hambantota in central and southern Provinces of Sri Lanka, the Government of Sri Lanka had requested the Government of India on May 18, 2003 for medical-cum-humanitarian assistance for approximately 15,000 flood victims. Indian Army disaster management teams, comprising 20 doctors and approximately 200 paramedics, engineers and administrative support personnel were airlifted by the Indian Air Force from Allahabad and Secunderabad to Colombo on May 20, 2003. The Indian Army troops established medical camps in Ratnapura, Galle and Matara besides a number of Medical Aid Posts in the affected villages on May 21, 2003, where a total of 16,957 victims were

provided medical relief. Special medical supplies were sent to flight outbreak of epidemics, such as typhoid and other deadly diseases like dengue fever and malaria. INS Sharda was deployed at Galle, Sri Lanka from May 20-26, 2003 to provide relief. The teams were de-inducted on June 6, 2003.⁶⁰

Again, in 2011, floods affected more than one million people, or one-twentieth of the population of Sri Lanka.⁶¹ The Indian Government dispatched 25 tonnes of relief material, including food, drinking water, sleeping mats, blankets and bed sheets to Colombo for the flood-affected people in Sri Lanka by Indian Air force Craft.⁶²

Tsunami Assistance

The largest humanitarian assistance was provided in the aftermath of tsunami in 2004. Indian Air Force helicopters set off for Sri Lanka within hours and an Indian naval ship set sail from Kochi equipped with relief supplies within four hours of a request from Sri Lanka, despite the fact that some of its own areas were hit by the tsunami. One field Ambulance comprising nine doctors and 130 paramedics was airlifted to Sri Lanka on December 31, 2004. The field ambulance provided aid in Hambantota and matara Districts in Southern Sri Lanka. Aid was provided to around 7,846 patients. Mobile hygiene and sanitation teams visited relief camps and villages. The army provided 66 tonnes of rations, 4.5 kl of kerosene oil, 7 tonnes of medicines and 30,000 pairs of socks. Two Composite Task Forces carried out relief and rehabilitation tasks in Galle and Hikkaduwa, to help in the distribution of relief material, restoration of power supply, telephone communications, water supply, construction of temporary toilets and assistance in construction of a bridge at Televatha. Relief operations in Colombo and Male sector were also carried out using two HS-748 and six Helicopters (Mi-8 and Mi-17) operating daily, airlifting approximately 17 tonnes and evacuating the required personnel. Teams of divers were also deputed for relief operations in Sri Lanka.⁶³

Pollution Response Operations Off Sri Lanka

In a prompt response to the request received from the Government of Sri Lanka, Government of India dispatched its naval Dornier aircraft and two coastguard ships “Veera” and “Vikram” (OPV Class with Integral Helicopter) to the Southern Coast of Sri Lanka to contain the oil spill that had occurred from a merchant ship off the coast of Koggala. A total of 260 officers and men of the Indian coastguard were involved in the oil spill and pollution control operation.⁶⁴

In addition to these operations, many Sri Lankan nationals were rescued from different crises in foreign countries by India. In 2006, Sri Lankan nationals were rescued from Beirut during Israel-Lebanon conflict by Indian Navy ships Mumbai, Brahmputra, Betwa and Shakti.⁶⁵ Search and Rescue operations by Indian forces continue to save many Sri Lankan nationals.

Constraints and Shortcomings in India's Security Assistance to Sri Lanka

India was perceived as a threat in the initial years of Sri Lanka's independence, and even during the 1980s when it trained the LTTE. Since 1990s Sri Lanka's threat perception changed, and in fact, it recognised India as a security provider to Sri Lanka. Sri Lankan Government has sought Indian assistance whenever it is in trouble. However, the Government of India could not provide all the military assistance Sri Lanka sought to defeat the LTTE in view of respecting the sentiments of the Tamil people in India. As already mentioned, the DCA too was not signed in 2004 due to the Tamil factor.

Tamil Nadu has been opposing India's security ties with Sri Lanka even after the Eelam War. Since the ethnic conflict is not yet resolved and militarisation of the Northern province is ongoing, Tamil Nadu still opposes India's security assistance to Sri Lanka. Increasing attack on Indian fishermen by Sri Lankan Navy is another reason for Tamil Nadu's opposition. It has even urged the central government to not provide training to the Sri Lankan defence forces. Due to heavy pressure from Tamil Nadu the Indian Defence Ministry in 2012 had to stop training the Sri Lankan Air Force personnel at the Tambaram Air force Base near Chennai in Tamil Nadu, and they were moved to the Yalahanka base in Bangalore. However, the then Tamil Nadu Chief Minister J. Jayalithaa vehemently opposed the central government's decision to move the Sri Lankans to a different base in India, saying that the Lankan airmen should not be trained anywhere in India.⁶⁶ Tamil Nadu's political parties including DMK, AIADMK and the PMK have also opposed the central government's reported move to supply two OPVs to Sri Lanka to strengthen its capabilities to guard its maritime boundaries.⁶⁷ J. Jayalithaa wrote to the Indian Prime Minister in 2013 to cancel the sale of the OVPs to Sri Lanka.⁶⁸

Despite Tamil opposition, India provided, and is still providing, military assistance to Sri Lanka. However, not much publicity has been given to avoid controversy within India. As a result, common people in Sri Lanka are not aware about many aspects of the Indian assistance. India has been seen in Sri Lanka more as an interfering country and as a regional hegemon than a security provider.

At this point, it is important to examine the Indo-Lanka relations in the framework of the small states' behaviour towards the regional power. Usually the small states try to balance the regional power in the neighbourhood by having close cooperation with the extra-regional powers. Though Sri Lanka realises that India can provide all the security, it would not like to see India as the sole security provider because of its inherent fear of India. In such a situation, it is clear that even if India keeps quiet on the Tamil issues, Sri Lanka will still try to use a third country to balance India. During the Cold War period, India's regional policy was

such that it did not allow any third country to interfere in the region. In such circumstances, fear on the part of the smaller countries in the region was understandable. However, in the post-Cold War period, India has clearly articulated that it does not have any problem with the regional countries working with extra-regional countries as well as those inimical to India, provided it is kept in the loop, and with particular regard to Sri Lanka, that its territory is not allowed for anti-India activities. Sri Lankan policymakers are well aware of this caveat, but the Cold War period mentality is still prevalent among certain sections, and Sri Lankan leaders try to exploit that. As an independent country, Sri Lanka has the right to take any country's help as it wishes, to protect its territorial integrity and sovereignty. However, allowing a third country to use its facilities ignoring India's security concerns cause unnecessary tensions between the two countries. In early 2007, when Sri Lanka acquired a Chinese-built JY-11 3D radar system, the then National Security Adviser of India MK Narayanan said, "It is high time that Sri Lanka understood that India is the big power in the region and ought to refrain from going to Pakistan or China for weapons."⁶⁹ MK Narayanan's objection to the Chinese radar system was that it would overarch the Indian airspace. However, Sri Lankans argued that they had to seek out China and Pakistan for arms as India under pressure from Tamil groups refused to sell arms to their government to fight against the LTTE. While it is true that due to the Tamil Nadu factor, India refused to provide lethal weapons to Sri Lanka, it did provide non-lethal weapons and intelligence assistance during the fourth Eelam War.

Recently, External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj objected to Chinese building an Aircraft Maintenance Centre in Trincomalee. According to media reports, China National Aero Technology Import-Export Corporation (CATIC) had been granted permission to build such a centre at Trincomalee. The Aircraft Maintenance Centre would service, maintain and repair all Chinese aircraft in the Sri Lankan Air force. The project is to be built with a loan of US\$ 40 million.⁷⁰ The Sri Lankan Minister of External affairs, Prof. G.L. Peiris said in the Parliament on July 22, 2014 that the government had only agreed on setting up such a Centre, but had not thus far agreed on a possible location for the project. According to him, there were only three possible locations for the project, and these had to be areas which could land jet planes. The areas were Katunayake, Mattala and Trincomalee. The most suitable would be decided when all factors were taken into consideration. Sri Lanka has only 44 Chinese commercial aircraft, and these too are very old. For years, Sri Lanka has managed using the local engineers to repair them. Obtaining a loan of US\$ 40 million to build an Aircraft Maintenance Centre at this point, has raised eyebrows in India.⁷¹ Allowing the Chinese to go ahead with the project will be a violation of the Indo-Lanka Accord of 1987, according to which both India and Sri Lanka agreed not to allow their respective territories to be used for activities prejudicial to each other's interests. Because of

all these, Sri Lankan Government has been considered as insensitive to India's security concerns leading unnecessary tensions between the two countries.

How to Remove the Shortcomings?

Severing defence cooperation with a neighbour cannot be viable for India's own security. On the Tamil question, the Government of India needs to put constant pressure on Sri Lanka, and be assertive if required. It is important to find a prompt and satisfactory solution to the concerns of the Indian fishermen. If the attacks on the fishermen decline significantly, Tamil Nadu's opposition to strong security cooperation with Sri Lanka will also be reduced.

It is important to publicise India's security assistance across Sri Lanka to remove the misperceptions on India there. This should be the responsibility of the Indian High Commission in Sri Lanka. It is said that India's security assistance is not given much publicity in Sri Lanka fearing agitation in Tamil Nadu. Therefore, the Indian Government needs to communicate with the Tamil Nadu leaders the importance of security cooperation with Sri Lanka.

Sri Lankan leaders and officials have ensured that they will not allow China or any other power to use their territory against India.⁷² According to Sri Lankans, their military cooperation with China is purely commercial in nature. However, it cannot be guaranteed that the Chinese would not use their projects in Sri Lanka particularly ports or airports for military purposes. A Chinese Navy submarine's visit to Sri Lanka's Colombo Port prior to the Chinese President Xi Jinping's visit on September 16, 2014 triggered speculations in India. Reportedly, it was the first time any Chinese conventional submarine visited foreign ports.⁷³ India, therefore, needs to categorically convey to the Sri Lankan authorities that it will not tolerate or keep quiet if China is allowed to use the Sri Lankan territory for any activities which may affect India's security.

Conclusion

India is expected to play the role of a security provider, and it has in the past proved its worth by providing Sri Lanka security vis-à-vis military operations, capacity building or humanitarian operations. In fact, given the geographical proximity, it can provide faster assistance to Sri Lanka than any other power in the region or outside it. While Sri Lanka is well aware of this situation, it would not like to see India as the sole security provider. As a small country, Sri Lanka will always try to balance India by cooperating with an extra-regional power simultaneously. However, in all the aforementioned cases, be it the JVP insurrection, armed ethnic conflict or natural disasters, it is observed that there is a limitation to getting assistance from extra-regional countries. In international relations, countries agree to cooperate with each other as long as it serves mutual

interests. The US cooperated with the Sri Lankan Government as long as it served its purpose. Today, China is finding it beneficial to work with the Sri Lankan Government, but tomorrow it may very well change. But due to geographical proximity, the security of both India and Sri Lanka are interlinked. Any kind of security threat to Sri Lanka will have spillover effects on India's security. Moreover, recent intelligence reports suggest of attempts by third parties to launch terrorist attacks in India using the Sri Lankan territory.⁷⁴ Therefore, India will continue its security cooperation with the Sri Lankan Government not only for its strategic interests, but also to ensure its own security. In the post-LTTE period, both the countries have expanded their security cooperation in the fields of maritime security, civil nuclear technology for peaceful purposes and for combating illicit drug trafficking. During the Second Defence Dialogue between the two countries on October 10, 2014 in Colombo, ongoing defence cooperation initiatives were jointly reviewed and new avenues for cooperation were identified.⁷⁵ Following the Defence Dialogue, Defence Secretary of Sri Lanka Gotabaya Rajapaksa and Sri Lankan Navy Chief Vice Admiral Jayantha Perera visited India to strengthen defence ties with India. In a bid to strengthen ties with Sri Lanka, India is reportedly planning to supply two naval offshore patrol vessels and other military equipment to Sri Lanka.⁷⁶ In coming years, India-Sri Lanka security cooperation is likely to grow stronger as Modi government enjoys absolute majority in the Lok Sabha and not dependent on the political parties in the South who oppose security ties with Sri Lanka.

ENDNOTES

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INDO-PACIFIC

8

Maritime Security Partner in the Indo-Pacific

Cdr Abhijit Singh

The Indo-Pacific is increasingly the focus of world attention. This vast nautical space, comprising mainly Asia's maritime commons, is home to some of most congested sea-lanes and a key geo-strategic theatre of global power-play. With a vital geographic position at the centre of the integrated Indo-Pacific, India has a key stake in its stability and security. Notwithstanding apprehensions that naval pro-activism in Southeast Asia may result in a strategic confrontation with China, India is well positioned to partner regional states without threatening the security of other rising powers.

Introduction

For many years following its independence, India's conception of the maritime domain and its security was limited to the Indian Ocean. This huge water body—particularly its eastern part—was seen as the critical link between India and countries on its periphery and a sphere of Indian influence.¹ India strove for political influence and strategic primacy in the Indian Ocean and saw itself as a natural provider of security. Meanwhile, its political elites came to regard the Asia-Pacific as a strategic adjunct—a geographical space viewed mainly through the lens of a distant regionalism. While India had diplomatic and economic interests in East Asia, New Delhi didn't really consider region as being strategically significant.

This is surprising, considering that India's acknowledgement of its interests in the Asia-Pacific region dates back to the 1940s when Jawaharlal Nehru had emphatically referred to an Indian role in the region. In his book, *Discovery of India*, Nehru wrote prophetically: “*The Pacific is likely to take the place of the Atlantic in the future as the nerve centre of the world. Though not directly a Pacific*

state, India will inevitably exercise an important influence there. India will also develop as the centre of economic and strategic importance in a part of the world which is going to develop in the future."² In subsequent years, the Nehruvian vision for an Indian role in the East was a recurring theme in New Delhi's Southeast Asian engagements.

In a more practical sense, however, it was only at the turn of the 21st century that the Asia-Pacific emerged as a prominent theatre of Indian political interest. As Indian policymakers began acknowledging their national stakes in the east-Asian littorals, a region earlier considered politically distant began to figure on the New Delhi's mental-map. However, while India developed a fair understanding of its growing stakes in East Asia, it still wasn't sure about the nature of its interests. While in the post-colonial period the concept of an 'Asia for Asians' dominated regional discourse—marked by regional initiatives such as the Bandung Conference in 1955—the campaign for a 'pan-Asian identity' lost momentum as the region fractured along the Cold War divide and global powers inserted themselves into the regional space. In this complex scenario, India could not quite embed itself into Asia.³

Over the past few years, a polarisation of the security scenario in Southeast Asia has enabled New Delhi to define its interests with greater purpose and clarity. As intra-regional rivalries and territorial disputes in the South China Sea have played out with a fearsome intensity, India has been forced to make better sense of its security engagements in East Asia. In another sense, however, this can also be attributed to the rising salience of maritime security in the broader Indo-Pacific region. This integrated oceanic space, comprising the full stretch of the Indian Ocean and the Pacific, has rapidly eclipsed the once dominant Asia-Pacific as the centre of global geo-politics. Widely accepted as the most economically dynamic region in the world and a key arena of great-power competition and conflict, the region is increasingly seen a crucial determinant of the rapidly shifting strategic equations. Slowly but surely, India has come to accept the Indo-Pacific as an arc of security interest.

Expectedly, the tenor of strategic interplay in the Indo-Pacific has been unpredictable. While trade in the region has grown substantially, the overlapping interests of various stakeholders, combined with the economic and military growth of regional powers have caused confrontation and conflict. The strategic dissonance doesn't appear to merely be the result of military assertion of regional powers. Instead, it is a by-product of the strategic conflicts over sovereignty claims and maritime governance in the global commons. The situation has been further complicated by the serious non-traditional challenges in the region that have turned maritime-Asia into a corridor of uncertainty. Growing instances of drugs and arms trade, human trafficking and illegal fishing have imperilled maritime security in the region.

With a vital geographic position in the centre of the integrated Indo-Pacific, India has sought to develop its security role in the region. Its nautical endeavours during the past few years have displayed an increasing willingness to be a security provider in the region. But fears in some quarters that India's growing maritime role will bring it into conflict with China have circumscribed New Delhi's security posture.

This paper seeks to outline India's stakes in littoral Asia and sketch the contours of its security role in the region. It argues that notwithstanding the apprehensions in some quarters about India's naval presence in East Asia, there are compelling reasons for New Delhi to play a robust role in securing the nautical environs of the Indo-Pacific.

Geopolitics of the Indo-Pacific

For a fuller appreciation of India's potential to be security provider, it is first important to understand why stability in the Indo-Pacific is so crucial for global prosperity. The Asian maritime theatre (a key constituent of the broader Indo-Pacific) is the strategic fulcrum of global prosperity as it hosts vital nautical capillaries of commerce that nourish world economies. Of the six major global choke-points, in fact, four are in this region.⁴ Among these, the Straits of Malacca—through which almost a quarter of world trade passes—is the most vital. The main artery of the world economy, the Malacca straits is a key enabler of not just China's economy, but also for many economies of East Asia, Europe and the Middle East.⁵

Likewise, the Straits of Hormuz is a critical conduit for energy shipments from the Middle East and the flow of Asian labour, capital, and consumer goods, particularly to the rich countries in the Arabian Peninsula. Geo-strategically speaking, the choke-points dominate more than the commercial and economic lifelines into and out of the rapidly expanding economies of South and East Asia. The strategic growth and expansion of aspiring powers can be contained and regulated through the mere control on the movements of their naval forces through these Straits. More importantly, with more than 150,000 vessels transiting through these narrow waterways every year the destinies of many regional and global economies are dependent on effective maritime security.⁶

There is also the emergence of new trading centres in the region. Increasing regional trade had led to the creation of port infrastructure and many transshipment hubs. New ports, airports, roads, rail systems and pipelines now traverse Asia from West to East and provide access to the landmass of Eurasia. The pace and scope of infrastructure development has been so dramatic that sometimes entire new ports have been developed on sites that were earlier little more than fishing harbours such as Gwadar in Pakistan or Hambantota in Sri Lanka.

Increased interest in the Indian Ocean has resulted in a phenomenon of competitive port building. If China has invested heavily in Hambantota, Gwadar, Chittagong and Sittwe,⁷ then India too has taken upon itself the task of developing Chabahar on the Southeastern coast of Iran.⁸ Similarly the U.S. is the primary patron of the large port being built in Dukm, Oman.⁹ India, the U.S. and China also happen to be the main power-brokers in the Indian Ocean—constantly looking to influence emerging geopolitical equations in the region. Unsurprisingly, analysts like Robert Kaplan have called the Indian Ocean a “cockpit of future maritime rivalries”.

Viewed through a broader prism, therefore, India’s maritime outreach to Southeast Asia is related to the wider geopolitics of the Indo-Pacific. Unsettled by Beijing’s growing economic and military heft and the PLA-N’s aggressive posture in East and Southeast Asia, China’s neighbours have increasingly exhorted India to play the role of a geo-political balancer.¹⁰ These states have been clear about their expectations from New Delhi, in terms of a security presence in the Pacific, but the latter has desisted from playing any role that involves counteracting China.

In the quest for its own logic of strategic maritime engagement, India has stressed on a two-pronged rationale to justify maritime presence in the Pacific.¹¹ The first is to secure its commercial interests in the region and uphold the principles of ‘freedom of navigation’ and ‘access to global commons’. The second is to retain the leverage to mount an effective response to a possible contingency in the Indian Ocean borne out of the China’s land border aggression. Many of India’s strategic elite believe that the developing maritime situation in the Indian Ocean is an indirect result of the military pressure exerted by the PLA on the boundary with India in Ladakh and Arunachal Pradesh. With repeated attempts by China to change known positions on the ground through incursions India has been forced to adopt a tough political posture and demand reciprocity in relations.¹² New Delhi, therefore, has avoided reaffirming its commitment to the “one China” policy, arguing that Kashmir is a core concern for India as Taiwan or Tibet, is for China.¹³

At the same time, the Indian Army has taken steps to increase its infrastructure and military deployment along the border, most recently by deciding to proceed with the creation of a new mountain strike corps of nearly 40,000 troops. India’s maritime analysts have argued that notwithstanding the accretion in force-levels on the border with China, it is finally the Indian navy’s stranglehold over the Indian Ocean SLOCs that will provide the decisive leverage in restoring the military balance-of-power with China.¹⁴

The Indian Navy, however, can only be an effective instrument if diplomacy can be mobilised to its advantage. Sadly, despite the growing economic interaction

in East Asia, New Delhi's geo-political traction in the region still remains limited.¹⁵ India's inadequate diplomatic heft has, in the main, been a collateral consequence of Beijing's deep economic ties with Southeast Asia.¹⁶ China has enormous investments in its neighbouring countries and has planned massive infrastructure projects in the region. The economic gains that Chinese investment in the region promises cannot be matched by India. New Delhi, however, suspects that the substantial financial payoffs entail long-term strategic implications that could impinge on maritime security. Indian analysts reckon that the construction of ports, logistical stations, storage facilities and free-trade zones is a ploy to project China as a benevolent power. The idea, apparently, is to use the projects' commercial returns to establish Beijing's legitimate interests in the Indian Ocean. But repeated offers of economic aid (for instance, a maritime cooperation fund proposed by Chinese Premier Li Keqiang last year) only serve to reinforce doubts about China's real intentions.¹⁷

China's rhetorical pronouncements of shared economic gains of the Maritime Silk Route (MSR) do not conceal its real purpose: ensuring the security of sea lines of communications (SLOCs). Since Beijing's principal focus right now is on African resources, the project could well be a proxy for a giant Chinese SLOC running all the way from the East African coast, to the Southern coast of China. It could ultimately result in the establishment of Chinese logistical hubs in the Indian Ocean, linking up already existing string of pearls. If anything, this would pose a challenge to India's strategic leverage in the Indian Ocean. As China's military power and political influence in the Indian Ocean grows, it could result in a dilution of New Delhi's geo-political equities in the region.

India as a Security Provider in the Indian Ocean

Even while accepting the essential logic of the Indo-Pacific, India's security elite have tended to treat the Indian Ocean and the Pacific as two distinct theatres.¹⁸ The former has always been central to New Delhi's maritime calculus and a key component of national security. Over the past three decades, the security establishment has displayed a consistent commitment to providing security cover to smaller nations in the Indian Ocean. The enduring security partnerships with the coastal and small island nations in the IOR underscore New Delhi's emphasis on its near-abroad. Not surprisingly, the Indian Navy has been declared as a net security provider in the region,¹⁹ mandated to pursue "a proactive engagement with countries in the Indian Ocean region and ensure peace and stability, to meet its wider security interests."²⁰

India's engagement with the island nations in the Indian Ocean is an apt illustration of its desire for a robust presence in maritime security endeavours in the region. The Indian Navy has patrolled Mauritius' EEZ since 2003, and deputed

a naval officer to manage the National Coast Guard of Mauritius. India laid the foundation of its naval security cooperation with Mauritius with the gift of the Indian Naval Ship (INS) Amar in 1971.²¹ Since then, it has periodically provided Mauritius with maritime reconnaissance assets—including an interceptor patrol boat (2001), three Dornier 228 maritime surveillance aircraft (2004 and 2010),²² three new Islander aircraft engines (2013) and even a coastal surveillance radar system.

In addition to providing maritime assets and training, the Indian Navy also carries out hydrographic surveys, and assists Mauritian Coast Guard ships in EEZ surveillance and joint patrols. During a visit to Mauritius in February, 2013 Indian Navy chief Admiral D K Joshi handed over an inshore survey vessel to Mauritius on New Delhi's behalf. The Indian navy also delivered a new offshore patrol vessel to Mauritius in December 2014, for use in anti-piracy operations, and to fight illegal fishing and drug trafficking.²³

The Indian Navy and Coast Guard also assist Seychelles in maintaining security by providing maritime surveillance, ocean surveys, training, and maritime military equipment and repair. In 2005, India gave the Seychelles Coast Guard a fast-attack vessel, INS Tarmugli, and a Do-228 aircraft and two Chetak helicopters in 2010.²⁴ Over the years India has assisted in aerial and sea patrols in the waters around Seychelles. Beyond bilateral relationships, New Delhi's leadership role in Indian Ocean institutions, such as with the Indian Ocean Rim-Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC) and the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) reinforces its strong security relationships with island-states in the Western Indian Ocean Region.

Contrary to popular perception, India's maritime role in the Indian Ocean isn't limited to the security of smaller island states. Over the past decade, the Indian Navy (IN) has played a significant role in securing the SLOCs in the Indian Ocean. In the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks in 2001, India agreed escort sensitive U.S. cargos through the Straits of Malacca. The operation signalled the end of its long-standing opposition to U.S. naval presence in the Indian Ocean, also cementing India's status as a key maritime security provider in the Indian Ocean Region.²⁵ Similarly, the IN's role in counter-Piracy operations off-Somalia has been significant. Since 2008, Indian naval ships have escorted over 2000 ships in the North-Western Indian Ocean, and are even known to have coordinated with the Japanese and Chinese navies.²⁶

India's contribution to regional stability is deemed critical not just on account of the threats posed by non-state actors, but also because of the growing military prowess of smaller regional states. Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Myanmar have been arming themselves and are increasingly asserting their stakes in regional security and governance.²⁷ Moreover, as China's influence in the IOR has grown,

India has mulled a stronger military relationship with its neighbours. Recent reports suggest, New Delhi is considering the supplying two naval offshore patrol vessels and other military equipment to Colombo, and enhancing the delivery of Dhruv advanced light helicopters (ALH) and other hardware to Maldives.²⁸

India's Maritime Outreach in the Asia-Pacific

As opposed to the Indian Ocean, where India's interests are predominantly strategic, New Delhi views the Asia-Pacific primarily through the lens of economics. Regional economic interaction has, indeed, played a key role in enabling the growth trajectories of major Asian powers and has been a crucial factor in India's own development. However, since most of the intra-regional economic engagement is contingent upon safe maritime passage for sea-borne trade, 'maritime security' has gradually come to occupy an important place in India's economic and foreign policy agenda.

The evolution of India's security posture in the Asia Pacific is, in many ways, related to the transformation of its Look-East policy (LEP). As a strategic policy, the LEP was more focused on economic growth and regional commercial interactions than it was on security needs.²⁹ In the early 1990s, after India was liberated from the structural constraints of a rigid bipolar global order, the Indian Government undertook an economic liberalisation program that led to an imminent expansion of the country's engagement with Southeast Asia. The aim of the new strategy was to link India to the world's most economically dynamic region by liberalising economic exchanges with ASEAN countries and seeking an economic and cultural reintegration with South East Asia.

Over the past two decades, the LEP has continued to be the prime policy framework of India's economic engagement with Southeast Asia. In this time, there have been compelling reasons why the policy has primarily remained an economic instrument.³⁰ As global economic power has shifted towards Asia, the imperative for engagement with East Asian economies had become stronger than ever. India, which until the late 80s had limited economic interaction with Southeast Asia, recognised the need to 'engage east'.

In 2010, however, India began to augment the security dimension of the LEP.³¹ After joining the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting plus Eight, for the first time ever, India's security interests in Southeast Asia were politically acknowledged. The advent of the ADMM plus coincided with the rise of China and the proliferation of non-traditional security threats in the Indian Ocean-Pacific Ocean combine.

As a result of the incumbent threats, the Indian Navy's regional security role grew—particularly counter-piracy and counterterrorism, and other irregular security issues such as anti-proliferation, counter-trafficking, and humanitarian

assistance and disaster relief, South East Asia emerged as a key locus of India's security attention.³² In effect, maritime security and connectivity became a driver for India's re-conception of its interests in Southeast Asia. In time, the Indian Navy began to increase its maritime forays in the region—the increased navy-to-navy interaction followed by an expansion of defence aid to ASEAN countries.

In June 2014, on a visit to the aircraft carrier, INS Vikramaditya, Prime Minister Narendra Modi linked maritime security to India's growth story.³³ Speaking about the need for secure sea-lanes, India's new premier identified the navy as a crucial factor in the nation's economic development. Keeping the sea lanes open for commerce, he noted, was a critical part of the navy's agenda.³⁴ Modi touched on the theme again during the commissioning of INS Kolkata in August, where he noted the "inextricable connection between maritime power and national growth story", adding that the navy's new ships could "inspire confidence among those worried about the security of maritime trade".³⁵ Without mentioning it directly, he hinted at an Indian role in the security of the broader Asia-Pacific littorals, where regular and irregular threats have emerged as a source of regional concern.

The re-conception of India's security interests in the Asia-Pacific bears further emphasis. After many years, New Delhi's engagement with Southeast Asia is being driven not just by growing trade and the attendant concerns of securing the SLOCs, but also larger strategic developments such as the U.S. Pivot to Asia, increasing Chinese military activity in the Indian Ocean, and India's own growing maritime capabilities. Consequently, India's policy elite have identified key areas of interest, where there are larger stakes to be protected. The South China Sea, for instance, is vital for India—not only as a gateway for shipping in East Asia but also as a strategic maritime link between the Pacific and the Indian Oceans. It profoundly affects India's strategic vision as a growing power, in terms of its expanding security role in the integrated maritime theatre spanning the two oceans. On more than one occasion, India has committed itself to protecting its commercial interests in the South China Sea.³⁶

In recent years the Indian Navy has taken active participation in the ADMM plus exercises, even as the Indian engagement with the Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF) has grown. While a section of the defence and foreign policy establishment has been wary of projecting India as a strong security player in the Western Pacific,³⁷ there is a broad understanding that India must have the necessary security presence to defend its substantial economic stakes. With state-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation's foreign arm, ONGC Videsh, involved in major oil-exploration activity off the coast of Vietnam and a substantial part of Indian energy and trade passing through the Malacca straits, the pragmatic school has insisted that India take keen interest in maritime security developments in the Asia-Pacific region.

Defence Cooperation with ASEAN

New Delhi, thus, has had to tread the middle path between military pro-activism and zero intervention in the Pacific. Defence cooperation with ASEAN members has been low-level—geared primarily towards exchanges of high-level visits, strategic dialogues, port calls, training exchanges, joint exercises and provision of defence equipment. Importantly, India has looked to ASEAN's leadership to address its regional security concerns. While endorsing ASEAN's security policies in combating non-traditional threats, it has also backed the association's negotiating positions in solving the fractious maritime disputes in the Western Pacific.³⁸ In recent years, India has sought to take its relationship with ASEAN to a higher level. During the ASEAN-India commemorative summit in January 2013, for instance, New Delhi set-out a blueprint for enhanced security cooperation in the future, characterising the summit as an important milestone that could take maritime ties to a new high.³⁹

In the months that followed the commemorative summit, ASEAN nations reached out seeking India's security assistance. In July 2013, the Myanmar Navy's commander-in-chief, Vice Admiral Thura That Swe, sought the help of the Indian Government in building offshore patrol vessels and in supplying naval sensors, as well as other military equipment, indicating a deeper level of relations between the two nations.⁴⁰ Myanmar Naval personnel are already trained at various institutions in India, and the Indian Navy has given Myanmar four Islander maritime patrol aircraft in the last decade. Following India's pledge of security assistance to Southeast Asia, Naypidaw is clearly looking for a more robust defence partnership with New Delhi.

About the same time that it reached out to Myanmar, India also offered a \$100 million credit line to Vietnam for the purchase of military equipment. This was finalised during the visit of the general secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam, Nguyen Phu Trong, to India in July 2013.⁴¹ Usually a privilege reserved for India's immediate neighbours, this was the first time that New Delhi has extended a credit line for defence purchases to a geographically more distant nation. Then, in October 2014, during the visit of the Vietnamese Premier Nguyen Tan Dung, New Delhi announced its decision to supply four naval patrol vessels to Vietnam. This was deemed a significant development, both for its timing, which coincides with Hanoi's raised pitch on its territorial dispute with China, and also the strategic signal that India sought to send out by modernising the Vietnamese military and expanding its involvement in Vietnam's energy sector.

The importance of ASEAN in India's strategic calculus is also clearly reflected in two high-level visits undertaken by Indian policymakers last year: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's tour to Japan and Thailand in May 2013 and Defence Minister A.K. Antony's visit to Singapore, Thailand and Australia in July the

same year.⁴² The latter visits to Bangkok and Canberra were especially significant and exemplified the larger effort at expanding India's strategic cooperation in the Asia-Pacific.

Antony's visit to Thailand came immediately after Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's tour of the country in which the Thai Government expressed interest in collaborating with the Indian Defence industry. The defence minister discussed the possibility of enhancing joint patrolling of the common maritime boundary between the India and Thailand. With new assets being based in Nicobar, including a new naval air station, India expressed confidence to carry out patrols in the region.⁴³ More significantly, he offered Thailand the opportunity to cooperate and collaborate in the defence production sector and also to help meet Thai armed forces' needs through Indian military industry.⁴⁴

The most significant visit to the Asia Pacific, however, came in the form of a prime ministerial tour of Australia in November 2014 where an agreement for a framework for bilateral defence cooperation was signed.⁴⁵ A wide-ranging and comprehensive bilateral agreement, it has resulted in the formal acknowledgement of many shared challenges in the maritime domain. According to the action plan of the Framework for Security Cooperation, both sides will hold annual prime ministerial meetings, a Foreign Ministers' Framework Dialogue, regular defence ministers' meeting and annual defence policy talks and regular bilateral maritime exercises—the first of which would be held in 2015.⁴⁶

With Indonesia, the Indian Navy has been doing coordinated patrols outside the Malacca straits ever since the signing of the strategic partnership agreement in 2005. But following Defence minister AK Antony's visit to Indonesia in 2012, defence cooperation rose significantly with greater interaction on counter-terrorism and maritime security. Recent reports suggest the two navies have raised the level of the CORPATs to expand them into full-fledged joint exercises.⁴⁷ With a new nautically proactive president at the helm in Jakarta, and his dreams and promises of a stronger maritime-Indonesia,⁴⁸ there is more reason for New Delhi to scale up its cooperation.

The improvement in cooperation with Malaysia too has been palpable. Kuala Lumpur has also been looking for training its Scorpene submarine crew and maintenance of the submarines and India has expressed a willingness to help.⁴⁹ Similarly, there has been talk about India improving its defence and maritime cooperation with Cambodia, Laos, Brunei and Philippines.⁵⁰ Reportedly many of the recent discussions have been combating non-traditional threats such as piracy, trafficking, arms-smuggling, maritime pollution and over-fishing.⁵¹ But freedom of navigation still remains a top-priority issue. Together, the aforesaid developments underline a new seriousness in New Delhi's "Look East" policy and a growing acknowledgement of India's key role in the foreign policy matrix of nations in East and Southeast Asia.

Meanwhile, increased visits by Indian Naval ships to South East Asia have shown the Indian Navy to be the lead agency in developing India's outreach in the Western Pacific.⁵² In 2013, Indian Naval ships visited Vietnam, Philippines, Singapore and Malaysia and carried out bilateral maritime exercises with each of their navies. A similar visit, a year ago, witnessed an interaction between the Indian Navy and the PLA-N with a rare port call at Shanghai. The Indian Navy's interactions with the PLA-N have, in fact, been growing. In April 2014, the INS Shivalik's participation in naval exercises with PLA-N ships off the coast of Qingdao appeared to generate much operational synergy and good-will.⁵³

Within the broader East Asia region, however, the Indian Navy's ties with Singapore and Vietnam are particularly notable. After the 15th meeting of India-Vietnam Joint Commission in July 2013, the strategic partnership between the two countries was expanded to include a cooperative agenda on regional and global issues, and the provision of enhanced material aid.⁵⁴ While India has been offering training to Vietnamese military officers, a defence-related credit line will help Vietnam in buying Indian security equipment and platforms. For its part, Vietnam has offered India access to its ports in the South China Sea, including Nha Trang.⁵⁵

With Singapore too maritime relations remain as robust as ever. The Singapore-India Maritime Bilateral Exercise (SIMBEX) in the South China Sea has been getting more intense overtime, and has improved its operational content. India holds a defence policy dialogue with Singapore every year, in which both sides identify future areas of cooperation and share mutual security concerns.⁵⁶ During these exercises joint anti-piracy drills are carried out in and around the Straits of Malacca and the Bay of Bengal aimed at protecting commercial sea lanes and enhancing maritime security. Besides, the two military research and development organisations—India's Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Singapore's Defence Science and Technology Agency (DSTA)—have been involved in defence technology cooperation.⁵⁷

In addition to the key role that it has played in addressing regular maritime security concerns, the Indian Navy has been expanding its engagement with other regional navies in the non-traditional security domain. While India's Southeast Asian partners have a common interest in securing the international waterways, each is deeply concerned about Chinese assertiveness in the South China Sea. Engagement with India, for many of them, is a geo-political imperative with a potential to restore the strategic balance in the Western Pacific. Not surprisingly, participation in the Indian Navy's biennial MILAN multinational exercises, conducted since 1992, has expanded significantly. The latest instalment in February this year saw participation by 17 countries—up from four in 1995, included five new participants: two African nations (Kenya and Tanzania), two

Southeast Asian states (Philippines and Cambodia) and the island nations of Mauritius, Maldives and Seychelles.⁵⁸

Meanwhile, India continues to engage closely with the U.S. in the Asian littorals. Twice in the span of a month in July 2014—the U.S. Navy’s RIMPAC⁵⁹ exercises off-Hawaii, and the India-US MALABAR⁶⁰ exercises off-Okinawa—the Indian Navy exhibited its close operational relationship with its American counterpart. In particular, MALABAR-2014 has been significant, not just because of the participation of a Japanese Maritime Self-Defence Force (JMSDF) contingent, but also for the high-spectrum maritime exercises the three sides engaged in. Maritime manoeuvres this time included carrier strike operations, surface and anti-submarine warfare, and VBSS (visit, board, search and seizure) operations—each requiring a higher state of interoperability and integration, and all exercises previously avoided by the Indian Navy during multilateral engagements. Taken together, the India’s recent maritime interactions have served to locate the IN within the strategic environs of the Pacific. With New Delhi’s newfound status as the largest importer of American defence equipment, the Indian Navy’s latest engagements have been widely interpreted as an expression of strategic intent in Asia’s wider littorals.

While the IN’s efforts in the Pacific haven’t been in the nature of defining strokes to shape the strategic contours of Southeast Asia, its maritime-‘Act East’ has in itself been quite substantive. India has preferred a strategy of low-profile engagement that consciously keeps away from overt military activism in the tension-ridden waters of the South China Sea. Lest it’s growing maritime engagements with nations in the Western Pacific—many of them traditional U.S. allies—be seen as tacit alliance-building against China, the Indian Navy has focused more on its bilateral engagements with other regional navies. These include the India-Thailand coordinated patrol aimed at countering terrorism, piracy and arms smuggling, and the Singapore-India Maritime Bilateral Exercise.⁶¹ The Indian Navy’s training and capacity building efforts towards Southeast Asian countries too have drawn acclaim. Maritime analysts aver New Delhi’s role in low-end capacity building and its insistence on upholding the fundamental maritime principals of “freedom of navigation” and “open commerce” has been widely interpreted as a willingness to be a responsible maritime stake-holder in the Asia-Pacific.⁶²

India-Japan Maritime Cooperation

It is often claimed that the real driver for India’s strengthening security relations with partners in East and Southeast Asia has been the putative balancing process in the Asia-Pacific.⁶³ India’s growing ties with Japan are a case in point. Seen as a part of the China counter-balancing, some analysts contend it is a strategy

that seeks to achieve strategic congruence for a more favourable balance-of-power in the region. Prime Minister Modi's visit to Japan in September 2014—widely seen as an unqualified success—does appear to fuel that perception. With a commitment from Japan of \$ 35 billion to India over the next five years for developmental projects and an agreement to accelerate military ties, the relationship is on the threshold of being cemented by the impending sale of the US-2 amphibious aircraft.⁶⁴ Importantly, the Indian Navy is slated to be the beneficiary of Japan's first overseas military sale in nearly 50 years.

To be sure, the dominant narrative still characterises Indo-Japanese relations as a function of Tokyo's economic aid and infrastructure development funds to New Delhi. Japan has offered to construct the Delhi-Mumbai and Chennai-Bangalore industrial corridors, and is a major FDI player in India.⁶⁵ Yet, there are many that see the advancing economic ties as a mere adjunct to the growing security relationship between the two countries.⁶⁶ After all, security analysts point out, Premier Abe—the most enthusiastic proponent of a strong India-Japan relationship—has often described 'security' as the main thrust of advancing ties between the two countries.⁶⁷ He has also spoken of the need for both countries to work together in the Indo-Pacific region, or "broader Asia."⁶⁸

Courtesy Abe's support, Japan's security cooperation with India is today better than it has ever been in the past. The two countries now have a structured maritime exercise in the form of the Japan-India Maritime Exercises (JIMEX), the second edition of which was held in the Bay-of-Bengal in February 2014. Japan joined India and the U.S. for the MALABAR series of maritime exercises in 2014—the three naval contingents engaging in high-spectrum operational drills in the East China Sea.⁶⁹

The growing maritime engagement now includes building naval capacity, naval and coast guard exchanges, joint naval and coast guard exercises and greater cooperation in information sharing and technical assistance; the protection of sea lines of communication (SLOCs) and anti-piracy efforts in the Gulf of Aden; and extending patrol boats and capacity building training to the littoral states in the Strait of Malacca. Along with their strategic dialogue, the two sides have launched a bilateral Shipping Policy Forum, a Maritime Security Dialogue, and a Cyber-security Dialogue.

Interestingly, consequent to Modi's visit to Tokyo, officials on both sides were instructed to launch working-level consultations with a view to promote defence equipment and technology cooperation. Such defence cooperation, especially in co-production and co-development of defence equipment, would not only assist in building up the Indian Defence industrial base, it will also help Japan by utilising the strong Indian software capabilities, which is a major component of modern defence equipment, in leveraging its hardware capabilities

with Indian software strength.⁷⁰ The recent moves to increase the level of foreign direct investment in Indian defence industry along with the increased participation of Indian private industry in defence production could go a long way in building stronger Japan-India defence and strategic cooperation.

The India-China Maritime Dynamic

An interesting facet of India's recent maritime evolution is its efforts to improve its relationship with China. In February 2014, the Indian Navy sent a warship INS Shivalik to participate in a multilateral naval exercise at the north-eastern Chinese port city of Qingdao.⁷¹ The naval exercise—meant to commemorate China's 65th anniversary, and was held alongside the Western Pacific Naval Symposium (WPNS)—was the first time Indian Naval ships were participating in a People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) organised multilateral maritime exercise.

The interaction at Qingdao notwithstanding, there is little doubt India is apprehensive about growing Chinese maritime presence in the South China Sea and the Eastern Indian Ocean. Chinese military modernisation and the PLAN's regular forays in the Indian Ocean have caused fear in Indian mind that suspect China will soon demand a stake in the affairs of the Indian Ocean Region—especially a voice in matters of maritime governance in regional institutions like the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), fast perceived to be succumbing to China's growing diplomatic and economic sway.⁷² Beijing too hasn't been welcoming to Indian naval forays into the South China Sea.⁷³ Not surprisingly then, despite having cooperated regularly in combating piracy off the coast of Somalia and even having exercised together in the Western Pacific, the Indian Navy and PLA-N have generally restricted themselves to their separate geographical areas of maritime interest. Each is distinctly uncomfortable with the other's presence in their respective theatres of nautical influence.

A crucial factor, however, in shaping India's maritime relationship with China has been the latter's proposal for the establishment of maritime infrastructure in the Indian Ocean. On two separate occasions during the past few months, China has proposed India join the Maritime Silk Route (MSR)—a grand maritime project proposed by Beijing that promises connectivity, infrastructure and commercial development. During the visit of Vice President Hamid Ansari's to Beijing in July 2014, and also the 17th round of Special Representative Talks in February 2014, China urged India to actively participate in the MSR.⁷⁴ Unsure about the project's geo-strategic implications, New Delhi requested for more details to help reach an early decision.

Meanwhile the MSR has received a welcoming response in Sri Lanka and Maldives. Colombo has already received a \$1.4 billion from Beijing to build the

“Colombo Port City,” and Male has allowed Beijing to undertake up-gradation of the Maldives’ airport and construct a bridge from the capital city to the island hosting the Maldives’ international airport. Worryingly, however, there has been very little detail released about the MSR, except that it involves the development of maritime nodes that will help enhance trade and sea-connectivity and assist substantially in the development of local economies⁷⁵

Some Indian analysts suspect that in the face of a relentless publicity campaign by China, many Indian Ocean states may sign up to the MSR without considering the viability and strategic purpose of the project. On the other hand, the recent announcement of a \$ 40 billion dollar fund for the “One-Belt-One-Road” project (of which, the MSR is a part) suggests that Beijing is serious about giving concrete shape to its ambitious proposal. Indeed, if the project’s stated aim of creating land and sea linkages from China onto wider-Asia and Europe becomes a reality, New Delhi might regret nixing Beijing’s proposal. The fact that the “New Silk Road”—the MSR’s land counter-part— seems to have taken-off in right earnest will certainly be weighing on the minds of Indian policy-makers.

A Security Role in the Pacific

The Indian Navy has already declared itself as a security provider in the Indian Ocean.⁷⁶ Its outreach to the smaller Indian Ocean states, the Middle East, Africa and the South Asian littoral highlights its presence as vital for the security of the Indian Ocean’s sea lines of communications (SLOCs). The success of the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) and the MILAN exercises underscores the Indian Navy’s robust involvement in regional maritime security, even as Indian policymakers have sought to contribute vigorously in regional multilateral fora such as the IORA.

Notwithstanding its expanding security role, however, much of the Indian Navy’s present contribution to security has been in the form of EEZ patrolling, information sharing and humanitarian assistance. With the Asian littorals emerging as contested spaces, there is a general sense that alongside its benign maritime role, India is looked upon to also play a strong balancing role in the region. Against the backdrop of China’s aggressive posturing in the South China Sea, regional states expect India to take a hard stance on maritime territorial issues, mainly with regard to matters involving security of sea-lanes and freedom of navigation. New Delhi has shown these are principles it is willing to defend. However, for the moment, it is reluctant to commit to anything more than engagement on non-traditional maritime issues such as humanitarian assistance and capacity building.

India need not, though, be self-limiting in its conception of regional maritime security; for it might be entirely possible for India to alter its model of security

to provide the assistance being sought, without necessarily getting into a confrontation with other powerful nations and causing conflict. It could—both figuratively and practically—be an effective counterpoise to the rising challenges in the Pacific.

New Delhi's recent maritime endeavours show it is beginning to recognise its unique role of pragmatic balancing and effective security provisioning. The Indian Navy's participation last year in the RIMPAC and the MALABAR⁷⁷ exercises in the Pacific—the latter interaction involving joint drills between Indian, U.S. and Japanese warships—reveals a desire for a security model that allows for both subtle strategic push-back and the provision of regional goods. The new paradigm, however, does not threaten or provoke other powerful players. In the same stretch of time, for instance, that the IN performed high-spectrum exercises with the USN during MALABAR and RIMPAC, it also performed maritime maneuverers with the PLA-N at Qingdao and the Russian navy (INDRA-14).

A Stabiliser of Regional Balance

With growing commercial and diplomatic interests, India realises the need to be a proactive and responsible regional stakeholder in the Asia-Pacific. It has made a strong case for supporting not only 'freedom of navigation' but also 'access to global commons' in accordance with principles of international law. Notwithstanding New Delhi's reluctance to play a regional balancing role to counter China's military might, it is beginning to appreciate the need for delicate maritime balancing in the Pacific. It realises that by playing a subtle stabilisation role, the IN could be a source of positive deterrence and greater regional good. This does not necessarily translate into an anti-China coalition, but certainly has the potential to impose subtle checks on China's aggressive displays of military maritime power. By just being more involved in security affairs in Southeast Asia, New Delhi could be a responsible stakeholder of peace and stability in the region.

As it develops its combat potential and strategic reach, the Indian navy too appears keen to dispel the impression that its mandate remains confined to India's coastal and near regional waters. It has set an expansive agenda for itself and aspires to be a world-class blue-water navy. While longer forays into the western Pacific do impose costs and constraints, an inability to confront challenges could seriously inhibit the realisation of India's strategic goals. To be a dominant maritime power in Asia, the Indian navy will need to work with like-minded stakeholders in a singular and clear-minded pursuit of common objectives.

Today, India regards multilateral maritime exercises with likeminded actors as not just cooperative endeavours but strategic interactions. The periodic engagements with the maritime forces of the U.S., Britain, France, Russia, Japan

and China clearly give the Indian Navy the strategic relevance to project India's geopolitical influence. India's naval planners also recognise the value of joint operations with advanced platforms in a complex strategic setting. Most importantly, even while not operating in a coalition of maritime forces, the Indian navy is prepared to combine strengths to achieve common goals.

From a policy perspective, India's abiding interests lie in ensuring its reinvigorated 'Act East' Policy is not reduced to a mere tag-line or statement of nominal interest. To improve its security role in South East Asia, the Indian Navy must augment its maritime presence in the Indo-Pacific region and expand its security cooperation with South East Asian countries. Maritime-Asia needs a new security framework that must see India play a central leadership role. Only then will New Delhi be able to achieve its larger strategic objectives.

ENDNOTES

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9

India-U.S. Security Cooperation in Asia: Can India be a Net Security Provider?

Saroj Bishoyi

Introduction

Asia has been witnessing a remarkable economic growth since the last decade. With 60 per cent of the world's population¹ and with high economic growth rate, it has become a key part of the world economy. According to the Asian Development Bank (ADB), in 2013, developing Asia comprising 45 member countries with gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate of 6.1 per cent represented one of the world's fastest growing economies.² In the July 2014 Asian Development Outlook (ADO), it projected developing Asia to grow steadily at 6.2 per cent in 2014 and 6.4 per cent in 2015.³ In addition, with the rapid global power shift from the developed western states to Asia, new centres of economic and political power have emerged i.e. China, India, Indonesia, Japan, and Australia which further altered the power dynamics of the region. The world is steadily moving into a "post-American world"⁴ where the influence of Asian powers is growing.⁵ Although the United States still remains a pre-eminent power in the world, its global dominance has declined since the beginning of the 21st century. At the same time, Asia is levied with daunting security challenges. Issues like border problem, revisionist power, nationalistic assertions, maritime security, nuclear proliferation, terrorism, piracy, drug and human trafficking, climate change, environmental crises, energy security etc. are the major challenges to the nation-states and have deeper implications for the region's peace, development and cooperation. The region's peace and security is not only closely linked to India's and that of the United States, but the countries of the entire region as well as the global peace and security. In a nutshell, the emerging trends and

issues in Asia offer unique opportunities as well as challenges to the nation-states for developing cooperation.

India is an emerging world power in this rapidly changing geo-strategic and geopolitical landscape of Asia. India's rise with economic, military and political power positively affects Asia's peace and security. Economically, India's growth rate has been accelerated. In 2013, its GDP was about \$ 2 trillion. It has over \$ 300 billion foreign exchange reserves.⁶ The 2010 Goldman Sachs report *India Revisited* predicted that India will be "the third largest economy in the world by 2030, behind only China and the U.S. By 2050, the Indian economy is projected to be similar in size to that of the U.S."⁷ India is today increasingly integrated with the world economy, especially compared to its own previous record. Importantly, India's economic engagement with the Asian countries has been constantly increasing. During the period April 2012-January 2013, Asia accounted for 60.08 per cent of India's total imports and 50.78 per cent of India's total exports.⁸ Its own population of more than a billion plus, of which 65 per cent are under the age of 35 years and more than 50 per cent are in the working age group, is also seen as a promising market. In addition, well-educated English speaking upper and middle class are very important which provide greater optimism and resolve to succeed. The rising private consumption; increasing foreign and domestic investments; booming IT, textile, Bollywood and tourism sectors further boost India's economy.⁹ Its economic interests now have assumed a higher priority in defining India's foreign policy and security goals.

Militarily, India is one of the strongest countries in the world. It has over 1.3 million soldiers (third largest army in the world), and a huge arsenal of weaponry including nuclear weapons; it was also the world's largest importer of defence equipment for the year 2012 and 2013.¹⁰ Though Russia is still number one country in terms of arms supplier to India, in recent years it has diversified its defence relationship by developing robust defence cooperation with the U.S., France and Israel. Particularly, the U.S. has emerged as a major supplier of defence equipment to India. India bought \$5.9 billion defence equipment in the year 2013. Major U.S. export deliveries to India include Boeing's P-8 Poseidon maritime surveillance aircraft which contributed to India's 42 per cent increase in import expenditures in 2012.¹¹ During India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi's September 2014 visit to U.S., the two sides welcomed their decision to renew the 2005 India-U.S. defence cooperation agreement for another 10 years. In the joint statement, President Barack Obama and Prime Minister Modi not only agreed to further intensify their cooperation on strategic issues, but strongly expressed to "build an enduring partnership in which both sides treat each other at the same level as their closest partners, including defence technology transfers, trade, research, co-production, and co-development."¹² In recent years, India's

defence and security cooperation with Asian countries has also significantly developed. It is now increasingly holding dialogues with Asian countries on key security issues, including maritime security, counterterrorism, piracy, and disaster management. Moreover, Indian Defence forces are well trained and prepared to meet any of the emerging security challenges. However, its current security posture and status in the world are based on its continuing possession of a nuclear deterrent. Its quest for a special role in the world remains a strong feature of its foreign policy and the character of that role has become more India-specific and less visionary.¹³

Politically, India is the world's largest democratic country with stable political system. For instance, in 2014 General Election of India, out of the total 834.1 million eligible voters, 553.8 million people cast their vote for a stable BJP led NDA Government in an atmosphere of confusing array of political parties.¹⁴ India with a pluralistic society has succeeded in transforming potential fault lines of language, culture, religion, and ethnicity into bonds that unite the nation. It strongly believes that development can be achieved and sustained through democracy. As Prime Minister Modi in his recent interview to CNN's Fareed Zakaria rightly said, "You can't say that growth is not possible because of democracy. Democracy is our commitment. It is our great legacy, a legacy we simply cannot compromise. Democracy is in our DNA."¹⁵ In fact, democracy and development complement each other. In addition, India's "soft power" influence is growing in Asia and beyond.¹⁶ Importantly, Indian policy makers are fundamentally pragmatic and strongly believe that India's continued economic growth and military power are the essential foundation for achieving its foreign policy goals.

Therefore, India's growing economic and military power, a stable democratic political system, and its global ambitions makes it a potential world power. In the present world politics, national power is in fact judged by these criteria. India's emergence on the world stage with this composition of national power gives it a greater leverage in the matters of world affairs and in a unique position to play a leadership role in the world, especially in Asia. In fact, it is already an important player in the ongoing regional and multilateral negotiations on major strategic issues, including trade and investment, energy security, climate change and security issues, particularly maritime security, terrorism and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). India has also been playing a significant role in the UN peacekeeping operations over the last 60 years commencing with its participation in the Korea in 1950.¹⁷ These roles have attracted world's attention towards India, especially that of the United States. The United States clearly recognises India's emergence on the world stage and its potential role in maintaining peace, stability and security in Asia which is critical to sustaining

and advancing foreign policy interests of both the nations. For instance, U.S. Secretary of Defence Chuck Hagel recently said, "India not only represents one of the most significant countries by any measurement in the world today, but will help shape a new world order that is emerging in this young century."¹⁸ As India's power grows, the U.S. expects it to be "a net provider of security" in the Indian Ocean Region and beyond. As former U.S. Secretary of State Hilary Clinton, speaking at the Anna Centenary Library in Chennai, India, on July 20, 2011 said that with a population of 1.3 billion people and a rapidly growing economy, India is "not simply emerging, but has emerged" as a global power, and hence should play a leading role in the future of the Asia-Pacific region as well as Central and South Asia.¹⁹ While India continues to refashion its security policy towards this dynamic region, the U.S. has already made a paradigm shift in its foreign policy to cope up with the inescapable geo-strategic reality of the 21st century. The U.S. now regards India as a "lynchpin" in its new defence strategy that focuses on Asia. In this strategy, it is not only urging India to play an active role in Asia, but calls for further deepening of defence and strategic relationship between the two countries.

In the light of increasing U.S. expectations of India as a security provider and its growing security ties with India, the present chapter aims to analyse and examine India's potential role as a security provider in Asia. It also aims to analyse the U.S. support to India in augmenting its capabilities to play security provider role. The chapter has been broadly divided into four sections. The first section provides an analysis of the evolving India-U.S. security relationship and the U.S. changing perceptions of India as an emerging world power and security provider in Asia and beyond. The second section focuses on expanding India-U.S. security cooperation in Asia, particularly covering the regions of South Asia, Central Asia, West Asia and East and South East Asia. Taking into account their shared strategic interests in the region, this section examines the progress made so far in their security cooperation in Asia as a whole. The third section deals with the major constraints that the two countries are facing in further enhancing security cooperation in this region. Finally, besides summarising the nature of the evolving India-U.S. security cooperation in Asia and its future prospects, it makes an overall assessment of the United States contributions to India in augmenting its capabilities to play security provider role.

Evolving India-U.S. Security Relationship and the U.S. Perception of India as a Security Provider

India's emergence on the world stage with economic, military and political power; and, its potential role as a security provider in Asia has significantly contributed to the development of India-U.S. security relations. Indeed, India-U.S. relations

have been transformed over the last one and half decade. In this transformed relationship, defence and security cooperation is the most visible aspect of their relationship. This is quite apparent from the increasing frequency and scope of bilateral military exercises, growing defence trade, counterterrorism cooperation, homeland security cooperation, as well as growing cooperation on regional and global security issues.

It may be recalled that with the end of the Cold War and collapse of the Soviet Union, India drastically changed its economic and foreign policies to cope with the new geo-strategic realities of the post-Cold War world where the U.S. emerged as an extra-regional security partner of India. India's May 1998 nuclear tests and self-declaration of nuclear weapons state brought global power attention. Though the U.S. imposed economic and military sanctions on India in the immediate aftermath of its nuclear tests, it found highly necessary to engage the growing Asian power both economically and strategically. The then India's External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh and U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott, held 14 rounds of strategic dialogues spanning over two years that brought the two nations closer on security front. Consequently, the U.S. played a significant role during the Kargil war of 1999 in dispelling the nuclear fallout in the South Asian region. In the history of India-U.S. relations, it was for the first time that the U.S. positively supported India against Pakistan. President Clinton asked then Pakistan leaders to respect the line of control, resolve the Kashmir issue bilaterally, not to resort to violence, and practice restraint.²⁰ This dramatically created positive atmosphere in New Delhi and changed India's perceptions towards the U.S. These developments in the post 1998 nuclear tests created mutual trust between the two countries which led to a historic visit of President Bill Clinton to India.

President Bill Clinton's visit to India in March 2000 was a turning point in India-U.S. security relations. During the visit, the two sides not only resolved to "create a closer and qualitatively new relationship" but signing of "a vision statement for the 21st century"²¹ provided the basis for the subsequent governments to further advance their relationship. The two sides had established their first joint working group on counterterrorism, formalising an area of cooperation that earlier existed.²² Importantly, at that time, the U.S. also expressed its willingness to work with India, particularly in Asia and recognised India's potential role in the region. For instance, in the "vision statement", the two sides strongly expressed, that "In the new century, India and the United States will be partners in peace, with a common interest in and complementary responsibility for ensuring regional and international security."²³ And, they agreed to, "engage in regular consultations on, and work together for, strategic stability in Asia and beyond."²⁴ Moreover, recognising shared interests and values between the two countries, President Clinton in his address to the Indian Parliament called India as a "natural

ally”.²⁵ Though the visit was a successful, it could not make any transformational effect. The Clinton Administration continued to hyphenate India-Pakistan relations and its preoccupation with nuclear non-proliferation policy towards the region hindered the progress of India-US security relations.²⁶

However, security cooperation between the two countries really began to transform after the September 11, 2001 incident. Particularly, after the Bush Administration removed most of the remaining military and economic sanctions which were imposed on India for its nuclear tests in May 1998, which helped to improve defence and technological cooperation between the two countries. In the year 2002, India and the U.S. signed a General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA), which facilitated U.S. weapons and technological sales to India.²⁷ In the same year in its National Security Strategy (NSS), the Bush Administration recognised India as a “growing world power with which we have common strategic interests.”²⁸ In 2003, India and the US signed a Statement of Principles (SOP) for enhancing bilateral cooperation in the field of strategic trade. In addition, the administration called India as a key “strategic partner”, dramatically shifted United States nuclear policy towards India by aligning India as a responsible stakeholder in controlling the proliferation of nuclear weapons; and, initiated a strategic partnership with India in 2004 laying out a roadmap for expanding cooperation in the areas of civil nuclear, civil space programme, dual-use technology, in addition to expanding their dialogue on missile defence. It also signed a new framework for defence cooperation agreement with India in 2005 where the two sides agreed to conduct regular joint military exercises, to strengthen the capabilities of militaries for promoting security and defeat terrorism, expand interaction with other nations for promoting regional and global peace and stability, and, to collaborate in multilateral operations.²⁹ It often expressed its “goal is to help India become a major world power in the 21st century.”³⁰ These initiatives paved the way for a closer India-U.S. security relationship on regional and global issues as well. In fact, India-U.S. security relations reached to a new height with the successful completion of the nuclear deal towards the end of the Bush Administration.

The bipartisan support for establishing a robust India-U.S. security relationship continued even after the Obama Administration came into power in 2009. Since then, the administration regards India as a “defining” and “indispensable” partner of the U.S. in the 21st century. It strongly believes that India is not only simply emerging but has already emerged as a world power.³¹ President Obama’s visit to India in November 2010 raised huge expectations of their security relations. During the visit, he not only supported India’s membership in the four multilateral export control regimes—Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), Australia Group (AG), Wassenaar Arrangement (WA) and Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), but India’s permanent membership in the reformed

United Nations Security Council (UNSC), recognising India as a close strategic partner. The two sides in their joint statement strongly expressed to work on the regional and global security issues as well.³²

The rise of Asia however lies at the heart of the United States revaluation vis-à-vis India. As the United States is increasingly dependent on Asian markets for trade and investment to sustain and grow its own economy.³³ In this regard, the United States views the Indian Navy as an important partner in maritime policing in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) where over 70 per cent of international trade and goods passes. The free and safe supply of energy holds key for Asian and also for the U.S. economy where Indian Navy is playing a critical role. The U.S. is also increasingly concerned about China's growing assertiveness across Asia. The U.S. strongly believes that India can play an important role in managing the balance of power in the region which in its view would help maintain region's peace and security. Taking into account these aspects, the U.S. Defence Department's 2010 *Quadrennial Defence Review* (QDR) states, as India's "military capabilities grow, India will contribute to Asia as a net provider of security in the Indian Ocean and beyond."³⁴ The US basically expects, India as an emerging player on the world stage "has a vital role to play in confronting global challenges and working with like-minded partners to ensure peace, stability, and prosperity."³⁵ India's role particularly "in the interdiction of WMD-related transfers, counterterrorism, counter-piracy and humanitarian relief help to further safeguard U.S. interests in the region". The U.S. recent defence budget cuts also provide another reason for Washington to share the burden by encouraging collective security measures across the region.³⁶ Thus, envisioning India as a security provider in the broader IOR, it is eager to achieve its strategic objectives in the region by sharing security burden with India.

Moreover, the U.S. believes that a strong relationship with India will benefit the people of the two nations as well as the countries of Asia and the world at large. It also expects India as a successful global example of a democracy and as a pluralistic society can play a leadership role in promoting democracy and human rights norms in Asia. As former Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs, Robert Blake in a speech said that "India is considered an important global example of successful, largescale democracy, as well as a potential partner in encouraging the spread of representative political systems. Washington also hopes to enlist New Delhi's voice in support of international human rights norms, particularly in the Asian region."³⁷ Besides, with the coming of Modi Government to power in May 2014, it is expected that India-U.S. strategic relationship will further improve. India's Prime Minister Modi has already expressed his strong desire to work with the U.S. on common areas of interests and he believes a strong India-U.S. relationship is joint effort for peace and prosperity. As Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Obama in their "Vision Statement for

the U.S.-India Strategic Partnership” declared that India-US “strategic partnership is a joint endeavour for prosperity and peace. Through intense consultations, joint exercises, and shared technology, our security cooperation will make the region and the world safe and secure.”³⁸

Therefore, India’s emergence on the world stage and its potential role in providing security in Asia has created enormous strategic and security interests for the U.S. The growing convergence of their security interests on a wide range of issues has brought the two nations much closer in Asia. As a result, India-U.S. security relationship today is witnessing “unprecedented levels of military-to-military ties, defence trade, and counterterrorism and intelligence cooperation.”³⁹ In fact, India now conducts the maximum number of joint military exercises with the U.S. defence forces than any other country and bilateral defence trade constitute over \$10 billion in last one decade. The two sides are now further exploring opportunities to transform the buyer-seller defence relationship to joint defence research, development, and co-production. It is worth noting here that the India-U.S. Joint Declaration on Defence Cooperation, issued on September 27, 2013, has placed the two countries in a unique category. The declaration stipulates, that “the United States and India share common security interests and place each other at the same level as their closest partners”.⁴⁰ Currently, the two sides are mutually engaging each other through various bilateral and multilateral mechanisms to further advance their security relationship.

The relationship is however not completely free of problems. There are considerable differences between the two countries over bilateral and regional issues which raise fundamental questions about the evolving security relationship and pose daunting challenges in further advancing their security cooperation in Asia. On issues such as troop’s withdrawal from Afghanistan, managing relationship with Pakistan and China, defining and fighting against terrorism, in addressing Iranian nuclear issue etc. the two sides have clear differences. The two sides must therefore address these differences in order to realise the goal of building a robust strategic relationship in the 21st century; else the relations will not only start to drift apart, but problems will keep on surfacing and delay its progress as it happened during recent diplomatic row over India’s diplomat Devyani Khobragade’s arrest, strip-search and indictment by the U.S. authorities. In this regard, the security establishments of the two countries need to closely engage each other to address the key security challenges. Progress on these will determine their evolving security cooperation at the regional and global levels.

Growing Convergence of Security Interests in Asia

The global power shift from the West to Asia and India’s emergence on the world stage has created new opportunities for both India and the U.S. to work together

in Asia. The growing convergence of their security interests further drive the two nations towards building a robust security partnership in the 21st century. As a result, the two sides have established various bilateral mechanisms for expanding their cooperation in the region such as East-Asia Consultation Group in 2010, Central Asia Consultation Group in June 2011 and West Asia Consultation Group in July 2011. The two sides are regularly holding dialogues on issues pertaining to South Asia. They have also established trilateral dialogues between India-Japan-United States and India-Afghanistan-United States in addition to the quadrilateral dialogue between the Australia-Japan-India-U.S. Besides, the two sides are holding “regular strategic consultations on pressing global challenges such as terrorism, areas of mutually beneficial cooperation such as peacekeeping, multilateral organisations such as the United Nations, and strategically significant regions where the U.S. and India share mutual interests.”⁴¹

Building on these ongoing bilateral, trilateral and quadrilateral dialogues, India and the U.S. seek “to expand their consultations to include a dialogue on the Indian Ocean Region, to deepen coordination on cross-cutting issues including maritime security and conservation of natural resources.”⁴² Therefore, taking into account the growing India-U.S. cooperation on a wide range of issues pertaining to Asia, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and President Obama in their September 2013 joint statement, “recognised that increased cooperation in these areas will strengthen the United States-India strategic partnership, highlighting shared democratic values and the capabilities the United States and India have to work together across Asia and around the globe.”⁴³ Indeed, there is huge opportunity for both the nations to further develop their strategic and security cooperation in Asia. A strong security relationship between the world’s strongest and largest democracy in Asia would provide peace and stability in the region and would benefit the people of the region and the world at large. As Prime Minister Modi and President Obama in their first joint editorial in the *Washington Post* stated, “the region and the world benefit from the greater stability and security that our friendship creates. We remain committed to the larger effort to integrate South Asia and connect it with markets and people in Central and Southeast Asia.”⁴⁴ However, the United States support to India in augmenting its capabilities to play a larger role in Asia will be the key factor in developing a closer India-U.S. strategic partnership in the region. The following sections deal with the evolving India-U.S. security cooperation across Asia.

Security Cooperation in South Asia

Culturally, politically and geographically, India is deeply connected with the South Asian countries. South Asia’s peace, stability and prosperity are also closely connected with India’s own progress. At present, however, it is the most volatile

region in the world. Issues like terrorism, nuclear proliferation and political instability throw serious challenges to region's peace and stability. These factors compel India to pursue peaceful relations with its neighbours in order to sustain its own rise. India's ability to establish and maintain predominant power in a stable region is seen as being vital to achieve a peaceful and predictable environment in which it can prosper. For instance, in a 2009 speech, the then Foreign Secretary of India Nirupama Rao clearly brought out the importance of South Asia's peace and stability to India, "That we strive for a peaceful and stable neighbourhood and for building peaceful and mutually beneficial relations with our neighbours goes without saying. This is an issue of critical importance since in the absence of such a neighbourhood, our efforts to play any substantive regional or global role, in accordance with our size and economic strength, and also our unhindered economic development would stand to be affected. Therefore, having a peaceful and stable neighbourhood is one of our top most foreign policy goals."⁴⁵ As a result, in contrast to its past foreign policy towards the region, India is now engaging its neighbours more actively. The newly elected Prime Minister Modi's invitation to South Asian leaders during his oath taking ceremony and his first foreign visits to Bhutan and Nepal are clear proof to this. As an emerging power, it now can play a vital role in maintaining the stability and security of the region as well as prosperity of the people of the region. However, the existing insecurity in the region is a major threat to India's own security and prosperity. This would also limit India's ability to play a leadership role in Asia. As David Brewster in his recent book *India as an Asia Pacific Power* argues that India's failure to create a peaceful and stable security environment in its immediate neighbourhood will affect its credibility as a security provider in Asia.⁴⁶

As mentioned, terrorism is a major challenge to India as well as to the United States in the region. Over the past two decades, the consequence of terrorist attacks on Indian economic prosperity has been felt acutely. India has been attempting to reform and strengthen its counterterrorism and counterinsurgency efforts. It has prioritised trade and aid incentives for South Asian nations to promote amicable relations with them, paralleling domestic efforts of security reform.⁴⁷ In addition to taking steps to normalise ties with Pakistan, it has been approaching its other neighbours, Bangladesh and Nepal in particular, to counter infiltration attempts by Pakistan-based militants. India is also working more closely with extra-regional partners, particularly with the United States, to share information and best practices on counterterrorism. In fact, India-U.S. counterterrorism cooperation has significantly improved since the September 11, 2001 incident. The two sides have made efforts to build military capabilities to conduct counterterrorism operations through military training and education programme, joint military exercises, intelligence, defence and logistics cooperation.⁴⁸

India and the U.S. share the common objective of stabilising Afghanistan, in order to deny sanctuary for terrorist networks targeting Indian and American citizens and interests. India is currently a key partner of the United States in shoring up support for Afghanistan through foreign aid and long-term strategic agreements with Kabul. Bilateral counterterrorism cooperation has also been strengthened in issue-areas beyond those directly related to Afghanistan, especially in the wake of the 2008 terrorist attack in Mumbai. The targeting of establishments frequented by westerners in addition to busy local hubs during that attack illustrated the shared interests involved. One U.S. State Department official described Indian commercial centres with a large presence of Americans as “big, squishy targets” for anti-American terrorist groups.⁴⁹ The United States Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) in its annual threat assessment 2010 report stated of India envisaging ‘a stable, friendly Afghanistan as crucial to India’s security,’ but taking a ‘measured approach to its assistance to Kabul.’ The report, noted, that “Indian leaders have underscored their desire to help re-establish a viable civil society in Afghanistan under a strong democratic government that is representative of all ethnic groups in Afghanistan.”⁵⁰ In this regard, India is implementing bilateral civilian assistance programmes and reconstruction aid, which has already exceeded \$ 2 billion, and that New Delhi ‘probably interprets recent public polling in Afghanistan which indicates that Afghan citizens are favourably disposed towards India’s role in that country as a positive endorsement of Indian activities.’⁵¹ In 2011, India and Afghanistan signed strategic partnership agreement which allowed India to play security role in the post-2014. So far Indian role in Afghanistan has earned a considerable reputation for it. However, this has created strong suspicion in Pakistan. Since many of the terrorist groups are safely operating in Pakistan which has links with the Pakistan’s ISI and its Army, they are poised to attack at Indian interests in Afghanistan. This remains unchanged even after the recent improvement in India-Pakistan relations. In this regard, Stephen Blank, senior fellow at the American Foreign Policy Council states, “Without a U.S. presence in Afghanistan, the challenges to India to sustain its investment there in the face of declining western support, continuing terrorism, and Pakistani machinations multiply.”⁵²

On Pakistan, India and the U.S. believe that a stable and economically successful Pakistan is in their common interest. However, Husain Haqqani, former Pakistan’s ambassador to the United States and currently director for South and Central Asia at the Hudson Institute, Washington DC observes that “Rhetoric and expressions of desire for more trade notwithstanding, security remains the overarching consideration in India-Pakistan ties.”⁵³ He added that in July 2014, “Pakistan’s military launched a military operation against terrorist safe havens along its border with Afghanistan, yet the Pakistani state is far from shutting

down the jihadi infrastructure.”⁵⁴ India obviously remains unhappy over Pakistan’s failure to prosecute terrorists involved in the 2008 Mumbai attacks.

These security threats in South Asia not only pose serious challenge to the two countries strategic interests in the region, but it immensely affects India’s ability to play larger role beyond this region. The United States could use its strategic leverage in influencing Pakistan’s behaviour towards Afghanistan in general and India in particular. Meanwhile, after new Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani came to power, Afghanistan and the U.S. have signed a BSA to allow American troops to stay in the country post-2014. Under the agreement, 12,000 foreign military personnel are expected to stay after 2014, when the combat mission of Afghanistan’s U.S.-led NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation) force ends. The force is expected to be made up of 9,800 U.S. troops with the rest from other NATO members.⁵⁵ Unlike earlier U.S. decision of complete drawdown of forces, this diminished troop’s deployment somehow help Afghanistan fight against terrorism and restore peace and stability in it. This comes after the rise of ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) terrorist groups in Iraq. However, the United States continuous financial and military assistance to Pakistan without sticks attached failed to bring any positive change in latter’s behaviour. The U.S. in particular needs to pay greater sensitivity towards India’s security interests in the region.

Security Cooperation in Central Asia

India and the U.S. have shared strategic interests in the Central Asian region. Both look to improve the economic connectivity of the region and also common security interests of fighting against international terrorism.⁵⁶ The U.S. expects India to play an active role in achieving their shared national interests in the region. For instance, in July 2011, former U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, said that “India and the United States share an interest in helping the people of this entire region build strong democratic societies and market economies, and to resolve long-festering conflicts.”⁵⁷ The U.S. strongly believes that “India’s diverse democratic system in which people of all faiths and backgrounds participate equally can serve as a model”⁵⁸ for the countries of the region. Secretary Clinton emphasised that India’s “leadership in South and Central Asia is critically important”⁵⁹ for the regions peace, security and prosperity. In this regard, she called for India and its South and Central Asian neighbours to work together to improve standard of living and reduce dependence on outside aid by creating a “new Silk Road” for regional trade, with upgraded border crossings and reduced bureaucratic barriers in order to encourage the free flow of goods. An increasing level of trade and connectivity between the countries of these two regions will surely create an atmosphere of peace and stability.

However, the main driving force behind India's growing relationship with the Central Asian countries is its energy and geo-strategic interests. In pursuing those objectives, it faces multiple and mounting security challenges from the Afghanistan-Pakistan region. Afghanistan occupies an important role in enhancing regional trade, but the impending U.S. withdrawal of troops from it could leave India as the most exposed foreign power supporting Afghanistan. Given the gravity of security threats in the Af-Pak region, even the diminished military and financial assistance to Afghanistan would have negative effect on its rebuilding and reconstruction process. This will also affect India's objective of bringing much needed energy from Central Asia and also on its strategic interests.

Like India, the Central Asian countries, which provided logistics support to the U.S. in its war against terrorism over the years, are deeply concerned about the security implications of troop's withdrawal from Afghanistan after 2014 due to its proximity to Afghanistan and Pakistan—the breeding grounds of terrorism. They are already facing security threats from extremists groups like the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, the Hizb-il-Tahrir and the United Tajik Opposition which have affiliations with Afghanistan and Pakistan. The withdrawal of troops will thus not only diminish United States influence in Central Asian and Af-Pak region, but will most likely lead to intensified terrorist attacks on them. In addition, Pakistan continues to display its hostile attitudes towards India by blocking its geographical and political access to Afghanistan and Central Asia. This also possesses a major constraint in enhancing India-U.S. strategic cooperation through regional economic connectivity. In this scenario, India's ability to provide any economic and military assistance to either Afghanistan or Central Asian countries will be affected. Stephen Blank stated that “since the U.S. functions as the creator of political space for India to operate in both Afghanistan and Central Asia, the U.S. withdrawal reduces India's ability to gain a major foothold in an area that will probably be subjected to increasing political and strategic rivalry after 2014”.⁶⁰

While India has developed close political and economic relationship with Central Asian countries, it is seriously handicapped by a lack of geographical access. There are various proposals for connecting with the region by road, rail, and sea links via Afghanistan and Iran but they are yet to be materialised.⁶¹ However, India and the Central Asian countries could step up their engagement in fighting against terrorism and also could enhance their contribution to the reconstruction and rebuilding process of Afghanistan through joint projects. India's full membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's (SCO) would also help India to work with other member countries in establishing regional peace and security. In this regard, Indian Foreign Secretary Sujatha Singh, addressing the SCO Heads of Government Council in Tashkent, Uzbekistan in November 2013 pointed out that the SCO should play a greater role in “rebuilding and reconstruction of Afghanistan, through common projects and financial

commitments.”⁶² India as an observer in the inter-governmental organisation has also endeavoured to play a constructive role both on security and developmental issues. Increased security cooperation between India and Central Asian countries would help address the emerging security challenges, especially after withdrawal of international troops from Afghanistan.

Security Cooperation in West Asia

Before 1990, India's foreign policy towards this region was largely determined by its stance on the Arab-Israeli issue. Since 1992, it has significantly improved its relationship with Israel when it established diplomatic relations with it. Defence and intelligence cooperation are the two most visible areas of their expanded relationship. In fact, Israel has emerged as the second largest supplier of arms to India after Russia with arms trade of over \$ 10 billion in the last one decade.⁶³ At the same time, steady economic growth over the past decade has caused a sharp increase in India's energy requirements. In the year, 2012-13, India imported around 63 per cent of its total oil from West Asia. India's dependence on foreign supplies is set to further increase with its rapid economic growth. The region is also one of the leading trading partners of India with a total trade of around \$ 200 billion in 2012-13.⁶⁴ Besides, about seven million Indians live in the area and they send over \$30 billion remittances annually to India.

Energy is however a major factor in India's expanding relationship with the regional countries, including Iran. From strategic point of view, Iran is very important for India as it provides access to Afghanistan and Central Asia. However, India-Iran relationship is going in the opposite direction from the United States ongoing efforts to isolate Iran over the nuclear issue. Though New Delhi and Washington have been consulting to find ways to cooperate on preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons, the unresolved nuclear issue looms threat on India's energy imports from it. The ongoing crises in the greater West Asian region, including in Iraq further adds concerns for India. However, India's quest for energy security as well as strategic interests could re-shape the region's geopolitical landscape and affects India's security relationship, particularly with the United States.

Moreover, India and the U.S. recognise the growing threat of ISIS to international peace and security. They look forward to enhance their security cooperation to counter this threat. But there are differences in their approaches to address this threat. Particularly, the United States unilateral military actions against ISIS have led to negative consequences, even though it has contained the rise of ISIS. When the U.S. takes military actions against such groups by entering other sovereign nation's territory, it must coordinate with those countries, including Syria where ISIS is safely operating. It also must get approval from the United

Nations and the Security Council before taking any such military actions.⁶⁵ Because such security challenges are trans-national in nature which require coordinated international responses. However, the United States unilateral action weakens rather than strengthening the international cooperative approach. Similarly, India's approach of diplomatically resolving Iranian nuclear issue differs from United States approach of sanctions and coercive diplomacy.

On the other hand, India with its democratic background, principled position of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, and long experience in UN peacekeeping operations, is in a right position to work as a mediator and can help restore peace and stability in West Asia.⁶⁶ Therefore, India and the U.S. should develop a coordinated and common approach towards this region by regularly holding their West Asia Consultation Group. This will help both the nations to effectively work on the major security issues in the region.

Security Cooperation in East and South East Asia

The East and South East Asian region represents the centre of gravity of the world's economic, political and strategic interests. The region has emerged as a significant geo-strategic space and a theatre of Great Power competition and rivalry. While traditional rivalries over maritime territory, sovereignty and resources have intensified among the regional countries, the rise of non-traditional threats such as terrorism, piracy, drug trafficking and climate change have thrown new challenges to the nation-states. The centrality of the region is however its natural resources, energy and international trade which renders, "its stability critical, the looming threat of maritime crime and environmental crises in the region making it an area of vital concern for maritime forces".⁶⁷ The nature of these security challenges in the region considerably has transnational implications which require international cooperative response. This geopolitical shift that shaped the expanded India-U.S. security relationship has changed the way both related to the region.

India's relationship with the East and Southeast Asia are very traditional. In the early 1990s, it revived this relationship through its Look East Policy (LEP). Since then its engagement with the countries of this region has been enhanced at economic and strategic levels. In fact, its LEP is a tacit acknowledgement that India needs to learn from the record of its eastern neighbours. This policy also reflects India's interest in protecting its broader economic and political interests throughout Asia. Moreover, India has strategic partnerships with many of the regional countries including Japan, South Korea and Australia. Particularly, India's relations with the ASEAN countries have seen a spurt in high-level visits and expanding trade and investment in the past decade. India has become a formal dialogue partner of ASEAN and would like to expand its participation in Southeast

Asian and Asia-wide institutions. Here too, there has been a modest but increasing programme of joint military exercises and port visits. For India, the big attraction is a more stable set of political and economic relations to the east, as well as the possibility of joint operations in the energy field. In addition, "India has signed three free trade agreements, all with East Asian partners: Japan, Korea, and the ASEAN. Participation in several ASEAN-centred institutions underscored the political dimension of India's Asia-wide ties."⁶⁸

India's security and strategic cooperation with the U.S. in the region has also dramatically developed over the last decade. There is an India-Japan-U.S. trilateral and India-Japan-Australia-U.S. quadrilateral partnership.⁶⁹ In a similar fashion, bilateral relations with Japan have improved greatly in recent years. Japan and India have a number of mutual interests such as preventing incidents of piracy and terrorism in the sea lanes through the Malacca Straits, improving bilateral trade relations and promoting peace in Sri Lanka. There have also been occasional joint military exercises, although India is also careful in not portraying its relationship with Japan in a too militaristic tone. This is because, in case of giving higher importance to security-related Indian cooperation with Japan, likely to be inhibited by concerns over its likely negative impact on the developing Sino-Indian relations, which are more multi-dimensional than the Indo-Japanese relations.⁷⁰

Most of the regional countries not only seek to further strengthen their partnership with India on a wide range of issues including trade, defence, science and technology, maritime security and disaster management, but also urges India to play an active and larger role in the region. In this regard, David Brewster argues that most of the countries in this region welcome India as a benign security provider.⁷¹ The U.S. in particular considers India as a "linchpin" in its rebalance strategy. It is generally perceived that strengthening relationship between them will help promote regional peace and stability as they share common values, interests as well as common security challenges.

There is however concern that "the Indian Ocean Region could witness a major military surge by China, turning it into an arena of great power competition in Asia."⁷² China has rapidly developed its relationship with Indian Ocean rim countries which is perceived as a "string of pearls" strategy to contain India. In response to this, India has sought to improve its naval and security cooperation with countries of East Asia including Japan, Vietnam, Singapore and the Philippines as well as with South Asian countries. However, India's strategic leverage particularly in East Asia is not comparable with that of China's growing clout in the Eastern Indian Ocean. China has recently gained this influence by funding huge maritime infrastructure projects such as Gwadar in Pakistan, Hambantota in Sri Lanka, Coco Islands in Myanmar, and Chittagong in

Bangladesh—the so called ‘String of Pearls’. These infrastructural facilities may have commercial purpose at present but according to Admiral Sureesh Mehta, former Chief of the Indian Navy, also “have a considerable scope for military applications.”⁷³ He further observes that, “China’s ability to put India under strain in the Indian Ocean is a growing factor shaping the broader dynamic of Asian security.”⁷⁴ Nonetheless, currently India and the U.S. are actively engaging with rising China. Both want China to play a positive role in building regional peace and security. As the Office of the Director of National Intelligence in United States in its 2010 report quoted Prime Minister Singh “the world should prepare for the rise of China as a major power”.⁷⁵ India believes that engaging with China is the ‘right strategy’ for both the nations. Importantly, recent improvements and development of relationship between India and China, two rising powers of Asia, is of great strategic significance.⁷⁶ This not only promotes their common national interests, but significantly contributes to regional peace, prosperity and stability.

Asia is still the fastest growing region in terms of economic development in the world. Most of the countries in the region, including major powers i.e. China, India, and Japan pay their main attention to economic development. They want to have a peaceful and stable regional and international security environment so that they can pursue their developmental goals unhindered. The U.S. which is deeply involved in the region, especially after September 11 incident has high stakes in the regions peace and stability than ever before. The economic dynamics have greatly promoted common strategic interests and enhance cooperation between them at bilateral, regional, and global levels for combating the security challenges, including terrorism, WMD proliferation, piracy, maritime security, energy, climate change, human and drug trafficking. In the same vein, India and the U.S. have come a long way since President Bill Clinton’s visit India in March 2000 in building their security relationship in the region. However, given their shared interests on a broad range of issues, the huge potential for further progress on those issues, and the strong domestic support that the relationship enjoys in both the countries, India-U.S. relationship deserves a much higher place. However, the two sides need to make concerted efforts for building a strong strategic relationship in the 21st century which they aim for.

Challenges

Despite the growing convergence of security interests and shared values between India and the U.S., they confront many challenges in expanding their security cooperation in Asia. At the bilateral level, after a decade of steady improvement in the relationship, it has become stagnated. While some critics regard the relationship is under plateau, others consider it is as drifting apart. Though a new hope and confidence has arisen after coming up of the new Modi

Government to power, especially after Modi's successful visit to the U.S. in September 2014, the two sides are facing numerous challenges in building a strong relationship in the 21st century, including implementing the much hyped India-U.S. nuclear deal; bringing more economic reforms for enhancing bilateral trade and investments; shifting buyer-seller defence relationship into a much higher level of joint defence research, development and co-production.

One of the key challenges that they face is however building consensus on implementing the pending defence agreements such as Communications Interoperability and Security Memorandum of Agreement (CISMOA), Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement for Geo-spatial Cooperation (BECA) and the Logistics Support Agreement (LSA) which the U.S. believes not only help advance their defence cooperation but would also help India to play a larger role beyond the South Asian region. In this regard, the January 2012 strategic guidance noted that, "A reduction in resources will require innovative and creative solutions to maintain our support for allied and partner interoperability and building partner capacity".⁷⁷ It clearly puts emphasis on building interoperability and capacity of the emerging partners through joint military exercises and defence equipment sales. In recent past, however, the U.S. Government officials and defence manufacturers have expressed their frustration over India's unwillingness to sign these defence agreements.⁷⁸ Though the U.S. believes CISMOA and BECA would enable technology transfer and seamless communications between the two militaries' weapons systems and the mutual "logistical support" agreement would help build the capabilities of their armed forces to meet the security challenges of the 21st century at the time of peacekeeping and humanitarian disaster relief operations. The security analysts have pointed out that this could lead to a formal India-U.S. military alliance in due course.⁷⁹ India's Defence Ministry as well as the navy and air force chiefs were also of the view that there was little to be gained by such agreements with the Americans and that they might even offend India's more important defence partners such as the Russians.⁸⁰

At regional level, the two countries are facing major challenges at all the sub-regions of Asia. In South Asia, big challenges come from Afghanistan and Pakistan. In Afghanistan, the U.S. is in hurry to withdraw its troops by shifting its prior goal of establishing a stable, peaceful and prosperous Afghanistan to an acceptable Afghanistan. Though India has made significant contribution to Afghanistan's reconstruction process, it is deeply concerned about the prevailing security situation in Afghanistan. There is a very strong reason to believe that terrorism will be back to Afghanistan affair once the international forces leave it. The case of Iraq is clear evidence of this. Peace and stability in Afghanistan is also highly necessary for India's goal of implementing the TAPI pipeline project which aims at promoting India's economic growth by ensuring its energy security. In this regard, Washington's proclaimed Silk Road project is largely intended to promote ties

between Central Asia, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India. However, given Pakistan's hostile attitudes towards India if Afghanistan fails, India's goal of bringing gas from Turkmenistan will be seriously affected. India's relationship with the Central Asian countries is also developing over the last two decades and New Delhi is yet to cultivate strong ties with these countries. However, like India, the existing insecurity in Afghanistan is a serious concern for the Central Asian countries and they too are worried about the post-2014 troop's withdrawal. Therefore, given the present situation in Afghanistan, international community including the U.S. must continue to support it for at least another decade.

On Pakistan, though India-U.S. counterterrorism cooperation has significantly developed since the September 11 incident vis-à-vis Pakistan, India and the U.S. have "contrasting policies toward Pakistan and fundamental differences in bureaucratic systems serve to constrict the depth of cooperation between the United States and India."⁸¹ India's urge to the United States to use its strategic leverage on Pakistan to mend its behaviour is in vain, instead recognition of Pakistan as non-NATO ally negatively affects India's security. Thus, any U.S. pressure and repeated pleas to India to accommodate Pakistan, ignoring its track record on abetting 'cross-border terrorism' are unacceptable to India. The United States continued military and economic assistance to Pakistan that bear no relevance to its expected role in the 'war on terrorism' has also been a cause of concern for India over the years. This creates big challenge for both the nations in building mutual trust and confidence in forging security cooperation in the region. Moreover, the Washington's recent efforts in negotiating with "good terrorism" are a clear sign of ignoring India's security sensitivity. India clearly points out that one cannot classify terrorism as "good terrorism" and "bad terrorism", terrorism is terrorism and they are threat to humanity. India is of the view that all the international community who believe in humanity should join together in fighting against terrorism.⁸² So far as West Asia is concerned, the region is very important for India from both strategic and energy security point of view. However, the ongoing unrest in the region and rise of ISIS has raised serious security concerns for India. In this regard, Iran is very important for India. It is one of the larger suppliers of energy to India. It is also a point of entry and exit from Afghanistan and Central Asian. However, it is "a questionable partner because its nuclear issues are by no means resolved."⁸³ India and the U.S. agree on the increasing threat of ISIS to international peace and security. They also recognise the importance of peace and stability in the greater West Asian region, but differences between the two countries apparently arise on their approaches to resolve the crises in the region, including the Iranian nuclear issue.

On East and South East Asia, though there seems to be growing complementarity between the United States "Rebalancing Strategy" and India's "Look East Policy", they confront challenges in building consensus on vital

strategic issues of national importance and also bringing reforms at regional and global institutions to address the emerging security challenges such as energy, international terrorism, nuclear proliferation and climate change. These challenges are trans-national and cross-cutting in nature which requires coordinated international responses. In addition, India's strategic interests in the region derive primarily from the domestic needs of ensuring energy security, safeguarding its SLOCs in the Andaman Sea and enhancing the international image of India as a rising power.⁸⁴ India's evolving "Look East Policy" however disappointed some U.S. Government officials and strategic experts who would like to see New Delhi forging closer trade and security links with America's Asian allies. As former Secretary of State Clinton urged New Delhi "not just to look east, but to engage east and act east, as well."⁸⁵ Moreover, the U.S.' Asia re-balance strategy comes in the backdrop of China's phenomenal economic rise and increasing military assertiveness in the South and East Pacific. Rising China's political and military ambitions has also given India major reasons to be wary. However, both India and the U.S. have some very different reasons to be worried about China. For India, these concerns about China are primarily related to the boundary dispute, the growing trade deficit and the rise of Chinese economic and political influence in South Asia, China's nuclear links with Pakistan and China's support for the Pakistani position on Kashmir. Washington has historically paid little attention particularly to the Sino-Pakistani nuclear weapons and missiles ties which together with Pakistan-sponsored terrorism has contributed the most to the deterioration of India's security environment.⁸⁶ On the other hand, the United States primarily following a hedging strategy towards China. As economically, Washington is increasingly engaging with rising China and militarily it tries to contain China by developing military partnership with its key allies and emerging partners in the region. Thus, notwithstanding the two countries serious concern about China's growing military assertiveness and their shared interests of resolving the South China Sea dispute peacefully, the two countries policies clearly diverge on managing their relationship with China.

Finally, New Delhi and Washington differ on their perception of the emerging world order and on the present structure of the global decision making. While India perceives for a multi-polar world where the global agenda would be set by a constellation of nations including Russia, the United States, China, Japan and India, the U.S. still looks to dominate the world in setting the global agenda by itself. Furthermore, India does not want to be seen as a military ally of the U.S. Instead, it wants to develop a mutually beneficial relationship with all the major powers including United States. It is also perceived that if India would blindly follow the U.S. policy in Asia then this could compromise its strategic and foreign policy autonomy. At present, it has diversity of engagements in Asia and the world, institutionalised in the form of triangular and multilateral groupings like

IBSA (India, Brazil and South Africa), BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa), India-China-Russia and those with Japan, Australia, and the U.S. In this regard, Kanwal Sibal, former Foreign Secretary of India, has rightly bought out India's concern, stating that, "India wants to develop broad-based mutually beneficial relations with various global power centres rather than being seen as excessively leaning towards one power centre."⁸⁷ Harsh V. Pant, a professor in the Department of Defence Studies in King's College London, also says that strategic autonomy effectively means India wants friendly relations with everybody which, "means you are not ready to make choices."⁸⁸ In addition, at a time when the U.S.' economic and political power is relatively declining, India's regional and international profile is growing, and the war possibility with China is very unlikely in the immediate future, it is believed that its balanced relationship with all the major countries of the world including Russia, China, Japan, and U.S. is very critical to its rise as a major power in the coming years. This allows India to maintain its foreign policy autonomy and would provide enough strategic manoeuvres in future.

Conclusion

From the above analyses, it can be said that the future prospects of India-U.S. security cooperation in Asia will largely depend on India's continuous rise as a world power and the success of their bilateral relationship. Though India-U.S. relations have dramatically improved since President Bill Clinton's visit to India in March 2000, they are yet to achieve the full potential of the relationship, and the goal of establishing a robust strategic partnership in the 21st century. At present, the utmost important question is how they can take strategic relationship forward by addressing the major challenges that they confront at bilateral, regional and global levels. However, India-U.S. security cooperation is still evolving and will certainly shape the peace and security in Asia and the world. As India's Prime Minister Modi and U.S. President Obama in their joint editorial rightly stated that India-U.S. "natural and unique partnership can help shape international security and peace for years to come."⁸⁹ They added, "While our shared efforts will benefit our own people, our partnership aspires to be larger than merely the sum of its parts. As nations, as people, we aspire to a better future for all; one in which our strategic partnership also produces benefits for the world at large." And, "The promise of a better tomorrow is not solely for Indians and Americans: It also beckons us to move forward together for a better world. This is the central premise of our defining partnership for the 21st century. Forward together we go—chalein saath saath."⁹⁰

Most importantly, the global power shift from the West to Asia is going to be a process lasting some decades into the future where India will continue to

evolve as a world power. In this budding geo-strategic and geopolitical landscape of Asia, the major objective of India's foreign policy has been to secure for itself strategic autonomy so that it can pursue its national interests. India's critical security concerns are: external security (emanating from Pakistan and China); internal security; sustained economic growth; energy security; maritime security; and access to technology.⁹¹ India's persistent success at the domestic front as well as peace and stability in its immediate neighbourhood would principally decide its role as a security provider in Asia. In addition, India's own strategy towards Asia has been evolving since the end of the Cold War. Over these years, "while India sought to engage with Asia and has been able to convert these challenges into opportunities through a combination of political, economic, and foreign policy measures, its approach in managing them has been ad hoc and not based on a forward looking grand strategy".⁹² As a result, its security relationship with the regional countries is not fully developed. In addition, the lack of India's diplomatic capacities is hampering its capabilities to engage with Asian countries more intensely and also affects its ability to provide security in the region. Consequently, it has not displayed fully its leadership role in the region.

Nonetheless, India has made significant efforts to enhance regional peace and stability, and to expand its outreach across Asia. India's increasing defence and security relationship with Asian countries is clear evident to this. It has considerably improved its relationship with major maritime powers of the region including the U.S., Japan, Australia, and China who influence and determine the peace and security of the region. Importantly, as India's national interests are no more confined to South Asian region, domestic consensus is now building up in favour of India playing an active role beyond this region. India's emergence on the world stage certainly has a positive impact on Asia's peace and stability which is critical for sustaining and advancing the countries national interests in the region. The U.S. regards that India's rise is in America's interests and has been urging India to play an active role in providing security in this region. Though it supports India's membership in the UNSC; four international export control regimes—NSG, MTCR, AG, and WA; and wants to transform buyer-seller defence relationship into joint defence research, development and coproduction of defence equipment by further deepening of defence and strategic relationship with India. In the practical sense, however, the U.S. support to India is not sufficient enough in building its capabilities to play a larger role in Asia. The U.S. must therefore help India to develop its capacities by helping it in building indigenous defence industries; in the field of innovation and technology transfer; in meeting the growing energy demands; and in reforming regional and global decision making institutions for bringing India into these decision making bodies. Substantial efforts in the areas will help enhance India's great power status and its ability to provide security in Asia. This will also foster India-U.S. security

cooperation in Asia on a broad range of issues. The U.S. support in these areas is a litmus test of the burgeoning India-U.S. security relationship in the 21st century.

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10

Security Engagement in Southeast Asia

Rahul Mishra

Introduction

With the ushering in of the twenty-first century, geopolitical and geo-economic realities of the world have transformed substantially. This change brought about scores of changes in the world order. One of the major developments was the shift in the nucleus of global politics to Asia and the emergence of the East and Southeast Asian economies. After the end of the Cold War, Southeast Asian economies grew faster than those in several other regions. That was also the time when India embarked on its economic reforms and began to look towards the Southeast Asian region. Additionally, in terms of defence cooperation, India strived to comprehensively engage the Southeast Asian countries. India's reengagement with the region started with the initiation of India's Look East Policy in 1992. The policy was the brainchild of the then Indian Prime Minister, P.V. Narasimha Rao and was religiously followed by the successive governments. The Look East Policy, rechristened as the 'Act East Policy' in 2014 by the Narendra Modi-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) Government, was one of the policy outcomes of India's Balance of Payments crisis and subsequent economic reforms, lack of progress in the South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC), globalisation and the end of the Cold War. The Look East policy was an attempt on the part of India to foster closer ties with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member states as also those countries falling in wider East Asian region.

The Look/Act East Policy has successfully entered in its third decade, and over the years, India has engaged countries of the region both at the bilateral and multilateral levels. On the bilateral front, there is constructive cooperation between India and the individual ASEAN member states. So far as India's multilateral

engagement is concerned, India's entry into several ASEAN-led mechanisms such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting (ADMM) Plus, East Asia Summit (EAS) and signing of strategic partnership agreement with ASEAN in 2012 further strengthened India's engagement with the countries of the Southeast Asian region and their flagship organisation—ASEAN.

Since 1990s, despite the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis, most of the East Asian countries have maintained impressive economic growth. Taking cues from recent developments, Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi-led NDA Government expanded the scope and focus of the Look East Policy after sensing that Phase I and Phase II of the policy could not achieve their fullest potential, despite being success stories.¹ With the Act East Policy, India aims to engage more robustly with countries of the Southeast Asian region as well as the countries of the wider Asia-Pacific region not only in economic and cultural sense but also in political and strategic domains. ASEAN member states have also appreciated India's initiatives and welcomed it with open arms. Swiftly changing regional security architecture can be cited as one of the most prominent reasons for India's proactive engagement with the region. India's rising bonhomie with Australia, Japan, South Korea and the U.S. paves its path for reinforcing its position in the Southeast Asian and the wider Asia-Pacific region.

This article argues that India's close politico-security and economic partnership, and support in fighting non-traditional security threats, bilateral and multilateral capacity building programmes and the growing security engagements with the three Southeast Asian countries, i.e., Indonesia, Singapore and Vietnam have facilitated strengthening of India's position in the Southeast Asian region, leading to India's gradual emergence as a security provider.

Indonesia

India-Indonesia relations date back to more than two millennia. The cultural bridge between India and Indonesia that has been in existence since the Neolithic period operates at several levels: art, architecture, popular drama and literature, Indian communities in Indonesia, and even the societal configuration of Indonesia and their struggle for freedom from Colonialism. This speaks volumes about the historic linkages between the two countries.² India-Indonesia relations were mainly shaped by their anti-Colonial sentiments. In the contemporary times, Indonesia has been viewed as a long-term strategic partner of India, increasingly occupying the central stage in India's foreign policy. Indonesia being the biggest archipelagic nation in the world holds substantial importance in India's diplomatic maneuvers mainly because of its geographical proximity with India. Though, India does not share a land border with Indonesia, the two countries share a

maritime boundary. Indonesia is not too far away from India. From the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Indonesia is approximately 128 km (90 nautical miles) away. This proximity situates Indonesia at a higher position in India's maritime security calculus. For India, maintaining cordial relations with Southeast Asian countries, especially Indonesia, is crucial for its national security as the Andaman and Nicobar Islands are closer to Indonesia than to New Delhi. The Andaman and Nicobar Islands, which are strategically located at the juncture of the Bay of Bengal and the Malacca Straits, compel India to secure its maritime interests in the region. In 2001, India realised the strategic significance of these islands and created the Andaman and Nicobar Joint Command at Port Blair, the only tri-service geographical command of the Indian Armed Forces. With the setting up of India's Andaman and Nicobar Joint Command, Indonesia's significance has increased manifold. Closeness between India and Indonesia at the international stage is natural as the two countries have several commonalities. While India is the largest democracy in the world, Indonesia is the third largest and these two countries are strong proponents of the Nonalignment and strategic autonomy. Both India and Indonesia are the biggest countries in demographic, geographic and economic terms in their respective regions. In fact, both India and Indonesia can be termed as 'first among equals' in the South Asian and the Southeast Asian region respectively.

Economic Aspects

Economic security is one of the key foundations of security, and lies at the core of a country's role as a security provider. Slowly and steadily India has also started working on this aspect with regard to its engagement with the region and its countries—Indonesia, Singapore and Vietnam. India is Indonesia's ninth largest trading partner, while Indonesia is India's second largest trading partner in the ASEAN region. However, the Balance of Trade is tilted in Indonesia's favour. It may be noted that though India-Indonesia trade is much below its potential, Indonesia is still an important economic partner of India and their economic cooperation has increased by leaps and bounds in recent years. Bilateral trade has increased manifold since 2007. India-Indonesia bilateral trade reached \$ 20 billion in 2013-14 from a meagre figure of just \$ 6.9 billion in 2007-08. The two countries aim to reach the \$ 45 billion mark by the end of 2015. India's exports to Indonesia include refined petroleum products, maize, commercial vehicles, telecommunication equipments, oil seeds, animal feed, cotton, steel products, plastics and pharmaceuticals in bulk and formulation; while it imports crude palm oil, coal, minerals, rubber, pulp and paper and hydrocarbons reserves.³

So far as India's investment in Indonesia is concerned, by 2020, India strives to surpass China to become the largest investor in Indonesia, which seems achievable. As of now, India's investment is close to \$ 15 billion in Indonesia.

Several Indian companies have made significant investments in coal mining, infrastructure, power, textiles, steel, automotive, mining machinery, consumer goods and banking sectors; whereas prominent Indian groups/companies such as Tata Power, Reliance, Adani, GMR, Oorja, Trimex, Videocon, L&T, GVK, Punj Lloyd, CG Power, Madhucon, Indo Rama, Aditya Birla, Bombay Dyeing, JK Industries, Jindal Stainless Steel, ESSAR, Ispat, Tata Motors, Mahindra, TVS, Bajaj, Minda, Classic Stripes, BEML, Godrej, Wipro, Balmer & Lawrie, State Bank of India, Bank of India, ICICI Bank, etc. have established fully-owned subsidiaries/joint ventures in Indonesia.⁴ While the current developments suggest a positive trend, there are still a few bottlenecks in bilateral trade and investment relations. For instance, Indonesia's investment in India is yet to reach a satisfactory level. Additionally, early and agreeable negotiations on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) would benefit the two sides in the long run. India's increasing investments in Indonesia's energy sector indicates that as India's energy demands rise, it would take more steps to ensure a reliable supply, leading to India's greater role in Indonesian foreign policy priorities and stronger bilateral relations.

Strategic Dimension

There are no two views that India has expanded the scope of its Look East Policy to include the military and strategic aspects. Over the years, in order to realise its maritime goals, India has modified the functions of the Indian Navy to strengthen its interactions with other navies of the Indian Ocean littoral. Interestingly, in the late 1980s, when India was upgrading its naval capabilities by acquiring the aircraft carrier *INS Virat*, and the three-year lease of *INS Chakra* (a Soviet-built nuclear-propelled submarine); Indonesia, among others, expressed its concern that such acquisitions by India are aimed at becoming a 'regional hegemon' having an offensive combat force with influence beyond the Indian Ocean and Malacca Straits.⁵ However, India learnt its lessons and massive naval diplomacy was put to use.⁶ Regular Maritime Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs) ushered in a new era of cooperation, which began to transcend the naval contours.⁷

Arguably, the most important steps were the joint naval exercises that India started holding periodically with Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore from 1990s near the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.⁸ The then Chief of Naval Staff (CNS) claimed that the ships' visit and communication exercises should dispel the apprehensions about any Indian ulterior motives in Southeast Asia.⁹ Subsequently, with its efforts India was successful in allaying concerns among Southeast Asian states about its naval capabilities.¹⁰ India, which was seen as one of the potential

hegemony competing with China and Japan, proved itself as an emerging 'benign power of consequence' and a security provider within two decades.¹¹

So far as the joint naval exercises are concerned, a steep rise has been witnessed in their numbers since the end of the Cold War. In order to strengthen its defence cooperation with other countries, India has been sending ships to the foreign ports, hosting foreign ships and assisting its maritime neighbours in disaster management activities. Training defence personnel has also been a common feature of India's strategic engagement in the Southeast Asian region. Friendly visit of the Indian naval assault vessel, *INS Airavat* to Vietnam in July 2011, and the Sail Training Ship (STS), *INS Sudarshini* expedition 2013 are just a few examples of deepening India-Southeast Asia maritime relations.

India and Indonesia not only have a common vision for economic growth and development but also have a common perspective on strategic issues such as defence and maritime security across the Bay of Bengal and the Malacca Straits. India has always been conscious of naval competition in the Indian Ocean region and the salience of Indonesia in its strategic calculus. Perhaps that is the reason why India held its first joint naval exercise with the Indonesian Navy at the Surabaya coast in 1989. That was just the starting point of their joint naval exercises. The two navies have been conducting joint maritime patrol exercises, HADR operations and regular exchange of officials for defence training purposes for several years now.¹² The Indian and Indonesian Navies work together on naval patrols and transnational crime prevention exercises.¹³ In 1994, the Indian Navy conducted second joint exercise with the Indonesian Navy. In October 2000, to test the compatibility of these two navies, the Indian Navy conducted Passage Exercise (PASSEX) with the Indonesian naval ships.

Later in 2002, India and Indonesia conducted their first-ever India-Indonesia Coordinated Patrol (INDINDO CORPAT) in the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL) in the Andaman Sea. The INDINDO CORPAT, so far, has had both navies dispatch two ships each for joint patrol of the seas against piracy, armed robbery, poaching, illegal immigration, drug trafficking, and human trafficking.¹⁴ Till now, twenty-four rounds of INDINDO CORPAT along the IMBL have taken place. The 24th edition of INDINDO CORPAT was conducted on September 9-30, 2014.¹⁵

The years 2001 (cooperation in defence), 2002 (first biennial patrol), 2005 (Strategic Partnership) and 2007 (Joint Consultative Mechanism of FMs) and the visit of the former Indonesian President, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (2011) are a few milestones in terms of India-Indonesia relations in the past few years. Former Indian Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh's 2013 Indonesia visit provided further impetus to India's strategic partnership with Indonesia.

The year 2005 can be termed 'watershed' in India-Indonesia relations when the two sides signed the 'Joint Declaration on Establishing a Strategic

Partnership'.¹⁶ During India's former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's Indonesia visit, the two sides agreed to 'adopt a five-pronged initiative for strengthening the Strategic Partnership with the objective of taking the robust, multifaceted cooperation to even greater heights in areas of Strategic Engagement, Defence and Security Cooperation, Comprehensive Economic Partnership, Cultural and People-to-People Links and Cooperation in Responding to Common Challenges.'¹⁷ There has also been an increase in the joint bilateral and multilateral (MILAN, KOMODO) naval exercises between India and Indonesia which suggest that there is a strong element of trust between the two countries.

India and Indonesia are conscious of the need to ensure the safety and security of the Sea Lanes of Communication (SLOC). In that regard, the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) have been established, with India and Indonesia as its key members. IORA and IONS have provided the member countries with a platform to engage in consultations to tackle regional maritime threats and challenges.¹⁸ Together, the political, strategic and economic considerations are likely to drive Indonesia to 'see India's military and naval growth as a maritime security provider in the Indian Ocean more than a security threat to complement, rather than supplant, the U.S. military presence.'¹⁹ The U.S. Rebalancing or Pivot to Asia, and China's increasingly assertive postures are also shaping Indonesia's perception of India, as 'while suspecting China's rise, Indonesia remains reluctant to be perceived as increasingly aligned with the United States. India could provide an alternative for Indonesia to tread between the two powers.'²⁰ China's unprecedented rise and increasingly aggressive postures in the region have emerged as both a challenge and an opportunity for the two countries, as both India and Indonesia are hedging their bets.

However, it should be noted that the rise in mutual trust has been gradual, involving sustained efforts and systematic planning; and requires effective implementation of the same for further strengthening of India-Indonesia ties. There was a time when almost all Southeast Asian countries including Indonesia had serious apprehensions about India's moves in the Indian Ocean region, which were termed as its 'hegemonic designs'. With time, however, Indonesia's perceptions have changed, and for Indonesia, India is no longer a threat, but an evolving regional 'security provider'.

Singapore

India-Singapore relations are arguably the most underrated bilateral relations in India's foreign policy discourse. India's linkages with Singapore are not new and date back to pre-independence era, when Singapore was a part of Malaysia. However, the formal relations began in 1965, advancing further only in the post-Cold War era. Singapore's steady economic growth was the main driving force

in India-Singapore relations. Today, Singapore has emerged as one of the top investors in India. In fact, Singapore has become one of the main pillars of the Look/Act East Policy.

With the initiation of the Look East Policy, India first reached out to Singapore and the latter whole-heartedly welcomed India to the region. Former Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong was invited by P.V. Narasimha Rao to mark the Republic Days' celebration in 1994. P.V. Narasimha Rao paid the return visit in the same year, which proved significant in gaining Singapore's support for India's full dialogue partnership in ASEAN. The relations were cordial to the extent that Singapore began to lobby for India's full dialogue partnership in the ASEAN. Singapore's 'India Fever' initiative proved to be a great success, establishing Singapore as the catalyst in socialising India with the ASEAN region.

Singapore's support to India was one of the major reasons behind India's improved image in the Southeast Asian region. India, too, has always been supportive of Singapore at the regional and international fora. For instance, India along with China and Malaysia supported Singapore's candidature for the United Nations membership. Perceptibly, Singapore had its own reasons to inch closer to India. Singapore gained independence from Malaysia in 1965 and found India as one of the most reliable potential partners in the post-Colonial world. The Singaporeans have always recognised a legitimate role for India as a regional security provider.²¹ In what has been called Singapore's 'survival phase' in the years following independence, Singapore saw itself as being in a precarious strategic position, concerned not only with the prospect of Communist Chinese-supported internal subversion, but also with external threats posed by Indonesia and a potentially aggressive Malaysia. In such a situation, Singapore saw India as potentially helping to maintain its new-found sovereignty against infringements by China as well as its large neighbours.²² Singapore has always proved that it is India's friend in need. For instance, it extended its support to India explicitly during the 1965 India-Pakistan War. Also, Singapore has played a pivotal role in India's membership in EAS and ASEAN and its various fora.

In the contemporary times, the bond between India and Singapore is stronger than ever before. To say that these two countries share a special relationship would not be an exaggeration. Ethnic Indians constitute about 9.1 per cent of the total population of 5.4 million, including permanent residents,²³ and are the third largest ethnic group after Chinese and the Malays. The significance of Singapore in India's foreign policy can be gauged by the fact that so as to boost Act East Policy, Prime Minister Modi is likely to pay a state visit to Singapore in 2015. Interestingly, this visit will make it the second Southeast Asian country where Modi would undertake his international trip. His first visit in Southeast Asia was

to Myanmar, where he attended the EAS and ASEAN Summits. In 2015, India and Singapore are also celebrating 60 years of their diplomatic ties.

Economic Aspects

Trade and investment statistics prove that India and Singapore depend on each other for their economic security and prosperity. Singapore is India's largest trading partner as also the largest investor in the Southeast Asian region. Sometimes it is also referred to as India's economic gateway to the Southeast Asian region. The signing of CECA on June 29, 2005 has further strengthened their economic relations. The agreement still holds relevance for both countries as this was Singapore's first such agreement in the Indian subcontinent. Economic and commercial ties have expanded significantly; particularly after the conclusion of the CECA in 2005 with bilateral trade growing from \$ 8.8 billion in 2005-06 to \$ 21.1 billion in 2012-13.²⁴ However, in 2013-14, bilateral trade reduced to \$ 19.3 billion, which made Singapore the seventh largest trading partner of India in the world.

On the investment front, since the early 1990s, Singaporean companies have been active in India's equity market as a source of Foreign Institutional Investments (FIIs) and the trend has gathered momentum in recent years. Singapore has emerged as the largest investor in India with a share of more than 11 percent of the total Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) received by India, a cumulative amount of \$ 25.5 billion from April 2000 to March 2014.²⁵

Strategic Dimension

While India-Singapore economic cooperation displays a positive image, their defence and strategic cooperation is not far behind. Though Singapore always persuaded India to play a broader security role in the region, their defence cooperation has taken a concrete shape only in the post-Cold War period. For instance, in the years following its independence, Singapore made a formal request to India to provide military training to the Singapore Armed forces personnel. However, the Indian leadership, mainly because of India's neutrality clause, turned down the request. Later, in 1971, when the U.K. decided to shut its naval bases-HMS Sembawang and Singapore Naval Base, the first Prime Minister of the independent Singapore, Lee Kuan Yew paid a visit to India and offered those bases to India for naval endeavours. Indian leadership turned down the proposal citing similar reasons again. During most of the Cold War period, India's close proximity with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) did not allow India to act as a security provider, neither at global level nor at the regional level. The 1971 Bangladesh War of Independence can be cited as the only

noteworthy exception in that regard. Till 1990s, India continued to shy away from exercising its influence in the region.

The disintegration of the U.S.S.R. coupled with the end of the Cold War, created a strategic vacuum, compelling India to move out of its shell. Despite fears in the early 1990s that a superpower withdrawal from the region might lead to unhealthy rivalry between Japan, China and India, the Singaporeans concluded by 1993 that India's strategic presence in Southeast Asia would, 'help stabilise the region by counterbalancing the other political heavyweights'.²⁶ Former Prime Minister of Singapore, Goh Chok Tong stated:

We see Singapore as being lifted by two economies. I visualise ASEAN as a fuselage of a jumbo plane with China as one wing, and India the other wing. If both wings take off, ASEAN as a fuselage will also be lifted. Singapore is part of this fuselage.²⁷

Given the position of Singapore at the head of the Malacca Straits, between the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean, maritime security will inevitably be at the heart of any security relationship between India and Singapore.²⁸ It is widely accepted that India and Singapore share warm and long-standing defence relations. Defence interactions between the two countries include high-level visits, policy dialogues, joint military training, courses, seminars and other professional exchanges. Bilateral defence engagements have deepened since the signing of the Defence Cooperation Agreement in 2003, as well as the Air Force and Army Bilateral Agreements in 2007 and 2008 respectively.²⁹ In retrospect, they embarked on their naval cooperation with the first PASSEX in the Bay of Bengal in February 1993. In February 1994, a joint naval exercise codenamed 'Lion King' for training in the Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) was conducted in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Subsequently, in January 1995, the Indian Navy conducted another ASW training exercise in the Bay of Bengal with the Royal Singapore Navy (RSN). This was followed by a joint naval exercise conducted in the Bay of Bengal in March 1996. In 1998, India-Singapore naval cooperation achieved another milestone with the Singapore Navy getting access to the Indian naval training facilities.

In 2000, defence cooperation was stepped up with the friendly visit of *INS Sindhuvir* to Singapore. In 2003, their defence cooperation was elevated to the next level when the two sides inked the Defence Cooperation Agreement. Under the agreement, India and Singapore focused on the threat of international terrorism and maritime security, and sought to establish intelligence exchange and a defence policy dialogue as well as expand and deepen exchanges and exercises between the two defence forces.³⁰ As a follow up to the agreement, both sides began annual defence dialogue in 2004. A strategic partnership with Singapore has developed to a large extent, with India giving training facilities on lease basis to Singapore

Air Force personnel. After training its pilots at Kalaikunda air base and nearby firing ranges, India signed another agreement with Singapore on August 12, 2008, permitting it the use of the Babina and Deolali firing ranges for armour and artillery exercises.³¹ The 2008 agreement facilitated the training of Singaporean ground forces in India till 2013. Significantly, India also allowed Singapore to station a small detachment of its army personnel and equipment (artillery guns and tanks) at the Babina and Deolali ranges for the duration of the agreement.³²

In October 2004, India and Singapore held their bilateral air exercise codenamed SINDEK 04 in Gwalior in central India and again in January 2006, at Kalaikunda, near Kolkata. On November 24, 2008, the sixth joint air exercise between the Air Forces of India and Singapore was held at the Kalaikunda air base in Kolkata.³³ The growing operational familiarity has led the navies of the two countries to venture into the South China Sea and conduct joint exercises as part of SIMBEX (Singapore India Maritime Bilateral Exercise)-05. Though SIMBEX was first conducted in 1994; with time, it began to gain prominence, which is “designed to enhance inter-operability and mutual understanding between the two navies”. This was given an added thrust at the diplomatic level when in February 2006, Singapore posted its first ever defence adviser to New Delhi.³⁴ According to the Indian Navy reports, the 2014 SIMBEX exercise was the twenty-first round in the joint naval exercises conducted by the navies of India and Singapore since early 1990s.

Interestingly, from 1993 till date, India’s highest number of joint naval exercises has been with Singapore only. These include missions for search and rescue operations, anti-piracy and ASW (RM&PK). India and Singapore have been working closely on the bilateral defence Research and Development (R&D) also. For instance, in 2006, the two sides convened a joint study on bilateral defence, which led to the bilateral defence technology meeting in 2007. However, due to the ST Technology controversy, subsequent delays and several other issues, the plans have not fructified completely. Nevertheless, in terms of defence ties, it is worth highlighting that ‘India has developed a competency with regard to electronic systems while Singapore has built up the expertise in the systems integration and in miniaturation of systems. As India’s domestic defence sector is still constrained, it is imperative to initiate fruitful and effective defence relations with technologically advanced countries like Singapore. Countries such as Australia, Japan and South Korea have their own large domestic demand and it is difficult to achieve a closer partnership with them.’³⁵ The pattern of defence cooperation between India and Singapore shows that if this trend continues, Singapore will soon become one of India’s largest defence partners in terms of the training and joint operations exercise. It is in this context that one may argue that India-Singapore maritime cooperation and Defence R&D are increasingly becoming the important dimensions of India’s Act East Policy.

India's role as a 'Security Provider' gets verified in case of Singapore in a rather unique way, as except Singapore, no other country is known to have taken Indian military facilities on lease. The quality and scale of India-Singapore cooperation in capacity building of military personnel is unmatched, especially in the Southeast Asian region. This makes Singapore different from any other country in the Southeast Asian region, in terms of India's role as a partner and a 'Security Provider'.

Vietnam

Vietnam is arguably the best testimony of India's emergence as a 'Security Provider'. India's traditionally close and cordial relations with Vietnam have their historical roots in the common struggle for liberation from foreign rule and the national struggle for independence.³⁶ Though India and Vietnam do not have a common border, India-Vietnam friendship has been exceptional and their bond is stronger than any of their immediate neighbours. Since 1950s, India-Vietnam relations have been remarkably cordial. The Cold War politics did not affect their cordial relations, and it was for Vietnam that India had to eventually shun its plan regarding joining of ASEAN as a dialogue partner in 1980. Regular exchange of high-level visits between these two countries has strengthened their relations. For instance, Jawaharlal Nehru paid a state visit to Vietnam in 1954 that was aimed at assuring the newly independent country of India's support. Given that Vietnam was amongst one of the first few friends of India after the latter got independence in 1947, India has always been on Vietnam's side through thick and thin. India welcomed Vietnam's independence from France and later again supported Vietnam during the Cambodian crisis. Indian leadership has always been open about New Delhi's closeness to Vietnam. For instance, in 1972, just a few months after the liberation of Bangladesh, the then Minister of External Affairs, Swaran Singh issued a statement saying that, "the liberation of Bangladesh was a great heroic event and the reunification of Vietnam will be equally heroic and great". In the same year, India-Vietnam (North Vietnam) diplomatic ties were elevated to the ambassadorial level, which gave a further fillip to their relations. In 1979, the then Minister of External Affairs, Atal Behari Vajpayee cut short his China visit in protest, when China launched a military offensive against Vietnam. In 1995, India was one of the first countries to welcome the accession of Vietnam to ASEAN.

From Vietnam's viewpoint, cordial relationship with India has been one of the prominent foreign policy priorities. Vietnam's strong association with India has always complemented India's eastward engagement. It may be noted that Vietnam too has always reciprocated India's gestures. For instance, Vietnam had extended its support to India during India-Pakistan War of 1971 as also during

the 1999 Kargil conflict. Among the CLMV (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam) countries, Vietnam has been India's long-time friend and Indian leadership perceives Vietnam as one of the most important countries for the Look East Policy. Consequently, Vietnam has endorsed India's bid for United Nations Security Council (UNSC) membership, and also supported India's candidature for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) membership, after its entry in APEC. Despite China's resistance, Vietnam supported India's membership to the EAS.³⁷ The two countries cooperate with each other effectively in several regional groupings including the Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC), ASEAN and the EAS.

Economic Aspects

India is swiftly emerging as one of the key security providers for Vietnam in the economic domain. During the past five years, bilateral trade has gone up significantly and reached \$ 5.23 billion in 2013, up by an estimated 30 percent increase compared to 2012.³⁸ The two countries are striving to reach the \$ 15 billion mark by 2020. Unfortunately, however, India-Vietnam trade and investment ties are still much below the optimal level. Nevertheless, as far as India's investment in Vietnam is concerned, Vietnam has proved to be a favourable destination. As of June 2013, according to the figures from Vietnam's Foreign Investment Agency, India has 73 investment projects with total registered capital of \$ 252.21 million.³⁹ ONGC Videsh Limited (OVL), Essar Exploration and Production Ltd, Nagarjuna Ltd, KCP Industries Limited, Philips Carbon and McLeod Russell are some of the major Indian investors.⁴⁰ Major pharmaceutical firms such as Torrent, ZyduS, Cadila, Glenmark and Panacea Biotech have also set up offices to promote their products in Vietnam. Incidentally, India is one of the largest exporters of pharmaceutical products to Vietnam.⁴¹ In essence, bilateral economic cooperation is in the form of India's extension of loans and developmental aid to Vietnam. Till date, India has extended 17 Lines of Credit (LoC) to Vietnam totaling \$ 164.5 million.⁴²

India-Vietnam energy cooperation comprises a major part of India-Vietnam economic cooperation. It primarily includes joint oil and gas exploration activities off-the-Vietnam coast in the South China Sea. India's state-owned oil company, OVL has so far invested approximately \$ 360 million in three acquired blocks namely: *Block 06.1*, *Block 127* and *Block 128*. India has invested \$ 342.78 million in *Block No. 06.1* till March 2012; \$ 68 million in *Block 127* till March 2010; and \$ 49.14 million in *Block 128* till March 2012.⁴³

Strategic Dimension

Shared vision of Asia, common concerns, and convergence of interests largely

define India-Vietnam strategic cooperation. The two countries have been working together to deepen their bilateral defence and strategic cooperation. Though Vietnam has always seen India as a long-term strategic partner, officially, their defence cooperation began with the signing of the first major MoU on defence cooperation in September 1994. The agreement was elevated to the defence protocol in 2000. Later in 2007, joint declaration on defence led to the agreement on comprehensive defence engagement. These arrangements allowed the sale of military helicopters and equipments to Vietnam and training programmes for Vietnam's military personnel as well as pilots. Moreover, the 2000 defence protocol facilitated the Indian officers to avail jungle warfare training in the training institutions in Vietnam. India and Vietnam established strategic partnership in 2007, which led to the initiation of their annual strategic defence dialogue. In addition to this, Vietnam has given India access to its Nha Trang port in the Khanh Hoa province, which makes India perhaps the only country in the world to have an access to such a strategically located port.⁴⁴ It is noteworthy that the Nha Trang Port is geographically proximate to the Cam Ranh Bay. In the maritime domain, India-Vietnam joint bilateral naval exercises have become a regular feature, so have the coordinated sea-patrols and simulation exercises, which are complemented by multilateral joint exercises such as the MILAN. As part of the MoU signed in 2007, India agreed to transfer 5,000 naval spare parts (belonging to Petya Class Submarines) to Vietnam for its naval up-gradation.⁴⁵ With the supply of BRAHMOS missiles to Vietnam, not only the India-Vietnam defence ties will take a giant leap, but it would also become a 'game changer' in India's projection as a security provider in the region.

As a security provider, India has not only been engaged in the capacity building of Vietnam military personnel, giving them access to the Indian Military Academy and other training institutions, but it is also involved in helping Vietnam with the upkeep of weaponry bought from Russia. Vietnam aims to develop civilian nuclear technology and construct first nuclear power plant by 2020/2022.⁴⁶ Considering India's expertise, Hanoi is seeking India's support, and an agreement in that regard has already been signed.⁴⁷ India's support to Vietnam in developing nuclear energy for peaceful purposes will prove to be another milestone in India's evolution as a security provider.

The China Factor

Due to the protracted South China Sea dispute, China has proved to be one of the most important factors shaping Hanoi's strategic calculations and foreign policy. It has been argued that India's long-drawn border dispute and Vietnam's maritime dispute in the South China Sea are the principal reasons drawing these two countries closer. Nevertheless, India's consistent support to Vietnam for a

peaceful resolution of the South China Sea dispute has played a significant role in deepening mutual trust between New Delhi and Hanoi.⁴⁸ As China is getting increasingly assertive in its maritime claims, and a rising India is still assuring its traditional friendship with Vietnam, Hanoi finds it beneficial to lean towards India. However, China has been critical of India-Vietnam cooperation, not only in the military domain but also in terms of energy cooperation.⁴⁹ China has been critical of India's oil and gas exploration activities with Vietnam, off-the-Vietnam coast. China maintains that any country carrying out oil and gas exploration activities with Vietnam in the South China Sea interferes in China's internal affairs.⁵⁰ Furthermore, it has been reported that, in 2011, unidentified Chinese warship demanded India's *INS Airavat*, an amphibious assault vessel, which was on a friendly visit to Vietnam and other Southeast Asian countries, to identify itself and explain its presence in the so called "Chinese waters".⁵¹ The move was an attempt to deter the Indian Navy from carrying out such activities in future.

So far as Vietnam is concerned, India has indeed proved to be a security provider, especially in the military domain. However, as long as economic cooperation remains weak in comparison to defence ties, India's role a robust security provider will remain incomplete.

India as a Security Provider in Southeast Asia: Concluding Observations

In the post-Cold War era, the U.S. and China have established themselves as the principal extra-regional actors in the Southeast Asian region. Of late, India too has emerged as a regional player. In the regional context, it is vital for India to work in tandem with the Southeast Asian countries, particularly with Indonesia, Singapore and Vietnam, to become a major stakeholder in the region. Indonesia, Singapore and Vietnam have been India's reliable partners in the region. While Indonesia and Singapore are the two largest economies in the region, Vietnam-India cooperation in military and energy domains serves India's requirements. It is remarkable how the Southeast Asian countries such as Indonesia, which were apprehensive of India's strategic presence in the region, today, see it as a benign security provider. Evidently, it is the rising convergence of politico-military and economic interests that has allowed India to carve out its own space in the Southeast Asian region.

Southeast Asia is the only region that has coordinated long-term multilateral and bilateral defence cooperation with India. (Meeting of the [Littorals of Bay of Bengal] [Andaman & Nicobar]) (MILAN) is indeed an outcome of India's deepening security relations with the ASEAN member countries. Since 1995, Indian navy has been holding joint exercises with the navies of the Southeast Asian countries. An initiative of the Indian Navy in the early nineties to create

a forum for the littoral navies of the region for exchange of thoughts in the area of maritime cooperation gave way to the first edition of MILAN in the year 1995.⁵² First ever MILAN exercise saw participation from Indonesia, Singapore and Thailand at Port Blair, Andaman, and Nicobar Islands. 'MILAN', a biennial gathering of navies hosted by India since its inception, involves as many as 17 participating countries. In 2008, delegates from Vietnam participated in MILAN. Since then, they have held intermittent bilateral discussions on counter-terrorism and intelligence sharing.⁵³ The 2014 MILAN exercise was significant in a sense that 17 nations, including India, had come together in making its biggest edition.⁵⁴ It was the first time that the two other Southeast Asian nations, Cambodia and the Philippines also participated in MILAN. MILAN was started with an aim to enhance relations with the navies of Southeast Asian countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand. At present, the scope the biennial exercise is extended to include Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) as also the non-traditional security threats. Joint naval exercises such as MILAN have helped India in projecting its image as a benign major stakeholder in the region.

That India is keen to make its presence felt as a security provider in the region is evident from the fact that it has been trying to participate in the MALSINDO Coordinated Patrols. Launched in 2004, MALSINDO involves Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, and Thailand (joined in 2008), and aims to protect the Malacca Straits. India has argued its case on the basis that it has stakes in the safety of the Malacca Straits since around 40 per cent of India's trade crosses this region. It has been argued that 'the Malacca Straits, being a choke point with the heaviest traffic in the world, demands the participation of stakeholders who can comfortably cooperate with other participating countries.'⁵⁵ However, India is yet to become a part of the MALSINDO. Interestingly, it has been noted that 'in 2004, while the littoral states of the Malacca Straits strongly objected to the suggestion made by the US navy for a regional initiative to combat terrorism, piracy etc, they were open to accepting assistance from India for improving the maritime safety of the Straits.'⁵⁶ The decision by Indonesia and Malaysia not to protest against Indian and US naval escort operations in the Malacca Straits in 2001 and 2002 testify to India's growing acceptance in the region.⁵⁷ "As a part of its renewed activism in the wider Asia-Pacific region and its Act East Policy, aimed at strengthening its influence in Southeast Asia, India has also become increasingly involved in Southeast Asian maritime security."⁵⁸

It has also been reported that the 'The Indian Navy plans to deploy its medium-range Dornier surveillance aircraft at its furthest air station in the Andaman and Nicobar islands to keep a regular watch on the oil and cargo traffic

passing through the strategic Malacca Straits and two other crucial sea lanes used to ferry these materials to China and Southeast Asia.⁵⁹ This clearly shows India's intentions and increasing capability to establish itself as a security provider. The statement given by the Prime Minister of Vietnam proves that ASEAN member countries look forward to India playing a bigger role in the region. During the ASEAN–India Commemorative Summit held on December 20–21, 2012 in New Delhi, he stated that India should:

Back ASEAN and China in fully and effectively implementing the Joint Statement marking the 10th anniversary of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the East Sea (South China Sea) and support the ASEAN in implementing its Six-Point Principle on the East Sea (South China Sea) to ensure the settlement of disputes by peaceful measures in line with international law, especially the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.⁶⁰

India, which shares a long maritime boundary with the ASEAN region has adopted a cooperative stance towards these countries and is assuming a more proactive role towards maritime security in the region. Joint naval exercises to fight against non-traditional security challenges and being vocal about the South China Sea dispute are cases in point. In addition to this, over the years, India has established its reputation as a benign 'non-threatening' power. By supporting the rule-based and just order in Maritime Asia, India has proved itself as a contributor to the peace and stability in the region.

With respect to India's participation in the Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) activities in the region, it has proved itself to be a credible security provider. India's timely aid to Indonesia when it was struck by Tsunami in 2004 enhanced New Delhi's image as a credible *Security Provider in the Non-Traditional Security Realm*. This was the 'largest humanitarian relief operation the Indian Navy has ever conducted outside India's territorial waters.'⁶¹ Under *Operation Gambhir* in Indonesia, Indian aid included two ships (one hospital); 40 tonnes of relief material; 25 tonnes of medical stores; one helicopter deployed; 20 helicopter sorties executed; one medical camp and 1,750 patients treated.⁶² Similarly, in 2008, when the Cyclone Nargis affected Myanmar, Indian response was impressively prompt.

In terms of capacity building, India's joint operations and training programmes have established that India is fast emerging as a security provider. Another indicator to measure India's weight as a security provider can be capacity building. India has been providing training to defence personnel of the Southeast Asian countries. As mentioned earlier in the paper, India has signed defence agreements with several Southeast Asian countries to train their armed forces as also their police forces. In this sense, India's defence cooperation has been stepped up. Additionally,

India has also been providing English language training and computer education in Vietnam and other Southeast Asian countries, thereby contributing to the human security as well. In the field of space technology, India has helped Indonesia (LAPAN-TUBAT), and Singapore (VELOX-I, VELOX-PIII, TeLEOS-1, X-SAT) launch their satellites at competitive prices.⁶³ In the Indian Ocean region, the Andaman Sumatra subduction zone, Bay of Bengal is one of the two tsunami-genic source regions. The 24x7 tsunami early warning center (ITEWC) continuously monitors, detects tsunamis, and issues advisories.⁶⁴ The ITEWC also acts as one of the regional tsunami advisory service providers for the Indian Ocean region. Countries such as Vietnam rely on India for weather monitoring and disaster alerts. India also provides free information on cyclones to Southeast Asian countries.⁶⁵ India has created a niche area for itself in space technology, remote sensing, weather forecast and early warning of seaborne disasters, thereby emerging as a credible security provider in the non-traditional security domain. This is particularly true in case of the Southeast Asian region.

The prospects of rise of India as a security provider seem to be higher than ever before, which are shaped by its rising military, economic & technological capabilities and its benign image. However, to establish itself as a reliable security provider in the region, India has to look beyond military training and benign aspects of naval diplomacy. Greater HADR operations with bigger role in safety of SLOC, and joint defence production ventures with Southeast Asian partners will facilitate India's rise as a credible security provider in the region. The key to India's emergence as a credible security provider also lies in comprehensively befriending more countries of the Southeast Asian region while developing its own capabilities in providing these countries with the necessary wherewithal to effectively deal with traditional and non-traditional security challenges.

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India in East Asia: Reviewing the Role of a Security Provider

Jagannath Panda

Introduction

In the current interplay of world politics, the new debate in India is that New Delhi needs an “Act East” policy much more than just the Look East policy.¹ The recent statement of India’s Minister for External Affairs, Sushma Swaraj,² indicates that there is a huge scope for India to emerge as a stronger power as well as a possible security provider in East Asia. India’s political and multilateral engagement in East Asia has robustly increased in the last decade, but with mixed success. Since initiating its Look East policy in 1992, India has pushed forward its political, economic and strategic engagements with East Asia steadily, and has upgraded its engagements with countries and institutions in the region. Under an “extended neighbourhood” diplomacy, the compass of India’s Look East policy has expanded from the Southeast Asia to East Asia and to Asia-Pacific, covering a range of multilateral mechanisms and institutions, including primarily the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). It needs to be noted, however, that these institutional engagements have not adequately augmented India’s defence and security postures in East Asia. Principally, this is because India has been a cautious actor and a passive respondent to security dynamics and acting more as a security partner in East Asia, limiting its venture to play and emerge as a possible security provider in the region.

East Asia being a priority region in India’s foreign policy outlook, India has tried to pursue an active policy in Southeast Asia and the Asia-Pacific. It is pertinent to ask, however, whether New Delhi’s politico-strategic engagement with the region is adequate or whether India should revisit its current dispensation as a security provider in the region. East Asia’s security environment is rapidly changing

with growing Chinese authority. The smaller and bigger countries of the region expect India to become a possible security provider for them through greater strategic and military engagements. Japan and South Korea, two of India's "extended neighbours", for example, perceive India's presence as conducive to their strategic interests. Besides, the Americans have advocated that New Delhi must play a pro-active role in East Asia. Given the interests of these different powers, the Indian political as well as official circles also recognise that India now sees itself as a net security provider.³ Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh expressed the view in May 2013 that India had positioned itself to perform the role of a net security provider in the immediate Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and beyond.⁴

This paper aims to appraise if India can play a leadership role in East Asia and emerge as a "balancer" to China's prominence and authority in the region. It points out the influences and nuances that facilitate Indian strategic interests in East Asia and how the region responds to India's strategic forte and presence. In the following four sections, I first examine East Asia's importance in India's current strategic context and its extended neighbourhood diplomacy, as well as how India is placed as an actor in this region currently. Second, I look at the key security and defence understandings that India currently pursues with the ASEAN members within the broader spectrum of East Asian politics, and consider whether these are sufficient to meet the expectations from the region to be a possible security provider. Third, I delve into the institutional or multilateral bonding that exists between India and East Asia, to highlight the scope and gaps, if any. Fourth, I outline India's engagement with the major powers in the region, and assess where India must play a leadership role. This appraisal has been carried out on the premise that India has been a reluctant security provider.

East Asia in India's 'Extended Neighbourhood' Diplomacy

New Delhi's East Asian reach is a construct of its "extended neighbourhood" conception.⁵ The official parlance of this concept was outlined in 2006 by the then Minister of External Affairs, Pranab Mukherjee. He said that India's political, economic and defence engagement with West Asia, Central Asia, Southeast Asia as well as in the IOR explained this phenomenon.⁶ This concept of "extended neighbourhood" signifies a classic mixture of soft power as well as hard power projection with continuous multilateral political, economic and ideational engagements that India steadily employs in different parts of Asia. In East Asia, India's Look East policy consists of a range of institutional, political, economic as well as security engagements. The principal contours of this engagement are: institutional bonding with ASEAN and other major powers; importance of smaller and bigger countries; geographic resources; and maritime dynamics vis-

à-vis China's dominant presence in the region. The scope of India's multilateral linkage with East Asia is founded on its institutional bonding through the East Asia Summit (EAS), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting plus (ADMM+).

ASEAN remains the main threshold in India's East Asia policy. Not only does ASEAN enhance India's "extended neighbourhood" policy in East Asia, it equally provides India an institutional base to engage with the region structurally.⁷ Engaging with ASEAN and instituting sectoral linkages with East Asia through ASEAN has been one of India's key policy priorities.⁸ New Delhi has so far followed a "gradualist" approach in engaging with ASEAN steadily. India was inducted as a sectoral partner of ASEAN in 1992, dialogue partner in 1996 and summit-level partner in 2002. In 2003, the two sides signed the Instrument of Accession to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia, and a Joint Declaration for Cooperation to Combat International Terrorism and a Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation at the Bali Summit. In 2004, India-ASEAN ties were further upgraded with the ASEAN-India Partnership for Peace, Progress and Shared Prosperity.⁹ This was followed by a Plan of Action that was implemented from 2004-2010; its second phase is in progress from 2010-2015.¹⁰ India's Look East policy was advanced further with the December 2012 India-ASEAN Commemorative Summit marking 20 years of India's association with ASEAN and the 10th anniversary of India-ASEAN summit-level partnership, to upgrade the bilateral ties to a "strategic partnership".¹¹ The crux of this Commemorative Summit was an evolving security understanding between the two sides, mainly on the aspect of maritime cooperation.

During the India-ASEAN Commemorative Summit, the then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said: "We see our partnership with ASEAN not merely as a reaffirmation of ties with neighbouring countries or as an instrument of economic development, but also as an integral part of our vision of a stable, secure and prosperous Asia and its surrounding Indian Ocean and Pacific Regions".¹² But India still continues to remain a reluctant and cautious power when it comes to defence- and security-centred issues in East Asia, not taking a position on most security-related issues, including maritime disputes. Not necessarily India has to take a position on most security or conflict driven issues; yet given the security outlook and policy perspective that it shares with East Asia, New Delhi must rise to the occasion and express a leadership position. India's approach to East Asia through ASEAN so far has been more economic-centric, and is based more on collaborative institutional mechanisms. Given the growing security dynamics and maritime politics in East Asia, India and ASEAN have nevertheless upgraded their partnership to a "strategic" one, where ASEAN member countries like Vietnam, the Philippines and Singapore expect India to play a leadership role.

For instance, praising the active policy of the new Indian Government under Prime Minister Narendra Modi and viewing India as a key “strategic partner” in the evolving Southeast Asian security architecture, the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Vietnam, Pham Binh Minh has appealed to India for a greater role in “freedom of navigation, maritime safety and security in the South China Sea region”. He also stated: “India’s strategic partnership owes its strength to the fact that your Look East policy meets our ASEAN’s outward looking policy.”¹³

Defence and Security Partnership: The Key

In East Asia, India does enjoy a good thrust of “strategic partnership” with Japan, South Korea and ASEAN, the last being the most important. This “strategic partnership”, formally launched in 2012, is still in the process of consolidation. For long the Southeast Asian community has seen India’s presence on a “positive scale”,¹⁴ particularly as an alternate power in the region to an extent with regard to China. Both India and ASEAN have engaged earlier with a set of dialogue mechanisms, high-level visits of defence personnel, training and education, coordinated patrols, joint military exercises, etc. Most of these engagements have, however, been “bilateral centric”.¹⁵ Also, even though Southeast Asia has been at the core of India’s security concerns in its Northeast, India’s defence and security engagement with ASEAN has been of a low standard.

Most of India’s defence engagements with the Southeast Asian countries have been with those that are engaged with maritime disputes with Beijing or those who see India as a potential rising power that may provide a possible security partnership in the longer term. Even though India envisages that defence relations with ASEAN are an essential part of its Look East policy, it has preferred to engage with the region mostly in terms of diplomatic and security dialogue mechanisms such as ARF and ADMM+ and the Shangri La Dialogue, as well as establishing bilateral defence and security dialogues with important members like Vietnam, Singapore, Thailand, the Philippines, Indonesia, Myanmar and Malaysia.¹⁶ India has stronger defence relations with Vietnam, which has a troubled relationship with China on the issue of the South China Sea, and Singapore which has always seen India as a natural security provider to Southeast Asia.¹⁷ Singapore is not only a key to India’s Look East policy but also India’s largest trading partner among ASEAN members.¹⁸ India’s relationship with Singapore is a ‘unique’ one, as Singapore trains its defence personnel at Indian military bases owing to its land scarcity. The two countries have a range of cooperation such as in defence and scientific research covering defence technology. India has enjoyed a “natural trust” with Singapore in its defence engagements, principally with the signing of the 2003 India Singapore Defence Cooperation Agreement.

India's defence and security ties with Vietnam have also moved constantly to a higher order, with a robust common understanding on regional security issues. China's rising dominance in regional security issues, mainly in maritime disputes concerning the South China Sea, has the two countries closer in the recent past. Ever since they signed a defence understanding, their defence and security relationship has moved on to regular joint military exercises and training, intelligence sharing and exchange of information, joint coastguard training to combat piracy, jungle warfare, sea search and operation rescue, etc. According to India's new Minister of External Affairs, Sushma Swaraj, the "on-going defence cooperation with Vietnam is an important aspect of India-Vietnam strategic partnership".¹⁹ India, however, is yet to emerge as a confidence power in Vietnamese outlook as a defence partner. The recent visits of the Indian President to Vietnam and Vietnamese Prime Minister to India seem to have raised the level of confidence between the two. India is now seems determine to share advanced high-tech weapons and equipment's. Vietnam also expects India to train its navy that New Delhi now seems to be taking seriously.

With Indonesia, India's defence cooperation has been a measured one so far. The primacy of the India-Indonesia bilateral engagement is based more on the "democratic" factor—that India as the largest democracy and Indonesia as the third-largest democracy in the world need to establish stronger ties for their bilateral and regional interests. The Joint Statement issued during former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to Indonesia highlighted "five initiatives" to strengthen the India-Indonesia Strategic Partnership. They are: strategic engagement, defence and security cooperation, comprehensive economic partnership, cultural and people-to-people contact and cooperation with regard to responding to common challenges.²⁰ The outlines of possible scope of defence and security cooperation between the two countries stated in this Joint Statement cover possible bilateral, regional and global cooperation. Information and intelligence sharing, training and joint exercises between the air forces, collaboration in sale and coproduction of defence equipment are some of the key aspects of India-Indonesia defence ties.²¹ Establishing closer cooperation and capacity building and joint exercises are some of the other highlighted objectives that the two countries agreed to enhance. India and Indonesia have also a strong maritime vision to cooperate in the IOR.²² But some of these stated proposals are yet to be implemented fully. Indonesia has not opened much towards India on maritime issues. Indonesia's geographic location between the Indian and Pacific Oceans must stimulate India to raise its ties with it.

Thailand and Malaysia are two other countries with which India must aim to establish strong security and defence ties. At the moment, India's economic engagement with the two seems to be the main connecting factor. In January

2012, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between India and Thailand, which incorporates that both countries must establish regular joint exercises, joint maritime patrols, make efforts to curb piracy and smuggling and conduct bilateral officers' training programme.²³ These stated objectives are still at the beginning level. As per the official understanding, India and Thailand are engaged in regular Coordinated Maritime Patrols (CORPATs), including cooperation in anti-piracy, security in sea-lines of communication (SLOCs) and providing security and safety of navigation in the Indian Ocean.²⁴ Thailand has also expressed an interest for some time now in India's defence industry for collaboration. Political instability in Thailand is one factor that has not helped India in pursuing a constant dialogue with that country. Besides, lack of proper institutional mechanisms between the two needs to be rectified. India's defence and security relations with Malaysia also are not very impressive. Though an MoU between the two countries was signed in 1993, which formally started their defence ties, these ties have not been realised to their possible full strength. An India-Malaysia Defence Cooperation Committee (MIDCOM) discusses the scope of cooperation,²⁵ but has not interested itself in regional security issues, mainly in the maritime sector. China's stronger economic and political as well as security understanding with Malaysia does constrain the latter in taking a pause with regard to India.

With Myanmar, India needs to build confidence along with a strong understanding on maritime issues. Myanmar is not only a close neighbour of India but also an important partner for sub-regional grouping in Bangladesh–China–India–Myanmar Forum for Regional Cooperation (BCIM), Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) and Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC). Among many reasons why India has not been able to pursue strong ties with Myanmar is the constant political instability there. Still, India needs to be mindful of Myanmar's importance as a country in both the immediate Southeast Asian context as well as in East Asian politics, facilitating China's entry to the IOR. Issues like maritime security, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR), oil infrastructure and environment protection, illegal migration on the India-Myanmar border region, etc. are important factors where the two countries need to build stronger security ties.²⁶ Currently, India's approach towards Myanmar seems to be more keeping in view the changing regional politics in the region, which needs to be improved to an independent approach in the East Asian context. India has shown some strategic interest in the recent past to assist Myanmar in building offshore patrol vessels (OPVs) as well as upgrade the training programme for Myanmar's armed forces.²⁷ India has also agreed "in principle" to provide assistance for the OPVs at Myanmar's request.

Table 1. India's Naval Exercises with ASEAN Members

<i>Name and Mode</i>	<i>Countries Involved/Year Commenced</i>	<i>Major Focus</i>
Singapore-India Maritime Bilateral Exercise (SIMBEX): Annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Singapore, 1993-94 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance inter-operability and mutual understanding • Maritime search, security and rescue operations
MILAN (Multi-nation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1995; 17 countries participated in 2014, 7 of them ASEAN members (Singapore, Vietnam, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Brunei and Philippines) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Humanitarian assistance and disaster relief • Peace and rescue operations
India-Indonesia coordinated Patrol Naval Exercise (INDINDOCORPAT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indonesia • Biannual Exercise • Started in 2000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Held along the International Maritime Boundary Line • Held normally in April and October • Joint patrol for sea search, coordination against piracy, armed robbery, poaching, illegal immigration, human trafficking, drug trafficking, etc. • Launched in line with India's Look East policy
Indo-Thai Coordinated Patrol (CORPAT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thailand • Started in 2005 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counter piracy, poaching and arms smuggling • Enhance inter-operability • Effective implementation of the Law of the Sea to prevent illegal activities
KOMODO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seventeen countries including India, Indonesia, the US, China, Russia, New Zealand, South Korea, Japan, Singapore, Malaysia, Brunei, Thailand, Vietnam, the Philippines and Laos participated • Inaugural multilateral naval exercise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Humanitarian assistance/disaster relief (HA/DR) exercise • The second exercise to focus on peacekeeping operations under the UN flag
RIMPAC (Rim of the Pacific Exercise)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Colombia, France, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, People's Republic of China, Peru, Republic of Korea, Philippines, Singapore, Tonga, the UK and US • Began in 1971 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperation of the combined forces and improve individual war fighting competencies • India sent ship for the first time in 2014 • This year also marked the first time hospital ships participated • People's Republic of China also participated for the first time in 2014

Source: Information compiled from open sources like Press Information Bureau, Ministry of Defence; Government of India, *The Hindu*, *Times of India*, Embassy of India in Thailand, *Jakarta Post*, etc.

A prime aspect of India's defence diplomacy with ASEAN member states is its maritime approach with the region. Most ASEAN members like Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia are important to India's maritime diplomacy in the northeast Indian Ocean, where India has usually maintained its maritime authority. The core of India-ASEAN naval engagement all these years has evolved through joint naval exercises, bilateral dialogues and exercises and a few exercises like MILAN, that are crucial to regional naval understanding for upholding peace and security in the IOR (see Table 1).²⁸ India has deployed at regular intervals its vessels and fleets in the South China Sea region as well as in the Malacca Strait and Sunda Strait. Further, the Indian Navy travels at regular intervals to ports of ASEAN members like Thailand, Vietnam, Philippines, Cambodia, Singapore and Indonesia. Also, the vitality of the Bay of Bengal has induced India to take up maritime diplomacy with these ASEAN members seriously. Currently, India has stepped up cooperation with Vietnam in the maritime sector, keeping in view the rise of the Chinese navy and its capability in the IOR. Importantly, India has built few bases south of Visakhapatnam for its Eastern Fleet, and a new naval air base, known as INS Baaz, South of Andaman and Nicobar Islands. India's territories of Andaman and Nicobar islands allow New Delhi to maintain a psychological advantage to reach quickly the Bay of Bengal region as well as the Malacca Strait. To increase the scope of maritime surveillance in the region, the Indian Navy has opened a new "forward air base" on Greater Nicobar in July 2012.²⁹ India has also sent INS *Sudershini* as part of the India-ASEAN commemorative expedition to mark the ancient and contemporary maritime linkages between the two sides.³⁰ These have been soft power approaches by India to make its presence felt in the ASEAN region.

For India, opportunities and options exist to emerge as a stronger security and military power in East Asia. The then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh at the Plenary Session of India-ASEAN Commemorative Summit, in 2012, said: "As maritime nations, India and ASEAN nations should intensify their engagements for maritime security and safety, for freedom of navigation and for peaceful settlement of maritime disputes in accordance with international law."³¹ A foremost attempt in this endeavour could be to advance further the multilateral and institutional presence that India shares with the East Asian region. India's current forte in East Asia is linked with its longstanding engagement not only with ASEAN and its members, but also with other great powers in the region such as Japan and South Korea.

India's Multilateral Presence: Need for Maritime Foresight

Politics in East Asia is linked closely with Southeast Asia as well as with the changing dynamics of Asia-Pacific. Economic multilateralism and maritime

politics are two important aspects that must impel India to rise to occasion and play a pro-active role. This is important when India has upgraded its multilateral engagements in East and Southeast Asia as well as in Asia-Pacific. New Delhi's thrust so far has been on building closer relations with ASEAN, ADMM+, ARF, Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) to propel a good understanding on maritime security issues, including other security and governance issues that are keys to the East Asian regional architecture. India's official advocacy is to thrust the focus on ASEAN and commit to peace and stable regional security architecture through forums like ARF and ADMM+, including expanded maritime interactions. Historically, the Southeast Asian countries were initially lukewarm to India's entry into ARF. In the post-Cold War phase, India slowly raised its engagement with ASEAN and joined ARF in 1996. Gradually, ASEAN members realised India's importance and standing and started seeing India's emergence as a vital factor in Southeast Asian security. Some of them, like Singapore, started viewing India as a possible counterbalance to the rising Chinese presence in the region.³² Since then, through its institutional bonding with the ASEAN, India has deepened its engagement with ARF and ADMM+.

India's approach to these multilateral processes is a consequence of its rising profile and perception of the Asia-Pacific region. The principal idea and spirit of East Asian Integration (EAI), from an Indian perspective, for example, highlights New Delhi's approach to the East Asian community as well as Asia-Pacific. In India's official policy phraseology, "The East Asia Summit is the forum for building an open, inclusive and transparent architecture of regional cooperation in the Asia Pacific region."³³ The context and importance of EAS is implied and argued in Indian foreign policy mainly within a construct of realising the importance of ARF and ADMM+.³⁴ India's official perception of ARF was aptly outlined by the speech of its former Minister for External Affairs at the 20th ARF meeting in Brunei Darussalam: *first*, ARF as a dialogue forum is a useful mechanism provided it is backed with commitments by all nations; *second*, ARF can be a conduit of hope and solution for addressing security issues, including terrorism and maritime security; and *third*, ARF can be pushed ahead as a multilateral cultural tactic to address Asia's growing security and political dynamics.³⁵ This official dialogue is, however, mostly rhetorical: neither has ARF been forthcoming about its perception of regional peace and stability nor has it helped in uniting the thoughts and spirit of its constituents the way it was originally meant to address. Besides, India is still not sure what should be its role in ARF and how it should approach ARF as a forum.

Compared to ARF, ADMM+ is a relatively new security mechanism. Given the security conditions in the Asia-Pacific, ADMM+ is supposed to be a confidence-building mechanism and to uphold peace and stability through

dialogue and discussion. ADMM+ has promoted a “new mode of multilateralism” combining ASEAN members as well as eight dialogue partners (Australia, China, Japan, India, South Korea, New Zealand, Russia and the US) in the Asia-Pacific region to discuss key security issues and promote confidence in the region. Counterterrorism, building cooperation in areas of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, peacekeeping and maritime security have been the main areas of discussion in this forum. But to what extent ADMM+ will uphold peace and stability in the region is yet to be seen. For India, ADMM+ has not been an attractive mechanism so far. Neither has India been quite forthcoming nor has its defence minister shown much interest in attending its security dialogue meetings.³⁶ In ADMM+ meetings India has raised the issue of the South China Sea dispute but has not advocated a perspective that will augment its own position of “freedom of navigation” and oil exploration.³⁷ India and ASEAN discussed pushing forward maritime cooperation in the region during their Commemorative Summit in 2012. It is apposite to India’s strategic interests to raise and discuss in the ADMM+ mechanism the issue of “freedom of navigation”.

It may be noted that actors like Vietnam and the Philippines who are parties to the South China Sea disputes, along with some disquiets from Taiwan, Brunei and Malaysia, are concerned about Chinese authority and do not want to share the negotiating table with China. Meanwhile, the new leadership in China under Xi Jinping has stressed pushing China as a stronger “maritime power”.³⁸ In the South China Sea, the Chinese authorities have unilaterally proposed “joint development” of oil or energy exploration in disputed areas. The Chinese Defence Ministry has also cautioned that countries that want to carry out projects for their self-interest in the South China Sea region should confine them to the range of “freedom of navigation”; besides, “freedom of navigation” should not be a factor in “territorial and ocean rights” of the countries involved.³⁹ Yang Yujun, the spokesman of the Ministry, in reply to a question on the US-Philippines understanding to protect the freedom of navigation in Southeast Asia, has stated: “The so-called protection of freedom of navigation is in fact a false proposition ... We call on the countries concerned not to seek private interests under the guise of freedom of navigation.”⁴⁰ China has described India’s joint oil exploration with Vietnam as illegal and has opposed India’s commercial moves in the South China Sea.⁴¹ India needs to take a serious note of this Chinese stance. There is scope for India to shape a well-crafted maritime drive over the South China Sea region. In this, a coordinated approach with likeminded countries like Vietnam and the Philippines, which share strategic interests similar to those of India and see India as a power, would be useful. It may be noted that the Vision Statement of the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit points out that both ASEAN and India look towards each other in “strengthening cooperation to ensure maritime security and freedom of navigation” and “safety of SLOCs for unfettered

movement of trade in accordance with international law, including the UNCLOS [United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea].⁴²

In its vision of ADMM+, India has stressed two key aspects: the vitality of ARF and the scope of ADMM+ in the regional security architecture. There is huge scope for these two multilateral frameworks to emerge as effective confidence-building mechanisms to address the security environment of the region. Though India has stressed time and again the importance of ARF and ADMM+ in the Asia-Pacific region, New Delhi's future outlook with regard to these two institutions should be on how to safeguard India's maritime interests in this region through their intervention. A more forthcoming and positive approach from India is needed with regard to these two forums. Besides, India must pursue the dialogue of regional integration prudently through ARF and ADMM+. The progression of regional economic integration should forge with the ASEAN+6 mechanism and should converge with the sentiments of EAS, where India is a factor. India's aim and core thrust currently is to build a stable regional economic and political order through the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) mechanism among the prospective members of the region. India needs to push forward the RCEP mechanism with a view to renovate and transform the region with higher economic growth through more robust cross-border trade and investment along with inter-regional economic collaboration.

For India, ASEAN remains the foremost draw at the moment in its quest for influence in East Asia. It is in India's interest that this multilateral body grows further as a comprehensive arbiter in regional politics. India has consistently advocated an ASEAN+6 mechanism and would like to see a positive culmination of this process. Further coordination must also be built with powers like Japan and South Korea to support a process like ASEAN+6. In fact, India must aim to develop a robust dialogue with all the three big powers—China, Japan and South Korea—on the issue of ASEAN+6. New Delhi must also propel a case to play a stronger role in RCEP negotiations and in the East Asian integration process. If RCEP emerges as an inclusive regional economic integration model, it carries a huge trade potential to emerge as the most effective and largest free trade bloc in the world.

Big Powers, the China Factor and India's Potential Leadership Role

There is a politics of interdependence and inter-reliability along with new multilateral understanding taking place in East Asia, where Northeast Asia is an important factor.⁴³ In this region, there is subtle competition between the US and China to maintain their respective regional supremacy.⁴⁴ Both Japan and South Korea are important factors in this power politics. If India has to enhance

its East Asian reach further, boosting defence and strategic cooperation with these two countries must be a priority for it. Sharing rapport with them on matters of strategic and security affairs along with concrete and vigorous defence and strategic ties with East Asia on the whole will enhance India's strategic reach in the region.

With South Korea, the Foreign Policy and Security Dialogue (FPSD) promotes discussion and further cooperation in the field of space and nuclear cooperation, collaboration in defence production, maritime and cyber security along with cultural exchanges and people-to-people contacts.⁴⁵ Any support from South Korea in the East Asian dynamics will be an added advantage to New Delhi. The regional order in Asia has become fragmented and there is a necessity for a liberal order in East Asia. India and South Korea can work together for a "multipolar East Asia".⁴⁶ North Korea and its denuclearisation can be a common factor for the two countries to cooperate under a "comprehensive security" structure in East Asia.

In addition, India has to maximise its presence through participation and presence in East Asia. The Seoul Defence Dialogue (SDD) is a recently established forum where India must aim to participate. The SDD is the highest-ranking multilateral security dialogue platform at the level of vice minister, which is being hosted by the Republic of Korea's Ministry of Defence since November 2012. It addresses issues concerning peace and security in the broader Asia-Pacific, and in particular, in the Korean Peninsula. China has not shown much interest in the SDD and has been passively partaking in the Northeast Asian multilateral forums.⁴⁷ India must aim to fill that gap.

Relations with Japan are another important endeavour in this regard. The Senkaku/Diaoyu dispute between China and Japan does not seem to be getting anywhere to resolution. The US National Defence Authorisation Act for Fiscal Year 2013, which outlines that East China Sea disputes are subject to the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between the US and Japan, has further complicated matters. The recent Japanese revision of its pacifist constitution and collective national self-defence doctrine has also compelled the Chinese to review the conditions in the East China Sea region and become more aggressive over the dispute. Taking all this into account, how should India perceive the evolving security dynamics in the East China Sea region? Is there space for India to take a pro-active position on the dispute?

India's official idiom is that the issue must be "peacefully" resolved. India values China as an "immediate neighbour" and as an "economic powerhouse", and Japan as a valuable "strategic and economic" regional and global partner. India is also not directly affected by the East China Sea dispute, and it makes sense for it to take a nuanced and impartial position. However, are India's strategic and maritime interests in East or Southeast Asia secured and enhanced by not

taking a position on this dispute? Leading powers that aim to offer a leadership role cannot afford a cautious or conservative posture on disputes, especially those that need serious contemplation. India must have a greater vision and may contemplate to conditionally revise its customary standpoint on the Sino-Japanese maritime dispute. Does that mean that India should have an “anti-China”/“pro-Japan” stance on the issue? Not really, but India’s strategic treatise, if not actual official position, must have some resemblance to the Japanese stake in the dispute. The predominant strategic view in India must plump for the dispute to go in favour of Japan. This also makes practical sense given China’s obsessive resistance to India’s oil exploration and commercial activities in the South China Sea. Besides, India must reconsider its approach over the East China Sea citing the Chinese reservation to India’s partaking in East Asian economic integration under ASEAN+6. For India, strategically, it makes sense to revisit its nuanced position on the East China Sea dispute.

India-Japan bilateral relations have witnessed a surge with the recent visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Japan. The Tokyo Declaration that marked the occasion phrases India-Japan ties as a “special” strategic and global partnership, and expresses a lot of interest and enthusiasm in pushing forward the bilateral defence and security partnership.⁴⁸ Key features of the current India-Japan defence partnership are: 2+2 dialogues involving the Foreign and Defence Secretaries, bilateral maritime exercises, Tokyo’s regular partaking in the India-US Malabar exercise, transfer of defence technology and equipment to India, and notably, Joint Working Group (JWG) cooperation in the US2 amphibian aircraft and its technology, etc.⁴⁹ Among all this, there is a certain recognition and commitment on the part of both India and Japan to issues like maritime security, freedom of navigation and over flights. Acknowledging the necessity for a closer and stronger strategic partnership between India and Japan, Prime Minister Modi appreciated Japan’s “proactive contribution to peace” and Japan’s Cabinet Decision on seamless security legislation. This must allow India to take Japan as a security as well as possibly a “limited defence partner” when it comes to regional peace and security. This can include some understanding on the East China Sea dispute. But India’s support to Japan should not become a one-sided affair. In return, India must urge Japan to proactively support India’s strategic character in East Asia and keep up the cooperation with India under the EAS. Japan must also give up its reservation on civil nuclear issue with India and must sign the deal with India.

The other factor that India must review and reassess is the evolving security dynamics in East Asia. East Asia is undergoing radical power transitions. The US role in the region is declining and China-Russia understanding is growing. In addition, rising tensions between China and Japan, prevailing maritime disputes, and unresolved North Korean nuclear issues are important factors that

need serious appraisal. Among all these, the India-China dynamics in East Asia is a low-key affair. What really makes the conditions in East Asia important for India is the simmering power balance between itself, China and Japan. No matter how much neutrality India maintains in East Asia, China will continue to identify India as a power closer to Japanese strategic interests. India must also introspect as to what extent China has appreciated India's "neutrality" in the East Asian maritime disputes. The North Korean nuclear affair is another issue which India must consider and proactively respond to as a regional power. True, India's position and perspective may not have much of value to the denuclearisation issue of North Korea. Yet, India must pursue a dialogue with the two big powers, Japan and South Korea, at a bilateral level. The Tokyo Declaration between India and Japan has taken note of North Korea's denuclearisation. Both countries have urged North Korea to take "concrete measures towards denuclearisation" and comply with global obligations.⁵⁰ Maintaining a strong bilateral understanding with Japan and South Korea would help India not only to address some of these security dynamics in East Asia but also to have a strong presence in East Asian affairs.

Summing up

In its engagement with East Asia so far, India has preferred to become a security partner rather than a security provider in region. A security provider needs not only constant and robust policy engagements but also a serious pursuit of big-power diplomacy. A security provider not necessarily needs stronger security presence all the time, but requires to have leadership vision and presence. To attain this status of security provider, India needs to take along all ASEAN members seriously along with the Association itself, ARF and ADMM+. India must also build up a strong relationship with Japan and South Korea, the two main powers other than China in the East Asian region. The main challenge for India is whether it can meet the expectations of ASEAN members and emerge as a credible power to share and address the security challenges emanating in East Asia as well as in the Asia-Pacific. For India, the most preferred approach should be to engage in multilateral cooperative endeavours. As regards the maritime politics in the South China Sea, India must emphasise more on network building and thrust its emphasis on both bilateral and multilateral interactions. Equally, India needs to show courage on most of the conflicting issues in the region, including the East China Sea. Three pointers need to be taken seriously if India aims to emerge as a leader in the region. *First*, upgrade further the bilateral security and defence ties with ASEAN as well as other big powers. *Second*, pursue a more nuanced stance on most of the conflicting issues and must be linked with its regional security interests. *Third*, upgrade and maximise the multilateral

contacts and presence, where building trusted mature relations with Japan and South Korea are an important step. The undertaking to rise as a security provider, is closely linked with a leadership role, and India needs to come abreast of it.

ENDNOTES

1. This paper is part of the chapter on “India-China dynamics in East Asia”, in my forthcoming book, *India-China Relations: Politics of Resources, Identity and Authority in a Multipolar World Order*. A revised version of this paper will appear in the book.
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12

India and China: Competition and Cooperation in the Evolving Asian Security Scenario

Avinash Godbole

The China factor was one of the determinants, if not *the* determinant of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's first few foreign visits to Bhutan, Nepal and Japan. In case of Bhutan, it was the impending China-Bhutan border settlement and in case of Nepal, it was seen as a fresh start using hearts and minds approach. The fact that the prime minister did select South Asian neighbours for his first two bilateral foreign visits highlights India's willingness to reassert Indian pre-eminence in the region. For China, South Asia remains the least economically engaged region; but is of significant strategic utility in its extended neighbourhood and therefore, it is bound to increase efforts in the direction to boost its domestic economy as well, as to deepen its friendships in the region. On the other hand, expansion of India's security relations in Asia add to China's concerns even as it continues to challenge the U.S. pre-eminence in the region. At the same time, the two sides have shown cooperative elements as well, as evident from the India-China dialogue on Afghanistan and the India-China maritime cooperation in the Indian Ocean region.

Thus, it is evident that the expansion in India's role as a security provider in Asia has already increased its strategic interaction with China. This interaction takes form of competition as well as cooperation depending on the nature of interests of the two Asian powers. This paper will explore and bring out the nature of India-China competition and cooperation as major regional security providers in South Asia.

Until recently, India's foreign policy and defence outlook remained land centric although Nehru envisaged a naval security and Pannikar's famous writing historically contextualised India as sea-faring power. This was primarily because

throughout history external security threats faced by India have had land origins. On the other hand, delayed modernisations and lack of doctrinal guidance have defined the role of Indian Navy largely in a supporting capacity. Therefore, scholars and servicemen alike have called the lack of Indian interests in assertive use of navy for force projection as being a systemic “sea-blindness”;¹ exceptions being the 1971 India-Pakistan war when the navy took on an offensive role. While India’s role in thwarting the Maldivian coup of 1988 was an important learning experience as far as the peacetime strategic significance of the defence forces was concerned, even that did not result in an expansion of India’s strategic doctrine to undertake a proactive security posture.² However, certain recent developments have caused a change of perception about India’s geostrategic role in greater Asia.

The larger geopolitical change with reference to the Indian position in the global strategic matrix has been the change in perception of India as a South Asian sub-continental power to being seen as an Asian power, if not a global power yet. India’s first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru envisaged the eventual global strategic shift in 1944, when he wrote in his book *Discovery of India*, “The Pacific is likely to take the place of the Atlantic in the future as the nerve centre of the world. Though not directly a Pacific state, India will inevitably exercise an important influence there.”³ Within the India-China matrix, this change has taken the form of changing the discourse of the relations out of the strict bilateral parameters to a more regional framework. India’s de-hyphenation from Pakistan and hyphenation with China, most notably in the U.S. strategy, has also played its role in this change. The United States Defence Secretary famously called India “a linchpin in the U.S. rebalancing strategy (*sic*)”.⁴ In addition, the fact that nuclear weapons rule out a conventional India-China war as both countries develop credible deterrence as well as second strike capability has helped the shift of the strategic discourse from bilateralism to a more regional outlook. India’s oceanic potential was also encouraged by Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe during his earlier stint as the prime minister when he addressed the Indian Parliament and revived the notion of indo-pacific in his speech titled *Confluence of the Two Seas*.⁵

This chapter looks at the places or locales where the two entities, one, India as an aspirational regional security provider and the other of China as an economic and strategic mammoth, meet. It looks at the question whether these two realities are destined to collide or whether the cooperative actions and postures are more likely. Based on this premise, this chapter looks at three countries where India and China have common interests. It begins by looking at the drivers of India as a security provider. Subsequently, China’s South Asia strategy is analysed within its broader Asian security agenda. The chapter as well looks at the three cases and examines the Indian and Chinese economic and security interests.

Drivers of India as a Security Provider

India's location is seen as a critical factor that drives India's position as a security provider in Asia. In 2013, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh asserted, "(India) sought to assume our responsibility for stability in the Indian Ocean Region. We are well positioned, therefore, to become a net provider of security in our immediate region and beyond".⁶ Earlier in 2012, the then Defence Minister Mr. A.K. Antony noted that "India's strategic location in the IOR and the professional capability of our Navy bestows upon us a natural ability to play a leading role in ensuring peace and stability here".⁷ More recently, the then National Security Advisor, Shivshankar Menon noted that India needed to "decide on becoming a net security provider as requested by some of the countries in South and Southeast Asia".⁸

Several developments in the last decade have brought about a change in the Indian and global strategic thinking about the possible implications of a proactive Indian role in the Indian Ocean Region. The first set of these changes are internal as they represent India's growing regional interests. First and perhaps the most important among these was the increasing number of incidents of piracy in the Indian Ocean since the beginning of 2002, which involved risk to both the Indian trade as 60 per cent of Indian trade transits the regions affected by piracy. A security challenge was the large number of Indian nationals who work aboard Indian and other flag carriers that routinely transit this region.⁹ Another major incident that caused the change of perceptions was when terrorists used naval routes for sneaking into the country. The public memory of terror by sea is of more recent and graphic 26/11 when the terrorists reached the Indian shores using the sea route. However, India first experienced this phenomenon in 1993 when Mumbai was rocked by a series of bomb blasts, the material for which was delivered using the well-established piracy networks. Third, India's exceptional and prompt action in the aftermath of the 2004 Tsunami gave world a glimpse of the operational capability of the Indian Navy. The Indian disaster relief operations in Sri Lanka, Maldives and Indonesia involved 35 aircrafts, 42 helicopters, 40 ships and about 20,000 personnel.¹⁰ India's swift action during this regional disaster also coincided with the initiation of the second phase of Look East policy. This was espoused by then External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha in his speech at the Harvard University when he said, "The new phase of this policy is characterised by an expanded definition of 'East', extending from Australia to East Asia, with ASEAN at its core. The new phase also marks a shift from trade to wider economic and security issues, including joint efforts to protect the sea-lanes and coordinate counter-terrorism activities."¹¹ Fourth, the revival of the naval modernisation with the induction of newer platforms like the induction of the nuclear powered submarine and the recent induction of the

aircraft carrier have substantially bolstered India's strategic capability as well as reach. Indian Navy also recently inducted first indigenously built Anti-Submarine Warfare Corvette INS-Kamorta.¹²

Another important driver of the Indian desire to seek a regional security role is India's social and economic engagement with the countries in the region. A substantial number of Indian nationals live and work in the extended neighbourhood and in some cases form the backbone of the labour markets in those countries. Since the end of Cold War, political and military crises in these countries have led India to undertake emergency evacuation operations for securing the safety of its nationals. In 1990, India evacuated more than 175,000 Indian citizens from Kuwait as the Iraqi occupation was underway. Air India earned its place in the record books for evacuating 111,711 Indian citizens from Iraq, Kuwait, and Jordan within a short span of time. Similar operations have been undertaken in Lebanon in 2006, in Libya in 2011, in Syria in 2012 and most recently in Iraq when ISIS engaged in a civil war.¹³

The second group of developments for India's expanding role are external. Most notably American policy makers and scholars have been more exuberant as well as optimistic about the Indian position and its geostrategic significance in the Asian matrix.¹⁴ The 2010 U.S. Quadrennial Defence Review also noted, as "India's military capabilities grow, India will contribute to Asia as a net provider of security in the Indian Ocean and beyond".¹⁵ American interest is about India becoming an active player in maintaining a regional balance of power in Asia even as the global strategic theatre shifts from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean.

An important external factor that is seen as driving the Indian security concerns in the region and the core focus of this chapter is China's increasing strategic interest in the Indian Ocean region. While analysts in India do not quite agree with the notion of the string of pearls and its alleged strategic importance, India is cognizant of the fact that China sees Indian Ocean as a strategic challenge, possibly a chokepoint, and therefore is keen to overcome this strategic deficit.¹⁶ China's infrastructure projects across the South Asian region have come only after indigenous regional integration projects did not take off. Besides, the history of unfulfilled promises by India has made the smaller South Asian countries look towards the other viable alternative in order to boost their local and national economies. China, keen to generate business for its companies and to expand its sphere of influence did not waste any time in grabbing the opportunity with both hands. China's increased role in South Asia is a reality that India has to contend with. For example, within days of Prime Minister Modi inviting the South Asian leaders to Delhi for his oath taking ceremony, China went a step further by offering attractive tariff incentives to the 'less developed' SAARC states at the China-South Asia Expo held in Kunming, Yunnan.¹⁷

Given its size and location, India will be called upon to undertake humanitarian and disaster relief (HADR) activities if the calamities like tsunami were to occur in the future. India will also be involved as a security provider for its citizens likely to be trapped in conflict situations in its neighbourhood. India will also play its role in the region to the extent it can, if it sees regime collapse or coups that destabilise and create ethnic or social tensions.¹⁸ The nature of such role will be determined by context and the perception of the day. India will also play a role of security provider in safeguarding its regional geopolitical and geo-economic space and interests.

China's Strategic Approach towards South Asia

How China sees South Asia can be seen within the spectrum of how it sees the new Asian security architecture and its own role within that. Especially since coming to power President Xi Jinping of China has been vocal about its centrality in the Asian politics. China not only wants to become *the* Asian great power but also wants to be accepted as such. There are broadly five major landmarks that showcase that China has pronounced a cogent new neighbourhood policy under President Xi Jinping. The first among these is President Xi's talks at Boao Forum for Asia (BFA) held in Hainan in April 2013. Second is the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) work forum on diplomacy in the periphery that was held in October 2013. Third is President Xi Jinping's address at the fourth summit meeting of Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) and the fourth is China's promotion of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) can be taken as the contours of the new Chinese approach to the regional issues. Fifth, the New Silk Road Economic Belt and the Maritime Silk Road (MSR), which China has promoted rather vigorously, can together be treated as the Chinese methods for implementing its perception of the Asian engagement in the future.

It was during the keynote speech at the BFA in April 2013, where President Xi stressed on "expansion of regional connectivity, building a regional financial platform, advance economic integration and harnessing of competitiveness".¹⁹ The AIIB and MSR follow from this conceptualisation at the BFA.

The work forum on diplomacy in the periphery followed from the idea of great national rejuvenation which put friendly relations with the neighbouring and regional powers as an extension of the idea of national rejuvenation.²⁰ The work forum also aimed to bring coherence between the strategic objectives and diplomatic outreach. China sees deepening economic ties with Asian countries as part of its midterm strategic objective after the achievement of short term objective of peace and stability in the Asia Pacific region and before the long term objective of national reunification is achieved.²¹ Xi's proactive foreign policy can also be seen from the fact that both he and Premier Li Keqiang visited

neighbouring countries as their first foreign destinations after assuming complete power in March 2013. Just before the work forum, President Xi Jinping also visited five countries in Southeast Asia.

According to President Xi's speech at the CICA meeting, "China's overall new security concept under President Xi focuses on comprehensive, cooperative, sustainable and shared security".²² He added that, "it is for the people of Asia to run the affairs of Asia, solve the problems of Asia and uphold the security of Asia. The people of Asia have the capability and wisdom to achieve peace and stability in the region through enhanced cooperation". It can be seen that Xi's remarks nearly resemble the idea of Asia for Asians and criticises and excludes any role played by any external power, i.e. the United States, as a balancer or a security provider in Asia. As a method of building alternate Asian security architecture, Xi also said, Asia needs to "focus on development, actively improve people's lives and narrow down the wealth gap to cement the foundation of security". Thus, regional engagement and extra-regional exclusion are the two pillars of China's new Asia strategy under the leadership of President Xi Jinping.

Viewed in this context President Xi Jinping's September 2014 tour of India and Sri Lanka and Maldives was an extension of China's engagement strategy in Southeast Asia despite the ongoing territorial disputes and strategic conflicts. The recent Chinese behaviour attests to the pattern that China will be friendly to the friends and enemy to enemies; just as the philosophy of reward cooperation and punish conflict has been followed in case of the ASEAN members. In academic interactions, Chinese scholars tend to maintain that effective regional mechanism needs to be based on post-Cold War developments and that the Asian security architecture is incomplete due to insufficient building materials and the ineffectiveness of institutions is about their lack of problem solving capacity.²³

According to the new Chinese diplomacy, China wants to be accepted as a great power. There are a few contours of this argument. First, China says that it is ready to and will provide more public goods in Asia; China will proactively respond to situations like HADR, oil spills, stress calls, and piracy, which means more presence of PLA Navy is to be expected as well as accepted by others in the region. Second, Chinese scholars have also gradually started arguing that China should change its policy of non-intervention and become active security provider in situations where its security, economic interests or the overseas Chinese workers are threatened. China would undertake a greater role under the rubric of responsibility to protect. Another significant point highlighted in the chapter is that the Chinese naval presence in the Indian Ocean is going to increase under the philosophy of 'willingness to share the burden of security challenge in the Indian Ocean' because China wants to see a more peaceful and stable Indian Ocean.

Naval modernisation is the most recent development in China's overall military modernisation strategy. Rapid increase in technological and fleet capability has helped China to be on track towards becoming a world class blue water navy. Consistent with its expanding reach capability, China's naval presence in the Indian Ocean has clearly increased in the recent past with two confirmed ports calls to Colombo by Chinese submarines within a space of six months.²⁴ China links it with the expansion of its energy networks via Myanmar and Chinese scholars argue that China's strategic competition in the Indian Ocean is with the United States and not directly with India as such. While reports suggest that China had informed the Indian embassy in Beijing about this planned movement in 2013, media outrage over the issue does suggest that China seems to be winning the battle of perceptions.²⁵ Therefore, the strategic competition between India and China in the Indian Ocean is a possibility. However, there is a possibility of cooperation as India and China have agreed to institutionalise a bilateral maritime cooperation dialogue to discuss issues of common interests including freedom of navigation, antipiracy and security cooperation at the agency level.²⁶

Overlapping Interests of India and China

There is a general overlap between drivers that guide India and China's strategic desire in Asia, in particular in the Asian waters and what out of cooperation or competition will prevail is not yet clear. Also, India is more likely to treat regional cooperation and bilateral relations with China as two sides of the same coin. China, on the other hand, sees regional cooperation as a way to overcome strategic deficit which is unlikely to happen in case of India, especially if border standoffs tend to recur. This is exactly what seems to have derailed President Xi's hugely followed India visit. India is not in a position to compete with China as far as regional multilateral initiatives like the AIIB are concerned. On such fronts, India prefers to join the initiatives which also match with India's desires of restructuring the global financial institutions. On the other hand, India has taken a cautious position on the MSR initiative as the operational details and ownership structures under MSR remain unclear as yet. Many see India's 'Project Mausam' as a strategic response to China's MSR.²⁷ Institutionalised under the Ministry of Culture, Project Mausam aims to reestablish the cultural connectivity that monsoon winds and seafarers enabled across the Indian Ocean. Its target audience is ambitious as it aims to connect maritime countries from Africa to Southeast Asia. Re-establishing oceanic relations will help build strategic trust as well. India has also recently started taking active interest in the subregional grouping involving Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar (BCIM). India will, in all likelihood, see how BCIM proceeds before taking a call on its relation with the MSR. It is important to note that Sri Lanka and Maldives have agreed to join the MSR group.

How China looks at the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) is an example of its strategic and economic interests in the region. Just ahead of the recent SAARC Heads of State summit held in Kathmandu, China's official news agency Xinhua published a 12 page special edition of the Asia Pacific Daily, published by Xinhua's Kathmandu bureau, making a case for 'elevating' China's engagement with SAARC from that of an observer. The edition had articles by various Nepalese leaders endorsing China's eventual full membership of the organisation.²⁸ China's Deputy Foreign Minister Liu Zhenmin spoke at the SAARC summit and also made a host of offers towards increased engagement with the region.²⁹

India's Defence Relations in South Asia

India has signed and operationalised defence cooperation agreements with number of countries across Asia. Most prominent among these, in context of this chapter, are Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, and Nepal. Following is a brief analysis of the Indian role and the Chinese interest:

Afghanistan

India has signed bilateral defence cooperation agreement with Afghanistan. While India has not stationed any forces inside Afghanistan, it has undertaken training for officers from the Afghan Army in India's premier defence training institutes, as per the Strategic Partnership Agreement of 2011. Afghanistan is also keen to bolster the offence capability of its defence forces by the military hardware sourced from India. During the last Delhi visit of President Karzai, Afghanistan presented a list of hardware comprising 150 battle tanks, field guns, howitzers and one squadron of attack helicopters.³⁰ Since the major share of the Indian artillery hardware is imported mostly from Russia, it cannot export it to the third country on its own. Therefore, there is also a trilateral process underway wherein India is training Afghan forces for the hardware that will eventually be supplied by Russia.³¹ As of now, India has agreed to provide Afghanistan with two indigenous Cheetah helicopters. In Afghanistan, India is also the highest donor for the purpose of reconstruction and has created important communication infrastructure like the 215 km long Zaranj-Delaram highway that can play crucial role in promoting economic development inside Afghanistan and at the same time reduce its dependence on Pakistan. Afghanistan also perceives the selection of the new Indian NSA, Ajit Doval, as a positive development for India-Afghanistan cooperation.³²

A greater Indian role in Afghanistan as a security provider is likely to be seen positively by China. Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi appreciated India's role in implementation of confidence building measures in Afghanistan during the fourth ministerial dialogue under Istanbul Process on Afghanistan held in October

2014.³³ Earlier in April 2013, India and China held the first dialogue on Afghanistan.³⁴ There is a view that alongside India, China is seen in positive light inside Afghanistan and its investments are also less likely to be attacked due to a perception of a benign role by Taliban as well as Pakistan's ISI. Secondly, for India and China, respectively in Kashmir and in Xinjiang, the source of the next wave of extremism might come from a failed state in Afghanistan. Therefore, stability in Afghanistan is a shared concern as China has a keen economic interest in Afghanistan. China has agreed to invest \$3.5 billion towards development of the Aynak copper mines in the Logar province.³⁵ Chinese investment in Aynak mines is expected to create 4000 job opportunities.³⁶ China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) is involved in setting up of Afghanistan's first commercial oil production site in Amu Darya that generates 1.5 million barrels per year for CNPC and hefty revenues for the Afghan Government.³⁷ Besides this, as per 2012 defence and economic agreement between Afghanistan and China, China also agreed to train 300 Afghan police officers over the course of four years besides participating in the multilateral cost sharing agreement for the Afghan police and army.³⁸ During President Ghani's visit to Beijing, China also agreed to train 3,000 Afghan professionals in various fields and offered aid worth \$325 million.³⁹

However, it must be added here that India and China are not exactly on the same page as far as terrorism is concerned. India considers, with fair amount of evidence from the past, that Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) is behind nearly all acts of terrorism inside India and against the Indian assets within Afghanistan; thus, India continues to battle the 'state-sponsored terrorism'. On the other hand, China sees the benign side of ISI; recently the Chinese special envoy to Afghanistan also lauded ISI as a "responsible force battling terrorism" and even gave it a clean chit as far as the May 2014 attack on the Indian consulate in Herat was concerned.⁴⁰ Therefore, there are limitations on the extent of India-China cooperation due to the divergence of perspectives on the factors of stability and instability in Afghanistan. Even the India-China counterterrorism dialogue, in place since 2002, has achieved precious little due to the same reason.⁴¹ Therefore, at the moment, how the ISI approaches India's role after 2014 will hold the key to the Indian role in Afghanistan and Chinese perception of and reaction to that. On the other hand, further worsening of the situation in Xinjiang might force China to seek out closer cooperation with India even if it does not break the China-Pakistan bonhomie. In addition, as a security provider, India seeks a greater role for Iran for economic development of Afghanistan via the Zaranj Delaram highway and the Chabahar port.⁴² It is also likely to reduce Afghanistan's dependence on Pakistan for port access. India is unsure whether China sees merit and supports this strategy. Besides, China is also estimated to accept Taliban sharing power as long as stability in Kabul is ensured, something India is uncomfortable with given Taliban's umbilical relations with the ISI.

Another important factor guiding India-China cooperation in Afghanistan is likely to be the Indian perception of the nature of Chinese activities in the Pakistan Occupied Kashmir. This is because China's mineral and other gains from Afghanistan will in all likelihood be transported using the Karakoram Highway. Termed as the "friendship highway", this highway took 20 years to build and had cost nearly 900 lives during this period. This shows the difficult terrain in this region. China undertook the expansion of Karakoram highway to increase its handling capacity as well as to make it all weather and subsequently offered soft loans to Pakistan when it did not have adequate funds to start the work on its side. The total expansion was estimated to cost \$ 400 million all of which came from China. This was supposed to cut down the travel time by 33 per cent.⁴³ This road link is an important part of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor that extends to the Gwadar Port which is of external strategic significance. Within China, Kashgar, the town where the Karakoram highway ends, is pivotal to the new development strategy that focuses on Southern Xinjiang and is also the region where the recent incidents of extremist violence have taken place. That is why Beijing takes this road linking with Pakistan with utmost seriousness. Therefore, it may not be surprising if there was any truth to the news of sustained Chinese PLA presence in the vicinity of the Karakoram highway in Gilgit Baltistan as Selig Harrison highlighted in 2010.⁴⁴ Therefore, traffic on the Karakoram highway will increase in proportion to China's assuredness in Afghanistan. Subsequently, for India, security cooperation at one location could lead to increased security challenge at another. This exemplifies the interconnectedness of India-China strategic uncertainty in South Asia.

Sri Lanka

India-Sri Lanka bilateral relations have multiple determinants, including the domestic politics in India's southern state of Tamil Nadu. India's political role in Sri Lanka has come in for much criticism from within and outside Sri Lanka. Besides the life of Rajiv Gandhi at the prime of his political life, India has had to pay strategically as well for its misadventure of the Indian Peacekeeping Force (IPKF), which in turn was a security provider role.⁴⁵ In fact India's actions in Sri Lanka and Maldives in the late 1980s were used in order to project India as an emergent regional hegemon. Coalition politics meant that for six years until 2002, India had not offered any offensive weapons and the assistance was limited to "defensive and non-lethal" equipment. Subsequently, by 2000, Colombo was unhappy with the NDA government's refusal to provide offensive arms when the LTTE was just beginning to peak. At that time it was Pakistan which came to Colombo's military assistance besides Israel, South Africa and North Korea.⁴⁶ At that time, India's offer was only limited to humanitarian support. The 2003 Vajpayee-Wickremesinghe joint statement led to subsequent intelligence sharing

and joint naval patrolling, which was in turn strengthened in 2004 after Mahindra Rajapakse and Dr. Manmohan Singh came to power in Sri Lanka and India respectively.⁴⁷ However, the Defence Cooperation Agreement never saw light of the day. Therefore, India took a much more cautious approach when the Lankan forces were out to eliminate the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) during 2008-09, even as there was certain degree of defence relationship in form of intelligence sharing and exchange of naval information was underway.

India has played an important role in Sri Lanka's post war reconciliation efforts to the extent that it could. India's peacebuilding role has taken form of relief and medical assistance, temporary roof shelters and starter packs for the agricultural implements for the internally displaced people (IDPs). Since June 2010, India has also undertaken a program to reconstruct 50,000 houses in the Northern and Eastern provinces.⁴⁸ India has also made an attempt to persuade the Rajapaksa Government to fully implement the 13th Amendment to the Constitution as part of the post-war reconciliation process.⁴⁹

China-Sri Lanka bilateral relations have flourished in the wake of 2009 decisive war against the LTTE. In this phase, China supported Sri Lanka by supplying fighter aircrafts, anti-aircraft guns, an assortment of assault weapons, and ammunition for those weapons. Ready availability as well as lower prices also worked in favour of the Chinese defence equipment.⁵⁰ The same year, China replaced Japan as the biggest donor with a commitment of \$1 billion in aid.⁵¹ Sri Lanka likes that the Chinese involvement is quick and without many terms and conditions, including those of the human rights records or the 13th Amendment. Chinese infrastructure projects in Sri Lanka are to the tune of \$4 billion. Besides the Hambantota port, these include the construction and control rights of the container terminal at Colombo port, the flagship Shangri La hotel and the Centre for Performing Arts in Colombo.⁵² Sri Lanka is an important cog in China's efforts to overcome the Malacca Dilemma.⁵³ It is no surprise then that in 2012, China's Defence Minister General Liang Guanglie undertook an unprecedented five day visit to Sri Lanka before coming to India for three days. China has also announced \$1.5 million aid for modernisation of the Defence Services College in Colombo. Sri Lanka is also going to receive \$100 million from China towards army welfare projects.⁵⁴ Sri Lanka and China also signed a 'Strategic Cooperation Partnership' Agreement when President Rajapaksa visited China in May 2013.⁵⁵ China expects to sign a Free Trade Agreement with Sri Lanka by the end of 2014 and sees it as an important part of its new Maritime Silk Route strategy (MSR).⁵⁶ Sri Lanka on its part has committed to join the MSR strategy.⁵⁷ When President Xi Jinping stopped over in Colombo before visiting Delhi in September 2014, he became the first Chinese President to visit Sri Lanka.⁵⁸ This epitomises the high stature that Rajapaksa led Sri Lanka enjoys in the power corridors in Beijing.

While the Sri Lankan embrace gives China a possible strategic foothold at the junction connecting South and Southeast Asia, for Sri Lanka, Chinese help could not have come at a better time. In the last few years, China has consistently resisted harshly worded Human Rights Resolutions against Sri Lanka across all the United Nation platforms. Secondly, Chinese financial aid has partially helped Sri Lanka escape the monetary crunch in the aftermath of the colossal war of 2008-09.

However, others also see a negative side of Sri Lanka's surging cash dependence on China and hushed voices prefer to call this an outcome of China-Rajapaksa bonhomie. Nearly 70 per cent of the major infrastructure projects are based on Chinese loans and are built with a major involvement of Chinese firms. Despite lower conditionality, Chinese interest rates remain the highest. Thus, even on this front Rajpaksa's desire for fast growth is yielding more fruits for China at the cost of Sri Lanka as Chinese projects create jobless growth at high interest rates. At the same time, Sri Lanka's exports to China are stagnant whereas 16 per cent of Sri Lankan imports originate in China. On the other hand, India's share of Sri Lanka's total exports has risen from one to six per cent in the last five years.⁵⁹

India's Strategic Response

For its part, India's has tried to balance the Chinese influence in this region. Despite domestic political pressures, India and Sri Lanka have deepened their bilateral defence cooperation. Recently, India upgraded the representation of defence staff in the Indian embassy in Colombo.⁶⁰ In December 2013, the two neighbours also agreed to deepen their bilateral naval ties and despite political pressures from within, India also continues to train Sri Lankan Army officials in the Indian Army's training academies.⁶¹ Then Chief of the Indian Navy Adm D.K. Joshi also visited Sri Lanka for five days to participate in the annual Galle Maritime Dialogue.⁶² India has also signed a trilateral Maritime Security Cooperation Agreement involving Sri Lanka and Maldives. In the last NSA level meeting of this grouping, third in the series, Mauritius and Seychelles were invited as guest participants indicating the intended geographic scope of this regional security mechanism. The last meeting of this group discussed initiatives to enhance Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA), capacity building for the MDA and joint exercises to increase preparedness for piracy, oil spills and search and joint rescue operations in case of disasters. It also discussed the possible areas for expanding maritime cooperation in the region in areas of hydrography, training in visit, board, search and seizure operations, training on board Indian Sail Training Ships, think tank level exchanges and joint participation in adventure activities.⁶³ Interoperability, shared maritime information network and identification structures is an important target area of this cooperation.

While in public, China continues to maintain that its interests in Sri Lanka are purely bilateral and economic, there are definite strategic and regional outcomes that China aims to achieve by winning over Sri Lanka's trust. On the other hand, India does feel the heat due to the pattern of dual use infrastructure that China is building in Sri Lanka. India-China security cooperation in Sri Lanka seems unlikely at the moment given the divergent as well as competitive strategic interest the two countries have in Sri Lanka.

Nepal

Nepal's location as the landlocked state between India and China has turned from economic constraint to a strategic opportunity for Nepal as India and China wish to deepen their economic and strategic engagements. While both the large Asian powers have historical linkages with Nepal, in contemporary times, these relations have taken a strategic outlook. Chinese road and rail networks already reach near the China-Nepal borders and China has promised to bring the railway directly into Nepal by the year 2020. China and India have also competed aggressively but silently, for the development of Lumbini, Gautam Buddha's birthplace. For China, it is a way to reassert the importance of official Buddhism and challenge the Dalai Lama's strong control over the Tibetan Buddhism.⁶⁴ China's initial offer of \$3 billion is nearly 10 per cent of the Nepalese annual GDP of \$35 billion. A large proportion of Nepalese media and government agencies saw the unilateral Chinese offer in bad light as an attempt to control its national historical heritage. Subsequently, its unilateral nature and protests from India led to Nepal's rejection of the Chinese proposal. Lumbini's location, within 10 kilometres of the India-Nepal border and the growing Chinese presence there is seen as a cause of strategic concern, given the porous India Nepal border.⁶⁵ Several Political forces in Nepal, including Prachanda, CPN-Maoist Chairman and head of the Lumbini Development National Directive Committee (LDNDC) have supported Indian role in this project. India has offered to develop Lumbini as part of the Buddhist tourism circuit including Gaya and Sarnath, both of which are in India. China has consistently sought to increase its defence cooperation with Nepal. In 2011, China offered an aid of \$7.7 million when the then Chief of General Staff, General Chen Bingde, visited Nepal.⁶⁶ China's strategic concerns in Nepal also arise due to the presence in Nepal of a large number of Tibetan refugees who are also politically active; a large part of the Chinese security aid to Nepal goes for surveillance and monitoring of the Tibetan refugees.⁶⁷

On the other hand, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi also recently visited Nepal, his second bilateral foreign visit and promised to deepen India-Nepal cooperation in areas of HIT (highways, infoways, and transways). Prime Minister Modi's bilateral visit to Nepal being the first by an Indian Prime Minister

in 17 years attests to both the hitherto neglect and present day significance of Nepal in India's regional policy. Both India and China are competing to develop Nepal's large hydropower potential 42,000 MW of which only 600 MW has been developed.⁶⁸ Prime Minister Modi's visit is seen in a positive light after he offered a series of new cooperative measures. He noted, India was ready to review the 1950 Treaty of Friendship between India and Nepal.⁶⁹ During this trip, India also offered Nepal a Line of Credit worth \$1 billion in addition to all other such arrangements that are in place. The two sides also agreed to sign a Power Trade Agreement (PTA), a framework agreement of power and trade agreements, within 45 days of the visit.⁷⁰ China's success during 2009-12 phase when it won the rights to build some hydropower projects was seen as India's loss of influence with Nepal. The PTA should help reset the things as the Indian loans and LoC would bring the investments at much more attractive rates than from China. For its part, China proposed a trilateral cooperation for Nepal's hydropower development after Prime Minister Modi's visit.⁷¹ India also reiterated its commitment to Nepal's sovereignty in internal affairs.⁷² In Nepal, it must be noted, India tends to be projected as a hegemon, especially by those out of power in order to criticise the government of the day as weak. This was also aided by section of the Nepali media that was highly hostile towards India.⁷³

Prime Minister's second visit in November 2014, led to some form of fruition of bilateral ties as 12 new agreements were signed.⁷⁴ However, there is also a perception that the Chinese pressure led to the cancellation of Prime Minister Modi's visit to Lumbini even as the Sri Lankan President Mahindra Rajapaksa visited Lumbini.⁷⁵ If true, this incident exemplifies the India-China strategic competition for influence in South Asia and calls upon India to increase its activism in Nepal.

India-Nepal Defence Relations

India-Nepal defence ties are diverse and cover areas like military educational exchanges, joint exercises and supplies of military stores and equipment.⁷⁶ India has also reinitiated its defence ties since 2013 after a break of eight years when the internal political turmoil in Nepal was at its peak.⁷⁷ There is also an India-Nepal Bilateral Consultative Group on Security that has held 11 meetings thus far and it is the nodal dialogue mechanism for the bilateral defence ties. Indian and Nepalese armies have conducted various joint exercises in the last few years and their focus areas have been counter-terrorism, jungle warfare, disaster-relief and terrain training. As a part of a long standing tradition, India and Nepal both grant honorary titles upon each other's army chiefs. The Indian Army chief is the only person having this bilateral honour in Nepal speaks volumes of the depth of India-Nepal defence ties. It is important to note that in 2011 China was also seeking establishing such tradition with Nepal as part of their deepening

bilateral defence cooperation. Recently, India also gifted Nepalese Army one Dhruv Advanced Light M-III Helicopter during Prime Minister's visit even as negotiations for the sale of two Dhruv helicopters were underway.

Conclusion

China under Xi Jinping is in no mood to hide its strength as President Xi's predecessors advised. China has not been shy to say that it has arrived and that others should accept it as a normal power. China wants to do this by leading the economic development and by altering the ADB led consensus as it promotes the AIIB as a better alternative. China's statements on becoming a provider of common security and common public goods indicate its increasing naval capacity and the confidence that goes with it. China's South Asian strategy falls within its larger Asian security outlook. In South Asia, it can be seen in case of the three countries studied here that there is a clear strategic competition between India and China. Both the countries have their strategic interests and there is little scope for convergence at the moment. India's increased financial capacity and increased proactive foreign policy seen from the first few days of Prime Minister's Modi's Government could help recover some lost ground. However, these three countries are where India-China strategic competition would remain and would see more conflict of interest between India as a regional security provider and China as a rising Asian power.⁷⁸

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13

India-South Korea Defence and Security Cooperation: Exploring the Possibilities and Challenges

Pranamita Baruah

India and South Korea have a long-standing historical and cultural relationship even though their strategic relationship is relatively new. After the end of the Cold War, the bilateral relationship between the two countries started deepening and eventually in 2010, a strategic partnership was officially proclaimed. While strong economic linkage remains the most significant component of the bilateral ties, respect for democratic values is another important aspect of the India-South Korea relationship. In the rapidly changing geopolitical and strategic scenario in the international order, the role of middle powers like India, South Korea and Japan in dealing with regional and global issues has been critical. This to some extent has helped these powers to converge their strategic interests in the region. The very fact that India's relations with these two countries are free from so called 'historical baggage' (unlike Japan-South Korea relations), the advancement of New Delhi-Tokyo and New Delhi-Seoul relations has largely been hassle free. On India-South Korea relations, Indian Ambassador to South Korea, Vishnu Prakash, avers:

The relationship is firmly anchored in a commonality of mutual interests and outlook. Ours is a problem-free and friendly relationship. We do not have any strategic differences. That can be said about very few countries. We have similar outlooks, similar interests and similar challenges.¹

Over the years, both India and South Korea have become increasingly aware that the enhancement of their bilateral security relations could have a significant impact on the balance of power equation in the region. That is why they have

elevated their relationship to a strategic partnership and have used mechanisms like the Joint Commission, the Foreign Policy and Security Dialogue to discuss regional security issues of mutual concerns.

This paper will primarily focus on the evolution and progress of India-South Korea defence and security cooperation. It will also explore the future prospect of that cooperative relationship and the possible challenges that could deter in deepening it further.

Factors Propelling the Convergence of the Bilateral Strategic Interests

Former Indian Ambassador to South Korea, Skand Tayal summed up the bilateral relationship by stating that India-Republic of Korea (ROK) bilateral relations were “correct but cool” till the end of the Cold War.² It is only recently that the two countries have come to realise each other’s importance in their strategic calculus.³ The very fact that the bilateral meetings between the heads of the two governments only commenced during the 1990s clearly displays the nascent state of the India-South Korea relations. Nevertheless, a deep analysis of the geostrategic situation in and around India as well as South Korea point out a number of factors that might have played a key role in bringing about a convergence of strategic interests between the two countries, and eventually propelling them to develop a strategic partnership.

(i) India’s adoption of the Look East Policy and South Korea’s ‘New Asia Initiative’: Until recently, the regional view of both the countries toward Asia has been confined to the relatively adjacent economies, not being able to see a geographically broader spectrum within Asia.⁴ However, India’s adoption of the Look East Policy (LEP) in the mid-1990s proved to be a turning point in India-South Korea relations. This policy emphasised on India’s growing strategic interest beyond its immediate neighbourhood of South Asia and towards East Asia. In the last decade or so, pressure started to grow on India to pay equal attention on engaging proactively with its northeast Asian neighbours as well.⁵ This eventually propelled India to initiate, under the LEP, to deepen engagement with the larger Pacific area (including both southeast as well as northeast Asia) and to incorporate wider strategic considerations, maritime focus and discreet military diplomacy.

In March 2009, South Korea introduced its ‘New Asia Initiative’ as part of its overall Global Korea activism policy. Just like the LEP, this policy too called for deepening of South Korea’s ties with other Asian countries in a comprehensive way that goes beyond mere economic interaction. While explaining India’s role in the ‘New Asia Policy’, former South Korean Prime Minister Han Seung-soo argued that “ensuring a more stable strategic balance in Asia requires a New

Look of paradigm shifts within and amongst nations. This New Look is highly relevant in the context of the growing Korea-India relationship".⁶ According to him, there was scope for greater convergence between India and South Korea, given their mutual interest in various areas.⁷

Realising their growing convergence of interest in the security field, India and South Korea (along with Japan) initiated a Trilateral Strategic Dialogue at the Track II level in New Delhi in 2012. In that dialogue, the Indian Government officials tried to emphasise the growing necessity for both India and South Korea to expand the scope of the bilateral relations to realise their common commitment towards maintaining maritime trade, energy and economic security in the seas around them; ensuring freedom of the seas; combating terrorism; etc.⁸

Thus, policies like the LEP and the New Asia Initiative not only helped both India and South Korea to deepen and expand the scope of their relationship further, but also made them realise the growing convergence of their strategic interests in the region.

(ii) *Mutual concern over energy security*: In recent times, due to rapid economic development, the energy consumption has been growing at a fast rate within India and South Korea. However as demand has consistently outstripped supply, substantial energy shortage has emerged as a major concern. Given that around 95 per cent of India's total external trade is carried out by sea, with over 70 per cent of the country's oil imports transiting the maritime domain, the economic/energy issue is clearly interlinked with the issue of maritime security.

As for South Korea, it ranks 10th in the world in terms of energy consumption. However as the country has practically no natural resource of its own, the government often faces challenge in meeting the growing energy demands. Given that 96 per cent of South Korea's energy consumption relies on imports, the country is by and large dependent on imported energy for its own economic development.⁹

Both India and South Korea are heavily dependent on the energy imports from the Middle East. While being transported to these countries, the energy shipments pass through the India Ocean. Most of Indian Ocean traffic transits through the Malacca Strait. To both India and South Korea, the trade inflow through the Strait of Malacca is strategically important as it connects the Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCs) that come out of the South China Sea with the Indian Ocean. Any instability in the Malacca Strait caused by non-traditional security threats such as piracy and terrorism could not only jeopardise India's trade inflow, but also the national security at large.¹⁰

Thus there is a convergence of strategic interests between India and South Korea as far as energy security is concerned. In fact piracy disruption in the

SLOCs of the Indian Ocean has propelled both the countries to deploy their naval forces into the Gulf of Aden.¹¹

(iii) *Aspiration for blue water navy*: The transformation of Indian Navy from a brown water local coastal force to a blue water oceanic force has been key strategic development for the country. A 'blue water' navy serves India's interest to become a 'sea power' that could not only defend her coast but her distant oceanic frontiers. The notion of blue water navy, to some extent, is interlinked with the economic aspect as well. As India's economic development is largely dependent on the energy resources imported through the sea lanes, defence of Indian economic interests on the high seas has been a major issue of concern.¹² Moreover in recent times, the high reserves of natural resources (especially hydrocarbons) in the India Ocean region have attracted a lot of attention from the regional players as well as the US.¹³ India, being a part of the Indian Ocean region, would like to secure its own economic interest in the region. By becoming a blue water navy, Indian Navy could serve that purpose. In this context, Admiral Suresh Mehta, India's former Chief of Naval Staff (2006-2009) rightly pointed out:

We are not only looking at countering threats but to protect the country's economic and energy interests. This task has extended our area of operations. This might necessitate our operating in distant waters. As the Indian economy grows, the country is making increasing investments in distant places to ensure the availability of energy flow to maintain this growth.¹⁴

South Korea too has expressed its intention to develop a blue water navy. The country is largely dependent on developing countries to sustain its rapid economic growth. However many of those countries are plagued by instability. As South Korea came to realise that it had no means to defend its overseas interests, this largely propelled Seoul to seriously think about developing a blue water navy.¹⁵ In this context, South Korean President Lee Myung-bak averred in 2008: "With a vision for an advanced deep-sea Navy, our Navy should become a force that can ensure the security of maritime transportation lines, and contribute to peace in the world."¹⁶

Thus the aspiration for blue water navy might have been one of the motivating factors for India and South Korea to deepen their ties through the strategic partnership. In fact, Indian navy, being the seventh largest navy in the world, could easily become one of the key maritime partners of South Korea—the world's eighth largest fleet. In this context, security analyst Mingi Hyun argues: "The potential for greater security cooperation with Japan and India rests largely on South Korea's navy—by far the country's most able power projection service."¹⁷

(iv) *The China factor*: India and South Korea could have certain convergence of

strategic interests while dealing with China as well. Given that both the countries treat China as an economic opportunity, they want to deepen their ties with it. However they are equally concerned that China's rise may not be as 'peaceful' as it claims. That is why the two countries seem to advocate that the US should remain in Asia in order to maintain some sort of balance of power vis-à-vis China.¹⁸

China, which is in neighbourhood of both India and South Korea, has been an ally of India's arch rival—Pakistan—and South Korea's errant neighbour—North Korea. Over the years, Chinese support to its two allies has concerned India and South Korea. India's growing stature as a major regional and global power, along with its long-standing territorial dispute with China has strained India-China bilateral relationship. In recent times, as the Chinese attempt to encircle India through the 'string of pearls' has come to be highlighted, many strategic thinkers have argued that India could use similar ploy by pursuing some degree of counter encirclement around China's own periphery of Pacific Asia. India might be able to realise that objective by developing closer strategic ties with East Asian countries like South Korea and Japan.

As for South Korea, besides the China-North Korea alliance, it has also been concerned about China's rapid rise and the growing prospect of a China-centric regional and global order. In geographical and naval terms, for long, South Korea faced China across the Yellow Sea/Western Sea and East China Sea, with disputed Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) between them. Many a times, the two countries confronted each other over Chinese fishermen's intrusion in the South Korea's EEZ waters.¹⁹ In March 2012, the maritime dispute between South Korea and China flared up over Ieodo/Suyan Reef, a submerged rock in the East China Sea.²⁰ Such disputes have had an impact on South Korean maritime strategy and naval modernisation. Terrance Roehrig, in one of his articles, argues that South Korea's "shipbuilding program and the construction of the naval base on Jeju Island are occurring in part with an eye toward China's future strategic direction".²¹

The rise of China at a time when the role of the US has been declining in the Asia-Pacific region is strategically uncomfortable development, as far as South Korea is concerned. This largely explains South Korea's desire to develop closer ties with other Asian countries, including India, in order to gain alternative sources of support.

(v) *Mutual concern over North Korea:* North Korea is another area where both India and South Korea seems to share certain strategic concerns, although the levels of intensify vary. Since the end of the Korean War, the relationship between the two Koreas has largely been antagonistic. Since the end of the Cold War, the situation deteriorated further with North Korea's relentless pursuit of the nuclear weapons programme that raised a sense of insecurity in South Korea. North

Korea's antagonistic and confrontational attitude towards South Korea has become increasingly evident with the former's conduct of a series of nuclear as well as missile tests aimed at intimidating the latter. The situation has turned more complex due to North Korean leader Kim Jong-un's occasional inflammatory war rhetoric, which included him threatening in 2013 to tear up the existing Korean War Armistice Agreement.

As for India, North Korea's engagement in nuclear proliferation with Pakistan has been a major issue of concern. In 2002, following the revelation of the North's alleged involvement in developing a highly enriched uranium (HEU) programme in collaboration with Pakistan, Pakistani nuclear scientist A.Q. Khan admitted to have run a network for selling HEU technology to Pyongyang. He also reportedly confessed to have supplied the North with centrifuge prototypes and blueprints, which enabled the latter to develop its centrifuge enrichment programme.²² More recently, on February 12, 2013, as North Korea carried out another nuclear test, it coincided with Pakistan's reassertion of its opposition to the fissile material cut off treaty (FMCT) at the UN Conference on Disarmament. Those two developments raised certain question within India regarding the possibility of Pakistan exporting HEU to North Korea to develop the latter's latest nuclear weapon.²³ While explaining India's genuine concern over North Korea-Pakistan nuclear nexus former Indian Ambassador to South Korea, Skand Tayal stated: "India has strong misgivings about the nexus between Pakistan and North Korea (DPRK) on exchanging North Korean nuclear missile technology with Pakistan's uranium enrichment technology."²⁴

Thus, concern over North Korea's ambitious nuclear programme and its proliferation of nuclear know how to other countries might have also played a role pushing India and South Korea to develop a strategic partnership.

Evolution of India-South Korea Defence and Security Cooperation

The evolution of India-South Korea defence and security cooperation can be divided into four major categories: during the Cold War (1953-1990), post-Cold War (1990-2003); the phase of 'cooperative partnership' (2004-2009) and lastly the phase of 'strategic partnership' (2010 onwards).

(i) *During the Cold War (1953-1990)*: During the Cold War, India-South Korea Relations was largely in a state of 'strategic disconnect' due to Cold War politics. However, during the Korean War, India took initiative towards developing some sort of security relations at the bilateral level by dispatching the 60th Parachute Field Military Ambulance Platoon, a mobile army surgical hospital that treated injured soldiers during the UN operations.²⁵

In December 1973, India-South Korea relations were elevated from consular level to full diplomatic relation. Then in August 1974, the two countries signed two major agreements to develop ties in the fields of economy and culture. Unfortunately, these two agreements did not seem to deliver much in creating a conducive environment that could propel the two countries in exploring the possibility of developing some sort of security ties.

However, the 1980s witnessed the evolution of democratic process in South Korea that subsequently led to the transfer of political authority from the military to parliamentary civilian rule. This to some extent helped the South Koreans to look at its bilateral relations with major Asian democracy-India outside the prism of Cold War politics. During the 1980s, the two countries decided to take the first tentative step towards defence cooperation by encouraging exchange of visits by defence personnel. In fact during 1984-1987, three delegations from the National Defence College (NDC) of both India and South Korea visited each other's country. In late 1980s, India acquired mine detectors from the Korean multinational company Lucky Goldstar (LG) and considered a proposal to purchase parachutes from the same company. In 1988, a project for the construction of offshore patrol vehicles was initiated between the Indian Navy and the Korea Tacoma Marine Industries, Samsung. For that a team from the Indian Navy was stationed in Masan (South Korea). In May 1990, as a defence wing was opened in the South Korean Embassy in New Delhi,²⁶ it came to be treated as another significant step towards enhancing the bilateral defence and security ties.

(ii) *During the post-Cold War era (1990-2003)*: The 1991 economic crisis in India coupled with the Soviet Union's collapse propelled the Indian policymakers to take a fresh look at the country's foreign policymaking. At that time, the newly elected Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao not only initiated economic liberalisation, but also authored the Look East Policy (LEP) in 1993 in order to deepen India's ties with countries on its eastern periphery. Under the LEP, being an economic giant in East Asia, South Korea came to be treated by India as a major country for commerce and investment. Since late 1980s, South Korea too, under its 'Northern Diplomacy' initiative, started developing diplomatic relations with the communist as well as the former 'anti-US bloc' of countries and tried to introduce a truly global aspect to its diplomacy. This new initiative pushed South Korea to enhance its ties with India.²⁷

South Korea's growing importance in India's strategic calculus became apparent with Narasimha Rao's visit to South Korea in September 1993. It was the first ever visit by an Indian Head of government to South Korea. This watershed event further helped the two countries to lay a firm foundation to deepen the ties at all levels—political, economic and cultural. Later on, the state visit by the

then South Korean President Kim Young-sam to India in February 1996 became another landmark in the bilateral ties.²⁸ His visit certainly took the bilateral relationship to a higher plane. Unfortunately economy remained a major component of this relationship.

However, the exchange of visits by defence personnel of the two countries continued. India's then Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General S.F Rodrigues visited South Korea in November 1992. As it was the first ever visit of a COAS of India to South Korea, it indicated the growing interaction between the two countries in the defence sector. Throughout the 1990s the defence delegations from NDC of both the countries visited each other's country. Here the visit of a Korean National Defence delegation to India on a study tour (October 1993), the goodwill visit of a South Korean Naval training squadron to Mumbai (October 1993), the visit of the then Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Vishnu Bhagwat to South Korea (June 1997), etc. can be rightly cited. India was granted 'observer' status at the sixth Western Pacific Naval Symposium held in Seoul during October 11-17, 1998. India's then Chief of Naval Staff Vice Admiral Madanjit Singh participated in that symposium. After that symposium, Indian Navy ships participated with South Korean Navy in a joint exercise and in the International Fleet Review to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Korean Armed Forces.²⁹

In September 2000, *INS Aditya* and *INS Kuthar* docked in Pusan, South Korea. At that time, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief (FOC-in-C) of the East Navy Command-Vice Admiral V.P. Pasricha, who was part of the crew, visited South Korea. Both India and South Korea participated in the meetings of Shared Awareness and Deconfliction (SHADE), an initiative of the US-led Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) stationed in Bahrain in order to coordinate the anti-piracy efforts in the Gulf of Aden and Somalia. Then in December 2001, a South Korean Naval Academy fleet comprising two battleships and one logistics support ship with around eight hundred crew members paid a goodwill exchange visit to India and participated in a joint naval exercise with the Indian Navy at Mumbai.³⁰

In the wake of 9/11 terrorist attacks and the terrorist attack on the Indian Parliament on December 13, 2001 pushed the two countries to consult on counter-terrorism. The then Indian External Affairs Minister Jawant Singh, during his visit to Seoul in April 2002 to chair the first ever meeting of the India-South Korea Joint Commission, discussed the issue of terrorism with his South Korean counterpart Choi Sung-hong. Both the leaders later on agreed to intensify contacts in the defence sector and expand political cooperation in multilateral fora. They also agreed to inject some strategic dimension to India-South Korea relations by expanding their bilateral defence engagement in areas such as training and exchange of military delegations.³¹

The year 2003 marked the 30th anniversary of the establishment of India-South Korea diplomatic relations. By then both the countries had tried various innovative ways in order to boost their bilateral ties.³² As for defence cooperation, in October 2003, Gautam Mukhopadhyaya, the then Joint Secretary (PIC) in India's Ministry of Defence, led a four-member defence delegation to South Korea to hold dialogues with the South Korean officials on a wide-ranging issues pertaining to defence. In November that year, the three Indian naval ships from the Eastern Command-*INS Ranjit*, *INS Kullish* and *INS Jyoti*-docked in Pusan for five days. On that occasion, the then Rear Admiral R.P. Suthan and Vice Admiral O.P. Bansal, FOC-in-C, eastern Naval Command, visited South Korea and met with the then South Korean Navy chief Admiral Moon. Such exchanges clearly indicate the growing interaction between the two countries in the defence sector.

(iii) *The phase of 'cooperative partnership' (2004-2009)*: India-South Korea relationship gained further momentum in October 2004 during then South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun's historic visit to India. During his visit, the two countries agreed to elevate India-South Korea ties to a higher level of "Long Term Cooperative Partnership of Peace and Prosperity". They evaluated the performance of the India-South Korea Joint Commission that supported an early finalisation of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism sponsored by India at the UN.³³ Later on both agreed to set up the India-South Korea Foreign Policy and Security Dialogue (FPSD) that was to be held alternatively in India and South Korea from 2005 onwards. While noting the usefulness of bilateral defence interaction and exchanges, the two countries also agreed to continue promoting such activities.³⁴ Accordingly the first bilateral FPSD was held on January 20, 2005.

In September 2005, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the two countries on cooperation in defence and logistics. This was the first bilateral agreement to forge a long-term institutional relationship in that area. It facilitated defence industry cooperation and the joint development of self-propelled artillery and mine-countermeasures vessels. The 2005 agreement was followed by another MoU in March 2006 between the coastguards of the two countries.³⁵

In October 2005, an Indian coast guard vessel visited Pusan and carried out joint exercises with the South Korean counterparts that involved joint interception of pirate vessels, search and rescue missions and fighting fires on ocean-going ships. A similar joint exercise was carried out in July 2006 when a Korean Coastguard ship visited Chennai.³⁶

During the first Joint Committee meeting between India and South Korea held in Seoul in March 2007, both sides agreed to exchange experience and

information on design, production, procurement and maintenance of defence equipment and services. In that meeting, South Korea proposed joint projects in order to produce and trade variety of arms and equipment, including 5000 tonne frigates, mine warfare ships, armoured vehicles and K-9 self-propelled guns. An MoU was eventually signed between the two sides to assure the quality of their defence products.³⁷

The defence ministers of India and South Korea held their first ever dialogue in May 2007. In that meeting then South Korean Defence Minister Kim Jang-soo and his Indian counterpart A K Antony agreed to carry out joint naval exercises and expand exchange of visits by high-ranking defence personnel and cadets from the two countries. Kim reiterated South Korea's desire to explore joint research, production and marketing of defence equipment with India. He also requested India to send a military attaché to the Indian Embassy in Seoul.³⁸

In the meantime, bilateral exchanges in the field of defence gained momentum. In May 2008, then South Korean Chief of Naval Operations visited India followed by India's then Chief of Naval Staff, Admiral Sreesh Mehta's visit to South Korea in August that very year. At the Western Pacific Naval Symposium and the International Fleet Review held in Pusan in October 2008, India was represented by Vice Admiral Nirmal Verma. Two Indian Navy vessels-*INS Kulish* and *INS Ghariyal* also participated in the review.³⁹

(iv) *The phase of 'strategic partnership' (2010 onwards):* In 2008, as Lee Myung-bak assumed office as the President of South Korea, bilateral relationship seemed to reach a new high. Lee's visit to India in January 2010 was historic as it led to the elevation of India-South Korea relations to a 'strategic partnership'. As for security cooperation, the leadership of the two countries agreed to maintain regular contacts, acknowledged the necessity of holding the South Korea-India Joint Commission meeting annually, agreed to raise the level of the FPSD from the joint secretary/director general level to the level of vice minister of foreign affairs/secretary (East). While agreeing to strengthen defence-related dialogues and exchanges through regular high-level military exchanges, the two sides also acknowledged the need for greater cooperation between the navies and coastguards in areas pertaining to safety and security of international maritime traffic.⁴⁰

Soon after Lee's visit, the fourth round of FPSD between the two countries took place in Seoul on April 9, 2010. It was the first FPSD meeting at the level of the secretary (East) and vice minister between the two countries. During that meeting, both sides discussed issues pertaining to terrorism, non-proliferation, bilateral defence cooperation, etc.⁴¹

Since 2010 onwards, the strategic partnership has helped the two countries in deepening their security ties. In September 2010, as A.K. Antony visited Seoul, it marked the first ever visit of an Indian defence minister to South Korea.⁴² This

visit led to the signing of two agreements on defence cooperation between the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) of India and the Defence Acquisition Programme Administration of South Korea. The agreements primarily focused on the following areas: exchange of military personnel and experts, military education and training; military exercises, promotion of cooperation in humanitarian assistance and international peacekeeping activities; joint R&D; co-development and co-production of defence production; etc. The agreements also highlighted some areas of immediate interest where both could work together, e.g., marine systems, electronics and intelligence systems.⁴³

The security relations between the two countries received a substantial impetus during then Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh's visit to South Korea in March 2012. At that time, India tried to boost the strategic partnership further by announcing that a defence attaché would be posted in the Embassy of India in Seoul by the end of 2012.⁴⁴ The two countries shared the view on the need to actively pursue consultation and cooperation in the field of maritime security and in maintaining regional stability through bilateral and multilateral fora. Most importantly, both agreed to deepen defence cooperation, including joint ventures in R&D and manufacture of military equipment, transfer of technology and co-production, and exchange between defence establishments of the two countries.⁴⁵ In the Joint Statement issued on March 25, 2012, both sides welcomed the commencement of a trilateral India-South Korea-Japan dialogue among the think tanks of the three countries. That dialogue took place for the first time in New Delhi on June 29, 2012.⁴⁶

The bilateral relationship received further boost with South Korean President Park Geun-hye's state visit to India in January 2014. As for security cooperation, in the joint statement, both sides decided to institute a regular dialogue between the national security structures of both the countries and exchange classified military information. It was believed that the sharing of such military information would contribute towards enhancing mutual confidence and cooperation in the military field.⁴⁷

In June 2012, bilateral naval cooperation reached a new high as four Indian Navy vessels paid a port call at Busan and conducted a joint exercise with their South Korean counterparts. In July 2013, India's then Chairman of Chiefs of Staff Committee (COSC) Air Marshall N.A.K. Browne visited South Korea with a tri-series delegation. In the Seoul International Aerospace and Defence exhibition held in October 2013, an eighteen member team led by the Scientific Adviser to Defence Minister and Chief of DRDO participated. It was DRDO's biggest ever overseas outreach initiative.⁴⁸

The above discussion largely indicates that though the aspect of India-South Korea defence and security cooperation was incorporated into the bilateral agenda

only recently (with the signing of the MoU on Defence Logistics and Supplies, 2005), over the years, it has grown at a satisfactory pace. However there are a number of areas where both can cooperate in order to boost their defence and security ties further.

Possible Areas of Cooperation

(i) *Defence manufacturing*: India and South Korea could forge joint ventures in the producing military equipment. They could even engage in the transfer of defence related technology. Both the countries have already taken some measures towards it. India's self-propelled Howitzer Development programme has cooperation between India's DRDO and Bharat earth movers Ltd., with South Korea's Agency for Defence development (ADD) and Samsung Techwin.⁴⁹ Given South Korea's expertise in ship building, both the countries could work on some joint ventures/partnership in that area, especially in the construction of building ships, ports, naval bases, etc. Hyundai Heavy Industries and Daewoo ship-building and Marine Engineering have responded to India's request for information (RFI) for a new frigate.

Minesweeping can be another area of cooperation as far as defence manufacturing is concerned. The Kangnam Ship building Company has jointly worked with the Goa shipyard for the minesweeping ship hunter programme of Indian Navy.⁵⁰ In June 2012, a contract worth US\$500 million was finalised with Kangnam to supply eight advanced minesweeping and hunting warships to India.⁵¹ Although India-South Korea cooperation in the defence manufacturing sector has not been that substantial, the process has already begun. Given the immense potential in this area, both the countries could benefit from it in the long run.

(ii) *Securing sea lanes of communication (SLOCs)*: Given the heavy dependence of both India and South Korea on energy imports from the Middle East, for them, the shipments of energy passing through the Indian Ocean region (IOR), especially the Malacca Strait, is extremely vital. Any volatility in that region could hurt their economies. Given the shared interest in ensuring security in the SLOCs in the IOR, both the countries could work together in dealing with the non-traditional security threats in the region, such as piracy and terrorism. The navies of the two countries are already cooperating in anti-piracy operations in the IOR and the Gulf of Aden.⁵²

(iii) *Dealing with the North Korea-Pakistan nuclear nexus*: North Korea's nuclear programme has been a major issue of concern to the East Asian states. India too has been extremely concerned about the proliferation of nuclear know-how from North Korea to Pakistan. Over the years, North Korea has been allegedly involved

in nuclear proliferation deals with several terrorist outfits including the Hezbollah and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). Given the shared concern between India and South Korea over nuclear proliferation, they could cooperate with each other in countering such acts. South Korea, being a member of the US-led proliferation security initiative (PSI) since 2009, it could help in intercepting the transfer of nuclear technology from North Korea to other countries or to other terrorist outfits.

(iv) *Humanitarian assistance and international peacekeeping operation*: This could be another area of bilateral cooperation. Over the years both India⁵³ and South Korea⁵⁴ have contributed a lot in this area. Given their shared interest, both the countries signed an MoU in 2010 to cooperate in these two areas. As India often deals with a large number of disasters within the country, it has developed a sophisticated disaster management system and even helped countries like Pakistan, Afghanistan, etc., to set up such system.⁵⁵ South Korea is trying to increase its participation in international humanitarian assistance programme and provide assistance in areas affected by natural and manmade disasters.⁵⁶ Here India, with its vast experience in dealing with disasters, could cooperate with South Korea in setting up an effective disaster management mechanism. Both the countries could also develop some institutional set up in order to coordinate their activities in the UN sponsored peacekeeping operations all over the world.

(v) *Modernising military training*: There is ample scope for the two countries to cooperate in this sector. Frequent and regular joint military training and naval exercises between the two countries could play a key role in modernising their military training process. South Korean forces have developed expertise in guerrilla warfare. Indian forces could make use of South Korean experience in this regard in dealing with terrorism and developing infrastructure in the border regions. As for India, it is known for its highly acclaimed military training academies and schools, such as the National Defence Academy (NDA), Indian Military Academy and Officers Training Academy. South Korean military personnel could come to these training institutions regularly and acquire guidance from these facilities.⁵⁷

(vi) *Cybersecurity*: Both India and South Korea share concerns over the growing security threats in cyberspace. This motivated them to agree to hold the first Policy Consultation on Cyberspace in 2014. Moreover an MoU has been concluded in this regard between the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) and Korea Internet and Security Agency.⁵⁸ In the coming years, cyber security can provide further impetus towards bilateral cooperation.

Challenges

Despite the recent surge in India-South Korea relations, a number of factors continue to deter the two countries from deepening the relationship in the area of defence and security. Firstly, there is a lack of convergence in the strategic intentions of the two countries. It is particularly evident in case of China. Deeply concerned by the security threats posed by China, India has been trying to contain China by developing strong ties with the US and its allies in the Asia-Pacific region. Though South Korea is also concerned about China's military modernisation programme, it has abstained from joining countries like India, Japan and the US in containing China. Instead South Korea believes that as China provides vast economic opportunities, engagement with China is extremely important.⁵⁹

Secondly, the failure of both India and South Korea in understanding each other's internal as well as external security concerns can be another deterrent. This is partly due to geographical distance and the geopolitical environment. India deals with religious extremism, separatism and fundamentalism on a regular basis. On the external front, it is surrounded by vulnerable states like China, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan. India has disputes with many of these states. Among them, the border conflict with China has been the most critical one. South Korea too faces a lot of security challenges, especially on the external front. Nuclear North Korea remains the most important security threat to South Korea. Recently South Korea has been increasingly concerned about the possibility of Japan's remilitarisation and the Japanese Government's assertive behaviour towards South Korea with regard to the territorial dispute over the Dokdo/Takeshima islands.

There is clear lack of convergence of security perception between India and South Korea. While South Korea largely treats China as an economic opportunity, to India, China poses as a major security concern. Moreover while India's relations with Japan have been growing rapidly, South Korea has long-standing historical and territorial disputes with Japan. The South Koreans cannot really realise the sensitivity of issues like India-China border dispute or the threat of terrorism to the Indians. Similarly, Indians too might find it detrimental to the country's national interest in taking strong action against North Korea.

Thirdly, the strategic approach of the two countries seems to differ. While noting the shared common values of democracy, market economy, etc. among South Korea, Japan and India, New Delhi hopes to promote trilateral cooperation. However, South Korea does not seem to share much enthusiasm in this regard. In fact due to South Korea's long-standing historical and territorial disputes with Japan, Seoul has not been keen on signing any public agreement on security relations with Japan so far.⁶⁰

Fourthly, trust deficiency can be another deterrent in boosting bilateral security cooperation. They would need to trust each other enough to share transfer of military technology. Then only coproduction of defence equipment could move ahead. Unfortunately till now, the two governments have not taken enough adequate measures in building trust in this regard.

Lastly, India's offset requirement another major hurdle in this regard. In major defence deals, South Korean companies often find it difficult to meet India's offset requirement, i.e., a minimum of 30 per cent capital acquisition in all deals excess of about \$50 million should be from India.⁶¹

The Future

The future prospect of India-South Korea relations looks promising. Unfortunately, trade and economy continues to constitute the most crucial factor in the bilateral ties while the security component of it comparatively is still at a nascent state. As mentioned earlier, a number of factors pose as major challenges in improving the defence and security relations between the two countries further. There is need for strong confidence-building measures between the two countries that could go a long way in boosting the defence and security relations. It is equally important for both to agree on certain principles in order to improve their security relations, such as, it should not be directed at any third country, both should primarily focus on shaping a healthy balance of power in Asia, their security ties should be in compliance with global norms and universal values (e.g., promotion of democracy, protection of human rights and prevention of proliferation). Most importantly, both need to be more sensitive to each other's internal as well external security concerns.

As of now, maritime security seems to be the main focus of bilateral security cooperation. However, as the two countries have already established strategic ties, it is time for them to take more concrete measures to realise strategic outcomes. In this regard, regular participation in each other's military exercises as an observer, joint counter piracy operations, exchange of military information, etc. To upgrade the bilateral security ties to strategic level, the two countries should strengthen military-to-military cooperation more vigorously.

Enhancement of bilateral defence cooperation, especially in arms imports and exports, technology transfer, joint development of military equipment could prove instrumental in boosting India-South Korea defence and security cooperation. Defence R&D cooperation between the two needs to be exploited to the fullest extent.

All these measures will play crucial role in boosting the bilateral defence and security relations. A strong strategic partnership between these two Asian regional powers will certainly be significant in ensuring security in Asia at large. Both the

countries could learn from each other their maritime strategies, analyse pros and cons of those strategies and develop better strategies to deal with newly emerging maritime challenges. India, with its strong ties with countries in the Middle East, Africa etc., could help South Korea to expand its maritime power to those regions and pursue its ambitious national policy of 'global Korea'.

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India-Japan Security Cooperation: Expectation, Challenges and the Way Forward

Titli Basu

The East Asian theatre is rapidly evolving. India is increasingly being perceived as an important player in addressing Japan's strategic challenges. Japan is faced with the issue of managing an increasingly 'assertive' China and the declining regional influence of its most valued strategic partner, the United States. Japan understands that solely relying on the US-Japan security alliance might not serve national interest in the fast evolving regional security architecture. Therefore, Japan made attempts to manoeuvre geopolitical advantage through security frameworks like the Quadrilateral Initiative or Democratic Security Diamond, aimed at diluting the Chinese sphere of influence, motivating constitutional revisionism and responding to the critique of being a 'passive free rider' on the US-Japan alliance. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is channelising Japanese resources to balance the emergence of a Sino-centric Asian order. Meanwhile, the Indian leadership has articulated the goal of 'act'ing East. Japan is vital in India's Look, Engage and Act East policy.

India is being perceived as a 'net security provider' in the Western Pacific by the US, Japan and several regional players. Japan initially was reluctant towards India and lost valuable time comprehending India's emerging power prospects. However, under former Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and Abe's bold leadership, India became a significant part of the Japanese idea of Asia. Strategic partnership enabled Japan to better manage the ongoing redistribution of power in Asia.¹ The National Security Strategy and National Defence Programme Guidelines of Japan, released in December 2013, identify India as a "primary driver" of the shift in the balance of power and argues that "Japan will strengthen its relationship with India in a broad range of fields, including maritime security, through joint training and exercises as well as joint implementation of international

peace cooperation activities.”² It is important to underscore that while the ‘China threat’ theory is making Abe explore alternatives like India, containment of China has never featured in India’s strategic discourse. Meanwhile, India is expected to pursue its quest for multi-polarity, great power identity and pragmatically engage with all the important players including China, Japan and the US in the fast altering security environment to ensure regional peace and stability which is critical for facilitating development.

This chapter will critically analyse China and US-Japan security alliance as intervening variables in the India-Japan security cooperation; map the domestic debates in both the countries and explore Japanese expectations from India as a security provider; evaluate the progress and identify the challenges in our security cooperation; and study the ways and means to broaden the scope of India-Japan security cooperation. Conclusion will present the analytical findings and evaluate if India is a security provider for Japan.

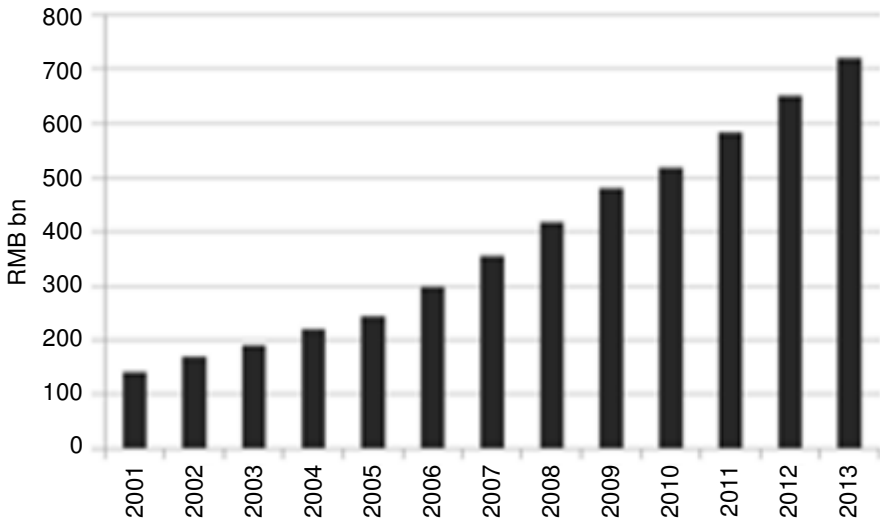
Evolving Regional Security Landscape

The geostrategic developments in the Asia-Pacific are shaping Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s initiative to enhance deterrence vis-à-vis an ‘increasingly severe’ security environment and manage the threats emanating from an ‘assertive’ China and ‘destabilising’ North Korea. Escalated tensions over territorial claims related to the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands and the fear of entrapment rationale prevailing among a section of the US strategic community is making Japan seriously weigh its policy alternatives. The power struggle between China and Japan over these contested islands witness dangerous escalation since the ‘nationalisation’ of three of the five disputed islands—Uotsurijima, Kita-kojima and Minami-kojima—by Japan in September 2012. Escalating tensions between China and Japan manifested in rising nationalism in both countries; repeated violation of territorial waters and airspace; assertive diplomatic postures; and reorientation of security policy. The Chinese Air Defence Identification Zone (ADIZ) in the East China Sea in November 2013 is often argued as an attempt to target Japan and demonstrate Chinese resolve to shape regional sphere of influence and put the pivot strategy to a litmus test. The US President Obama, in April 2014, expressed “strong concern” with regard to the heightened tensions in the East China Sea. The complexity of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands conundrum is intensified by mutual trust deficit, respective domestic constituencies, and role of extra-regional power in the East Asian security architecture.

China has been developing its military capabilities facilitated by a continued increase in military budget. Japan is concerned that the volume of Chinese defence spending augmented by roughly four times in the last ten years and 40 times in the last 26 years.³ Abe has, for long, nurtured and recently pursued the goal of

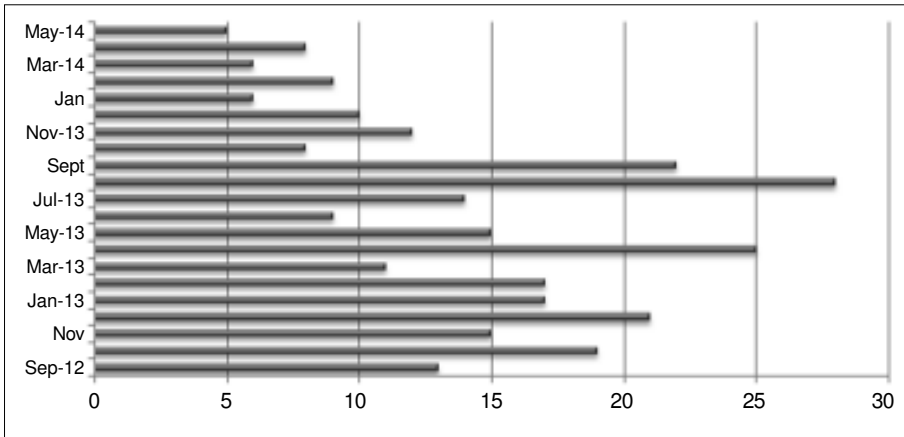
a ‘normal’ Japan by way of his concept of ‘active pacifism’. In July 2014, Abe has managed cabinet approval concerning re-interpretation of the pacifist constitution, allowing Japan to redefine its right to collective self-defence. Abe argues that his objective is not to wage war or permit Self-Defence Forces (SDFs) to be dispatched in a foreign country for combat, but to enhance deterrence to manage the security threats.⁴ The rising nationalism in both countries is reflected in the opinion polls conducted by various organisations. For instance, the ninth Japan-China public opinion poll conducted by Genron NPO and *China Daily* revealed that over 90 per cent of Japanese and Chinese have an unfavourable impression of each other’s countries. The main cause for the unease is owing to the “territorial issue”.⁵

Figure 1: 2001–2013 PLA Budgets



Source: “Chapter Six: Asia”, *The Military Balance*, 2014, p. 210.

Japan is critical of China for attempting to alter the status quo by coercion. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (MOFA) stated that Chinese ships traversed the adjoining waters of the Senkaku Islands more frequently since September 2012. Despite robust economic engagement between the two nations, Senkaku dispute along with the wartime history including the Yasukuni Shrine visits by the Japanese leadership has created an impasse which has the potential to escalate into a serious military confrontation. Hence, Japan is rethinking its strategy to strengthen its capabilities. Beyond catering to nationalism, China has a larger stake in Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands as China’s posturing in the dispute in East China Sea will hold a message for the contending states in the South China Sea.

Figure 2: Chinese vessels Identified within the Japanese Territorial Sea

Source: Data drawn from MOFA, 2014.⁶

Moreover, Japan is nervous about the depth of US commitment to the region. One school of thought argues the case of US's conscious decision of not antagonising China and nurturing the 'new type of major power relations'. Abe is cautious regarding the fear of entrapment logic prevailing in the US. There is a school of thought who argues that the US is worried about getting dragged into Japan's conflict. While for 60 years, Japan was worried that the US would pull them into war but now the US is nervous that it may get involved in a conflict owing to the security alliance.⁷ The fear of entrapment has shifted from Japan to the US. While Japan keeps the US anchored in East Asia, US's military preoccupations in the Middle East and Central Asia and its reactions in Ukraine, the changing dynamics of the US pivot/rebalancing strategy in the region and anxiety over cutbacks in the US defence budget raised Japanese worries vis-à-vis the US obligation.

Additionally, North Korean nuclear and missile programme is intensifying tensions. Continually ignoring United Nations Security Council (UNSC) sanctions, its provocative rhetoric and behaviour is believed to be posing a severe threat to Japanese security.⁸ Besides conducting three nuclear tests and further developing smaller nuclear warheads, North Korea has deployed ballistic missiles with a range that encompasses entire Japan. Furthermore, it is developing ballistic missiles that would reach the US. Recently, North Korea has engaged in firing a series of short-range ballistic missile into the Sea of Japan raising Japanese concerns.

Mapping the Japanese Thinking Concerning India

India is touted as the 'new hope' concerning Japan's threat perception. Satoru Nagao articulates that since regional stakeholders including Japan, Australia and

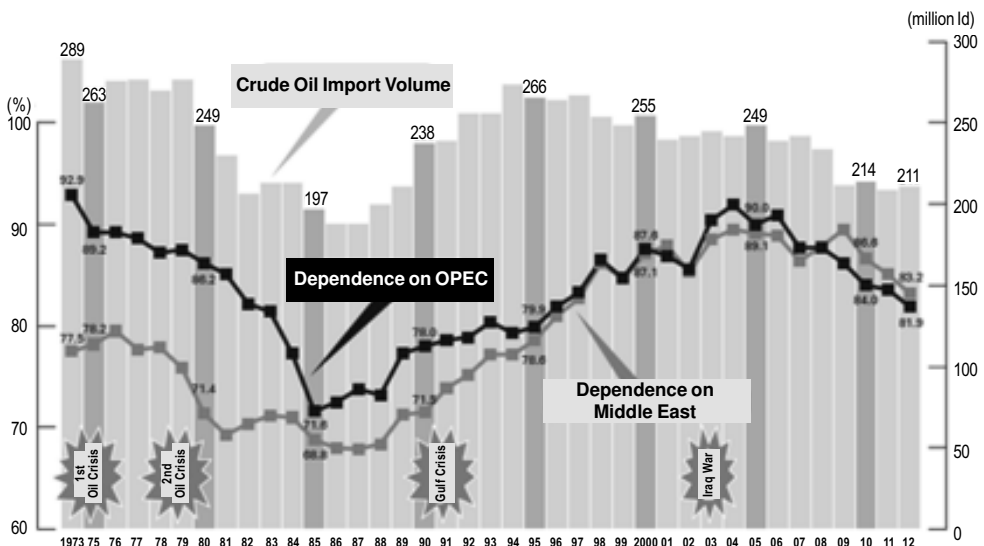
the South China Sea littoral states are likely to face an assertive China owing to their relatively weaker military strength, Japan requires a 'new rising power'. Since both "share similar concerns" regarding Chinese military modernisation, the case of strengthening India-Japan military cooperation is argued owing to the sophistication of Indian naval capabilities in safeguarding the sea lanes of communication (SLOCs) in the Indian Ocean; India's ability of emerging as a security provider to South East Asia owing to its robust engagement with the region; and India's reputation as a "trustworthy" nation.⁹ However, another stream of scholarship argues that a 'more reliable partner'—the United States will continue to constitute the core of Japanese security landscape while managing the threats emanating from China. While Japan comprehends the potential of Indian blue water navy with regard to the developments in the contested Senkaku Islands, Indian 'intent' is focused on the south rather than in the east.¹⁰ Abe argues that China's escalating military spending is 'distorting' the Asian power balance, and to manage the balance, cooperation between India and Japan, as well as the United States, has a 'vital role'.¹¹

There is a school of thought which argues that Japan is establishing a robust partnership with India while maintaining the balance of power vis-à-vis China. Scholars argue that China variable is "especially important" in Japan's policy orientation towards India.¹² Noted Japanese scholar, Takenori Horimoto articulated that emerging China led Japan and India deepen their potential strategic partnership.¹³ Section of Japanese media (conservative right-wing) underscored that a strong India-Japan security engagement is "vital" in managing developments in the contested waters of the East and South China Seas and the Indian Ocean and safeguarding the sea lanes.¹⁴ From geo-political and strategic perspectives, scholars cite China while enunciating that as democracies, India and Japan would be the "stabilising factors in the equations of Asian security".¹⁵ Scholars argue that an initially reluctant Japan is nurturing India as a 'counterweight'¹⁶ and pursuing a strategic alliance to 'balance' a rising China'.¹⁷ It is important to underscore that some scholars do not weigh India for its own merit but analyse India as an important card with reference to China. Japan was unable to comprehend the diplomatic significance of India devoid of the 'China factor'.¹⁸ Meanwhile a separate strand of literature articulates that Japan's approach to India should not aim at managing China.¹⁹ Moreover, former Foreign Minister Taro Aso stressed that Japan considers strengthening Japan-India relations to ensure peace and stability, and it is not aimed at containing China.²⁰

Moreover, India is projected to be a credible naval power.²¹ India's military influence, especially naval capabilities, is favourably perceived by Japan vis-à-vis China.²² Japan intends to cooperate in protecting the Indian Ocean since it is anxious concerning Chinese abilities to interfere in SLOCs passing through the Indian Ocean. Energy starved Japan is severely reliant on Middle Eastern oil

imports, trafficked through the Indian Ocean.²³ One strand of scholarship underscores the convergence of interest and ‘shared responsibility’ in securing the SLOCs as a ‘public good’ for the region.²⁴ Often the logic of obligation to ‘secure peace and stability along sea-lanes’ is articulated for India-Japan cooperation.²⁵ Assessing the regional developments with regard to China’s rise and ‘fragile partnership’ with the United States, Japan is prepared to engage with India on critical issues concerning sea-lane security.²⁶ The Indian Ocean is critical for Japanese petroleum imports from the Middle East. Japan has traditionally relied on the United States Navy to secure their vessels in the Indian Ocean. However, Japan is gradually grasping India’s constructive role in securing the regional sea-lane. Infrastructure facilitation by China along the Indian Ocean has made India, the United States and Japan concerned. India’s maritime capabilities are expected to ensure secured passage of Japanese vessels through Malacca Strait.²⁷ Beyond securing energy interest, SLOCs, especially Malacca Strait is vulnerable to piracy and terror incidents. India extended cooperation during the 1999 M/V Alondra Rainbow piracy incident.²⁸ India is perceived as a significant security partner in terms of its emergent maritime power projection ability to preserve the security of vital SLOCs and chokepoints connecting the Middle East to the Indian Ocean²⁹ and further. The Far Eastern Naval Command and the Eastern Naval Command serves as an important connection between India and the East Asia, consolidating India’s status as a credible naval power with power projection capability.³⁰

Figure 3: Japanese Crude Oil Import Developments and Reliance on OPEC and Middle East



Source: Petroleum Industry in Japan 2013.³¹

Tracing the Trajectory of India-Japan Security Cooperation

The December 2013 National Defence Programme Guidelines, issued by the Abe administration, clearly articulate that Japan intends to strengthen its relations with India in a wide variety of issues including maritime security, through joint training and exercises.³² The 2008 Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation pledging to safeguard vulnerable SLOCs, India-Japan bilateral naval exercise (JIMEX), the coastguards' exercise to develop a coordinated response to security challenges like piracy, poaching and other unlawful activities, negotiations on joint production of the Shin Maywa Industries (7224.T) amphibious aircraft in India, ongoing discussion on the civil nuclear cooperation agreement reflects the deepening bilateral security cooperation.

The October 2008 Joint declaration on Security Cooperation followed by the December 2009 Action Plan based on the Joint Declaration laid the foundation of a robust India-Japan security engagement, which is a significant component of the Strategic Partnership. The shift in Japanese approach towards India is shaped by few important variables including the emergence of China as a formidable force; eroding US position in the region; escalating US interest vis-à-vis India; and securing trade networks in critical maritime space. Beyond common values and shared interests, India is an understandable choice for Japan owing to increased US interest in India as a stabilising factor in Asia. Since the US Defence Department acknowledged India as a long-term security partner, it facilitated the India-Japan relations. As the US developed robust relations with India, Japan was compelled to re-evaluate its stance. While then US President Bill Clinton's India visit in early 2000 was followed by then Japanese Prime Minister Mori's India visit in August 2000, the Indo-US nuclear deal provided Japan the confidence to add value to the strategic partnership.³³ The 2007 US-Japan Security Consultative Committee referred to nurturing cooperation with India.³⁴

In the 2011 annual summit, then Prime Minister Noda and Manmohan Singh emphasised on maritime security cooperation together with safety and freedom of navigation. Multi-faceted defence exchange frameworks are in place involving the Defence Ministers, Defence Secretary and Vice Ministers'-level Defence Policy Dialogue, Service Chief Meetings, Comprehensive Security Dialogue at the Joint Secretary/Director General level, Military to Military consultations between Joint Secretary, and Deputy Director General, MOD of India and Japan, Service staff dialogues and officers exchange on training programmes.³⁵ Annual Subcabinet/Senior Officials 2+2 dialogue was instituted in 2009. The 2008 Joint Declaration underscores information sharing and policy coordination on regional matters; bilateral cooperation in multilateral frameworks including the East Asia Summit (EAS), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery

against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP); defence dialogue and Coast Guards cooperation; safety of transport; dealing with terrorism and transnational crimes; disaster management; and disarmament and non-proliferation.³⁶ Moreover, dialogue involving the National Security Advisors is instituted in 2014 following the establishment of the Japanese National Security Secretariat to strengthen cooperation on security concerns.³⁷

Then Minister of Defence Itsunori Onodera visited India in early January 2014 for the Japan–India Defence Ministerial Meeting with his then Indian counterpart A.K. Antony and underscored the need to strengthen consultation and cooperation related to maritime security to deepen the Strategic and Global Partnership.³⁸ During the November 2011 meeting, then Defence Minister Antony and Ichikawa resolved to perform bilateral exercise involving the Japanese Maritime SDF (JMSDF) and the Indian Navy. India and Japan has held the third Defence Policy Dialogue and the second ‘2 plus 2’ dialogue. Moreover, the first India-Japan Maritime Affairs Dialogue was hosted by India in January 2013.³⁹ To further consolidate the relations and strengthen maritime cooperation, India has invited Japan to participate in the Malabar naval exercise 2014 despite Chinese reservations witnessed in 2007. Joint coastguard exercises on anti-piracy, search and rescue operations are organised since 2000.⁴⁰ The Japanese Coast Guards and their Indian counterparts performed a joint exercise off the coast of Kochi and JMSDF and the Indian Navy conducted second bilateral exercise off the coast of Chennai in January 2014 and December 2013, respectively. The 18th edition of the Malabar naval exercise involving India, United States and Japan commenced on July 24 in the JMSDF Sasebo base in Nagasaki.⁴¹ While India and the United States are conducting the annual exercise since 1992, Japan participated following India’s invitation, making this its third time. Earlier in 2007, China expressed reservations on Japan’s participation in the Malabar exercise, which also included Australia and Singapore, as a containment policy targeted at China. Taking note of the trilateral naval exercise, the Chinese authorities expressed that the activities by the involved nations should facilitate mutual trust and regional stability.⁴² China reacted by underscoring its desire for a ‘harmonious’ and ‘stable’ Asia-Pacific region. Furthermore, the Joint Working Group (JWG) negotiation on the Shin Maywa Industries Utility Seaplane Mark 2 (US-2) amphibian aircraft is ongoing. Both the countries are weighing the possibility of assembling the US-2 aircraft in India, which will provide India the opportunity to access Japanese military technology.

Furthermore, the 2009 Action Plan outlined cooperation framework with regard to capacity building for disaster management. Information sharing on disaster prevention and preparedness through dialogue involving the Indian National Disaster Management Authorities (NDMA) and the Cabinet Office of Japan

through Asian Disaster Reducing Centre (ADRC) is established. Additionally, Ministry of Home Affairs India and Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism Japan agreed to cooperate in developing a Tsunami Disaster Map of India.⁴³ Following the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, India has sent a relief and rehabilitation team comprising of a 46-member National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) to Onagawa (Miyagi Prefecture) in March-April 2011.⁴⁴

Maritime security lies at the core of India-Japan security cooperation. Maritime security cooperation is crucial for augmenting energy security beyond dealing with piracy and security of SLOCs. Moreover, India, Japan and China are cooperating in coordinating their initiatives on anti-piracy in the Gulf of Aden.⁴⁵ India and Japan have engaged in anti-piracy mission off Somalia.⁴⁶ Moreover, India acceded to ReCAAP in June 2006;⁴⁷ thus expanding the scope for deepening security cooperation.

Challenges in the Security Relations

Despite the India-Japan bonhomie, one of the challenges in the bilateral relations is negotiating the Agreement for Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy. While the Abe-led administration is in favour of nuclear export to boost the economy, one of the biggest hurdles in redefining the India-Japan bilateral relations is negotiating the civil nuclear energy cooperation agreement. Despite the 2011 Fukushima Daiichi nuclear catastrophe and severe reservations of the domestic anti-nuclear interest groups, Japan has negotiated agreements with a number of countries including Jordan and Turkey, while negotiations are ongoing with Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates; and Abe is lobbying with governments in Central Europe. However, among all the agreements, negotiation with India is difficult for Japan since India have nuclear weapons and it choose not to join the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) or signed the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), thus jeopardising Japan's national identity as a crusader of non-proliferation and disarmament. The *Hibakusha*⁴⁸ groups have registered strong protest vis-à-vis nuclear cooperation with India articulating that "a nation that has suffered atomic bombings itself is now severely weakening the NPT regime, which is beyond intolerable".⁴⁹

While in the 2014 Tokyo Declaration, the leadership mentioned about the 'significant progress in negotiations', fundamental difference on NPT and CTBT⁵⁰ continues to make the negotiation difficult. In September 2008, Japan agreed to extend special treatment to India by allowing exemption from the 1992 Export Guideline of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG). However, the negotiation related to India-Japan civil nuclear cooperation is navigating through a difficult path. Japanese psychological scar of the atomic bombing led it to believe that every nation ought to be a party to and entirely stand by NPT. There is school

of thought in Japan that argues that US-India Civil Nuclear Agreement and the NSG discussion on India's special treatment is contrary to the NPT principle.⁵¹ However, it is important to note that for a country enjoying the nuclear umbrella of the US, it is unfair to be a judge of India's nuclear weapons programme. Moreover, the reasons for India's reservation with the NPT are well-established. While Japan imposed sanctions on India following the 1998 nuclear test arguing that it has worsened the regional security setting, it quickly reverted its policy once it grasped the strategic importance of India, its ascend as a regional economic powerhouse, its maritime clout in the Indian Ocean, its sphere of influence in South Asia and its growing strategic importance to the US.

Japan understands Indian policy concerning moratorium on nuclear tests, strict export control system and International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Safeguard Agreement promoting clarity regarding India's nuclear developments. However, Japan's fundamental point that India must stay within the NPT framework and sign CTBT persists.⁵² The negotiation started in June 2010 which later got disrupted following the nuclear accident in the Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear facility. Authorities stressed that since key NSG member countries clinched or are negotiating civil nuclear energy cooperation agreement with India, engaging in negotiation with India rather than maintaining the status quo is necessary. Japan insists on incorporating a well-defined termination and cessation provision in case of future nuclear testing in the agreement.

Following the 2008 Nuclear Suppliers' Group (NSG) waiver, India has entered into civil nuclear agreements with several countries including France, Argentina, Russia, Mongolia, South Korea, Kazakhstan, Canada, and Namibia, despite being a non-signatory to the CTBT. Moreover, the Indo-US Civil Nuclear Agreement of 2008 is the framework on which India wants to model her subsequent agreements where India's unilateral commitment to abstain from nuclear tests is acknowledged as adequate guarantee.⁵³ Additionally, in the unlikely case of a nuclear test, decision to suspend the agreement will be called forth following a year of consultation. However, Japan argues that India should renounce its right to conduct nuclear tests and proposes an immediate termination of cooperation in case India fails to comply with her voluntary moratorium.⁵⁴ Furthermore, Japan also stresses India to agree not to enrich or reprocess any fuel of Japanese origin. But the provision in Japan's recent agreement with Turkey permitting enrichment of uranium and extracting plutonium in case established in writing further complicates the negotiation.⁵⁵

Abe is navigating through the difficult choice of Japan's position on nuclear non-proliferation and the commercial interest of Japanese nuclear businesses who are struggling to cope with the post-Fukushima financial loss. Moreover, the agreement is vitally important for French and US nuclear businesses. Without

the India-Japan civil nuclear agreement, their projects in India are unable to make progress since critical components for the nuclear reactors are expected to be provided by the Japanese corporations. For instance, Toshiba, Hitachi and Mitsubishi have stakes in Westinghouse, General Electric and Areva respectively. Additionally, the nuclear lobby within Japan is exerting enormous pressure on the political leadership of Japan to facilitate nuclear technology export to avoid losing out to the South Korean and Russian businesses capturing the multi-billion dollar Indian nuclear energy market.⁵⁶ Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) and the Japan Atomic Energy Agency (JAEA) strongly favours nuclear cooperation with India.⁵⁷ After the Fukushima meltdown, Japanese companies are looking for markets to compensate for the loss following the offline reactors at home. Delay in negotiation runs the risk of escalating cost. However, once the differences are addressed, this agreement is expected to cement a strong foundation further consolidating the bilateral relations.

India's energy appetite is expanding in order to fuel the economic engine. Energy-starved India considers nuclear energy as an indispensable element of its national energy mix and aims to achieve 20GW nuclear capacity by 2020. With tall plans for nuclear energy, it is indispensable for India to manage support from innovative nuclear technological bases including Japan to strengthen its civilian nuclear industry.⁵⁸ By 2020, India intends to build 18 more nuclear power reactors which may perhaps amount to \$86.1 billion market.⁵⁹ Being a leader in civilian nuclear technologies, Japan is critical in sourcing nuclear generation technology and the development of India's nuclear industry. A civil nuclear cooperation agreement with the Japanese, allowing nuclear technology to India, is imperative for enabling India's growth. Toshiba, Hitachi and Mitsubishi Heavy Industries are leading nuclear power businesses in the international market and civil nuclear agreement with India will prove beneficial for the Japanese firms owing to the enormous scope for investment in the fast expanding nuclear energy market of India and further cooperate in development of newer and advanced fuel cycle technologies.⁶⁰

Besides civil nuclear cooperation, India is discussing the possibility of sourcing Japanese defence technology since 2006. In the following years, consultation mechanism for high technology trade was instituted deliberating on loosening Japanese principles concerning arms export to India. While India had assured the Hatoyama administration that such technology will not be shared with third countries, considerable progress is yet to be made on high technology trade. Joint Working Group (JWG)⁶¹ negotiation on the Shin Maywa Industries Utility Seaplane Mark 2 (US-2) amphibian aircraft is ongoing. India reportedly plans to obtain 15 US-2 aircrafts following a Request for Information (RFI) in 2010-11 which will be used in patrolling Andaman and Nicobar islands and conducting

search and rescue operations in the Indian Ocean. Due to Japan's 1967 voluntary ban with regard to arm's export,⁶² a civilian version devoid of the IFF system is being offered to India. India and Japan are exploring the prospect of assembling the US-2 aircraft in India which will provide India the chance to access to Japanese military technology.

Defence cooperation, until now, is restricted primarily to joint naval exercises. India's defence modernisation and procurements present opportunities for Japan to build better partnership, depending on the extent to which Japan liberalises its defence exports and transfer of technology and joint-production. While there remains pressure, exerted by the Nippon Keidanren, on the administration to enable arms export since Japanese defence industry is losing out as it is restricted to domestic demand and barred from participating in international projects aimed at developing and producing military equipment. Many countries including India present profitable commercial opportunity to the defence industry in Japan. Regardless of the strategic implication of the US-2 amphibian aircraft deal, negotiations have proved to be difficult as Japan perceives India as unyielding on technology transfer requirements. Moreover, owing to political obligations, Japan favours removing some features from the aircraft. Japan expects that the 'symbolic importance' of this deal will facilitate escaping few obstacles connected with Indian defence procurements.⁶³ Better access to Japanese defence technologies including the stealth technology, communications, electronic warfare technologies, surveillance radars is needed. While Japan is undoing some of its voluntary constraints vis-à-vis defence technology exports, India should exploit this opportunity to access the sophisticated Japanese defence technology.⁶⁴

Is India a Security Provider to Japan?

While Japanese exceptions from India as a security provider is acquiring depth following the convergence of security and strategic concerns vis-à-vis China, India is expected to offer a measured response since it officially upholds strategic autonomy, articulating a position that its security policy is not aimed at any particular country. China argues that Japan has fabricated the 'China threat theory' to mislead the international community and has registered its protest against any Japanese initiative of nurturing new strategic partnership with countries like India. Indian leadership has taken a cautious approach and argued that India's strategic partnerships with other countries are defined by economic interests, needs and aspirations and that it is not aimed at containing China or anyone else. While Japan is working hard to garner support for the fiercely contested territorial and sovereignty claims in the East China Sea, India is hesitant to get involved in the dispute and venture in the East China Sea where China has firmly defined its sphere of influence. While former Prime Minister

Manmohan Singh stressed that India is “well positioned to become a net provider of security in our immediate region and beyond”,⁶⁵ India’s approach towards geopolitical realities is guided by a balance between engagement and autonomy.⁶⁶ Hence, Japan continues to trust the US as a “more reliable partner to address the China threat”.⁶⁷

Nevertheless, the scope of expanding India-Japan security cooperation will be shaped by the unfolding changes in Japanese pacifist orientation, which will have implications for the restrictions imposed on the MSDF. The principal obstacle holding back the extension of India-Japan security cooperation is the ‘post-World War II regime’ upheld by the Japanese Constitution.⁶⁸ While the security engagement clearly defines a shared obligation for both India and Japan in securing SLOCs, but until now given the constitutional boundaries, the responsibility is “asymmetrical as Japan expects India to provide maritime security in the Indian Ocean as part of the arrangement”.⁶⁹ Given Abe’s pursuit for ‘active pacifism’, India and Japan may consider cooperating in UN-commanded operations in maritime domain once Japan categorically outlines how it intends to operationalise the re-interpretation of its Article 9 and exercise its right to collective self-defence. Moreover, the Indian Navy and the MSDF may consider jointly patrolling the SLOCs.⁷⁰ Counter-terrorist operations unit of the Japanese coastguard is trained by the US Navy’s SEAL unit.⁷¹ Indian counterparts will greatly benefit in case both coast guards explore the possibility of deepening cooperation regarding counter-terror attacks and averting further criminal activities at sea. Additionally, departure in Japan’s policy position on transfer of defence equipment and technology has raised India’s hopes about new vistas of high-end defence technology cooperation. India is eager to secure supply of high-end defence technology and collaborative projects in defence equipment and technology with Japan since it is among the foremost manufacturer of sophisticated military technologies. While India is hesitant to assert its influence in East Asia, co-development and co-production of defence technologies and signing the civil nuclear energy cooperation agreement will take India-Japan security relation to the next level.

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WEST ASIA

India's Constraints in the Gulf Region

Prasanta Kumar Pradhan

The Gulf region is important for India for several reasons. India's bilateral trade and commerce, India's dependence on the energy imports from the region, presence of around seven million Indian expatriates, common security concerns etc. are some of the factors which make Gulf region important for India. Combined with this are the close historical linkages, people-to-people contacts, religious and cultural interactions which encourages India look at the region with priority and focus. Realising the importance of Gulf region, India has rightly described the region as its 'extended neighbourhood'. Though India has huge stakes and interests in the Gulf, a major concern for India is the continuing insecurity and instability in the region, which has further escalated in the aftermath of the protests in the Arab world since December 2010, popularly known as the 'Arab Spring'. The protests threatened the stability of the monarchies in the Gulf region, exposed the oil supply lines to potential danger, led to uncertainty in expatriate population about their future and causing regional geopolitics to undergo change. In such a situation, it became obvious for India to be concerned about the regional security and stability in the Gulf. India can be of help for the Gulf countries to strengthen their efficiency to maintain security. This paper discusses India's security ties with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries and Yemen; and the opportunities and challenges before India in moving ahead to be able to play a determining role in the Gulf security.

India's Security Ties with the Gulf Countries

India and Oman

Oman is one of the first countries with which India established defence contacts in the region. India and Oman signed a military protocol agreement in 1972.

This led to a three-year deputation of Indian Navy personnel to man Oman's Navy in 1973. The office of the Indian Defence Advisor in Muscat began functioning in 1989 and Oman opened their Defence Attaché's office at New Delhi in 2002. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Defence Cooperation was signed between India and Oman in 2005. The areas of cooperation envisaged in the MoU included, 'exchange of expertise in military training and information technology, utilisation of military and educational courses and programmes, exchange of observers attending military exercises and exchange of formal visits'.¹ The Indian Air Force (IAF) and the Royal Air Force of Oman (RAFO) defence cooperation was initiated in 2006 and Oman is the only country in the Gulf region with which air staff level talks are ongoing. Presently, a two-tier arrangement for defence cooperation—Joint Military Cooperation Committee (JMCC) and Air Force-to-Air Force Staff Talks (AFST), exists with Oman.²

In May 2006, Oman's Under Secretary for Defence, Mohammad Nasir Mohammad Al Raasbi, led a defence delegation to India and discussed about deeper interaction between the two armed forces. The visiting delegation called on the Indian Air Force chief and the Indian Navy chief, and also visited Hindustan Aeronautics Limited and Bharat Electronics Limited in Bangalore. Earlier, former Indian Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee, while visiting Oman in March 2006, said that the successful India-Oman economic ties could be replicated in the defence field as envisaged in the MoU. The military cooperation committee between the two countries was set up as a result of the MoU. The committee was asked to identify areas of cooperation, including participation by India's Ordnance Factory Boards and defence public sector undertakings in meeting the requirements of spares and inventories of Oman's armed forces.

During last few years, there have been frequent bilateral visits between the two countries relating to defence cooperation. Oman's Defence Minister Sayyed Badar Saud Harib Ali Busaidi visited India and attended the Aero India-2009 in Bangalore in February 2009. India's defence Minister A.K. Antony also visited Oman in May 2010. During his visit, both the countries agreed to "accelerate their cooperation in maritime security and regional security issues".³ Antony reiterated the growing threat of maritime piracy and the need for cooperation among the countries of the region.

The sixth meeting of the India-Oman JMCC was held in Muscat in January 2013. The Indian side was represented by Defence Secretary Shashi Kant Sharma while the Omani side represented by Mohammad bin Naseer Al Rasbi, Under Secretary, Ministry of Defence of Oman.⁴

The IAF and the RAFO were engaged in joint exercises in October 2009. The exercise, called 'Exercise Eastern Bridge' included Omani Jaguars and F-16s

along with Indian *Darin-I* Jaguars and *IL-78*. *MKI* air-to-air tankers took part in the joint manoeuvres to 'enhance understanding of operational, maintenance and administrative procedures between *RAFO* and the *IAF*'.⁵ They also held another exercise in Gujarat in 2011.

The Indian and Omani Navies have been regularly conducting joint exercises as well. Both the sides have benefited from such exercises learning from each other's experiences. Navies of both the countries conducted the ninth Biennial Naval Exercise 'Naseem Al Bahr' in September 2013 off the coast of Oman. The year 2013 marked the 20th year of the beginning of the naval exercises between the navies of India and Oman, which started in 1993. The focus of the ninth exercise was on Surface Warfare, Visit Board Search and Seizure (*VBSS*), Anti Air Warfare, Air Operation, Advanced Helo Operations and Maritime Interdiction Operations (*MIO*).⁶

In December 2011, India and Oman extended the *MoU* on defence cooperation for a period of another five years. The *MoU* was signed during the visit of the Omani Defence Minister Badar bin Saud bin Harib al Busaidi to New Delhi in December 2011.⁷

India and UAE

An agreement on defence cooperation was signed by India and the UAE in 2003 when Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, Chief of Staff of the UAE Armed Forces, visited India. The agreement aims at providing military training, cooperation in military medical services and jointly combating pollution caused by the military at sea.⁸ It also included co-production and development of defence equipment, joint exercises, information sharing and technical cooperation. Again, during the visit of India's former Minister of External Affairs Pranab Mukherjee to the UAE in May 2008, talks were held to explore ways to establish a 'long-term' defence relationship based on possible joint development and manufacture of sophisticated military hardware, which is a step forward in efforts to streamline the military relationship, which so far has been dominated by naval ship visits and training exchange programmes.⁹

Both the countries are regularly coordinating on matters of defence cooperation. The UAE defence personnel have undergone training in India. India has been participating regularly in all International Defence Exhibitions (*IDEX*) organised by the UAE. Both the countries formed a Joint Defence Cooperation Committee (*JDCC*) in 2003 and in this regard, the fifth meeting of the committee was held in New Delhi in 2012. Under the provision of the first meeting of *JDCC* held in New Delhi in 2006, a five-member UAE Defence team visited India to examine Anti-Aircraft Gun *L-70-40* mm in March 2007. Turnaround and goodwill visits by Indian Naval ships have been taking place from time to time and interaction between the Coast Guards of both the countries has enabled

identifying possibilities of cooperation in this area as well.¹⁰ The first ever India-UAE Joint Air Forces exercise took place in September 2008 at the Al-Dhafra base in Abu Dhabi in which eight Su-30 MKI aircrafts took part along with one IL-76 plane. The UAE hosted the meeting of the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) at Abu Dhabi in May 2010, where India handed over the chairmanship of the IONS to the UAE.¹¹ Four Indian Navy ships reached Dubai port in September 2013 to take part in joint exercises with the UAE Navy. According to Vice Admiral Shekhar Sinha, Commander-in-Chief of the Western Naval Command, the ships 'will participate alongside five UAE naval ships in day-long exercises including manoeuvres and communication drills' and added that, '...this visit is part of bilateral cooperation and taking our interactions to a higher level'.¹²

India and Qatar

India and Qatar signed a defence cooperation agreement and an agreement on security and law enforcement in 2008 during Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to the country. The agreement covers a wide range of defence and security issues of both bilateral and regional importance, including, terrorism, piracy, maritime security, money laundering, narcotics and transnational crimes. While the pact on defence cooperation lays out a structure for training programmes by the two sides, exchange of goodwill missions and experts, the security and law enforcement agreement emphasises sharing of information and database on threats posed by terrorists, money laundering and smuggling of narcotics.¹³ Qatar has availed the NDC courses in India and has expressed interests in a few other training courses as well. Since 2008 both the countries have been holding a joint defence committee meeting to strengthen bilateral defence cooperation. In this regard, the second meeting was held in March 2012 in New Delhi.

India and Saudi Arabia

India and Saudi Arabia signed a defence cooperation agreement in February 2014 during the visit of Crown Prince Salman to New Delhi. The pact will allow exchange of defence-related information, military training and education and cooperation in areas varying from hydrography and security to logistics.¹⁴

Prior to this, the Delhi declaration of 2006 urged both the countries to cooperate with each other in the matters of security. During his visit to India in 2006, King Abdullah expressed his interest in engaging with India in the field of security. Indian Navy ships have visited Saudi Arabia on goodwill visits and for joint naval exercises, for example, in March 2011, Indian Naval ships visited port of Jubail in Saudi Arabia on a goodwill visit and recently in October 2014, both the countries conducted a naval exercise when INS Tir and INS Sujata visited Jubail.¹⁵

The Indian Army also plans to hold joint exercises with the Royal Saudi

Land Force in the near future. A 16-member delegation from Saudi Command and Staff College visited India in June 2010. Saudi Defence personnel also attended training courses at the Defence Services Staff College, Wellington, and the National Institute of Hydrography, Goa.¹⁶ Prince Bandar Bin Sultan Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Secretary General of the National Security Council of Saudi Arabia visited India and called on Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in March 2011. Both the leaders discussed the recent developments in the region and expressed interest to expand further cooperation between them.

The visit of India's Defence Minister A.K. Antony to Saudi Arabia in February 2012 along with senior military leaders has raised hopes regarding a stronger India-Saudi Military cooperation. Antony reiterated India's readiness to cooperate in fighting terrorism and piracy in the Indian Ocean and suggested that both, the Indian and Saudi Navies should jointly explore practical cooperation in the high seas against the pirates.¹⁷ The first meeting of the India-Saudi Arabia Joint Committee on Defence Cooperation was held within six months of Antony's visit in September 2012 in New Delhi. During the meeting, both sides discussed issues such as exchange of high level visits, training, and functional exchanges in various areas.¹⁸

India does not have a formal defence cooperation agreement with Kuwait and Bahrain. Nevertheless, contacts are maintained through high-level military visits, port calls, goodwill visits that take place at regular intervals. In September 2013, two Indian Navy ships were on a goodwill visit to Kuwait. Earlier in 2007, two other India Navy ships visited Kuwait in 2007. The Indian Navy has also expressed its interest to build ships for the Kuwait Navy.¹⁹ Similarly, Indian Navy ships are also visiting Bahrain as symbols of goodwill. Two Indian Navy ships visited Bahrain in 2013 on a goodwill mission.

India and Yemen

Yemen can be an important partner to fight terrorism and piracy in the region. As of now India does not have any defence or security cooperation agreement with Yemen. Both the countries understand the importance of security cooperation between and have met and discussed about the possibility of signing a security cooperation between them. The internal turmoil taking place in Yemen since the fall of Ali Abdullah Saleh and the continuing instability is a major factor for both the countries not being able to reaching an agreement. In December 2010, before the Arab Spring emerged, Yemeni Minister of Interior Mutahar al-Masri and Indian Ambassador to Yemen Ausaf Sayeed explored the possibility of signing security coordination.²⁰ The talks could not be carried forward because of the worsening internal security situation in Yemen and the issue was raised again during a meeting of the Interior Minister Abdul-Qader Qahtan and Indian Ambassador to Yemen Amrit Lugun. Both the officials

expressed their desire to strengthen security cooperation and discussed 'ways to develop security cooperation and coordination between the two countries'.²¹

Naval Diplomacy

The Indian Navy has been at the forefront in dealing with their counterparts of the Gulf and has been playing an important role in India's Defence diplomacy, which has been termed as 'Naval Diplomacy'. India's Maritime Doctrine published by the Ministry of Defence in 2009 stipulates, 'Naval Diplomacy entails the use of naval forces in support of foreign policy objectives to build "bridges of friendship" and strengthen international cooperation in one hand, and to signal capability and intent to deter potential adversaries on the other. The larger purpose of the navy's diplomatic role is to favourably shape the maritime environment in the furtherance of national interests, in consonance of the foreign policy and national security objectives'.²² In addition, a number of India's major national concerns like piracy, maritime security and ship transit, which have maritime dimension are directly related to the broader foreign policy of the country.²³ Traditionally, India has received threats from the land borders from Pakistan and China. However, in recent years there has been a substantial re-orientation in India's strategic outlook towards the maritime dimension. Giving priority to the maritime dimension is a crucial way to increase India's power and influence. India's geographic position, India's standing as the most populous state in the Indian Ocean region and its central position in the northern Indian Ocean gives it a unique advantage in the Indian Ocean.²⁴ Besides, India's increasing reliance on sea for trade, incidents of piracy and terrorism at sea has made it give priority to the Indian Ocean.

Naval cooperation is one of the most promising areas of military-to-military cooperation by virtue of its capacity to safeguard critical SLOCs and establish linkages with the militaries of other countries. India has played a crucial role in increasing positive maritime ties by undertaking various benign measures such as combined bilateral and multilateral exercises, port calls and military assistance for training to countries in the Indian Ocean region.²⁵ To this end, the Indian Navy has been engaged with the navies of the Gulf region and others in conducting joint exercises, port calls, goodwill visits and deepening interactions.

Changing Regional Security Situation: India's Concerns

Arab Spring threw many challenges for India's interest in the region. Among many other issues, India was concerned over the safety of Indian expatriate workers living in the region, safety of oil supply lines, bilateral trade and commerce, increasing incidents of terrorism, possibility of pirates taking the opportunity etc. Thus far India has treaded cautiously but effectively to protect

India's interests. But at the same time there have been calls from several quarters to strengthen India's security ties with the countries of the region so that India will be able to protect its interests with reasonable ease.

Safety of Indian Nationals: The worsening situation in Libya and Egypt in 2011 required evacuation of thousands Indian Nationals living in those countries. Indian Government has had to make tremendous efforts to bring its nationals back home safely. It was quite an uphill task for India to do so and India had to send special planes and ships to evacuate its citizens. Earlier in 1990, India was faced with a similar kind of situation during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and India evacuated its citizens from Kuwait. Today there are around seven million Indians living and working in the region. Their safety and security is a primary concern for India. It would be even more difficult an operation to undertake if such kind of emergency arises in any of the GCC countries. Thus, it is important for India to strengthen security cooperation with the countries of the region thereby making it easier to meet any such kind of exigencies in the future.

Islamic State: The rise of the terrorist organisation Islamic State (IS) in Iraq and Syria has had implications for India. The IS militants have captured and taken some Indian Nationals in Iraq. A group of 46 nurses taken hostage by the IS militants were released in July 2014 but there are still 42 Indian workers who are under the hostage of the IS. In order to strengthen its diplomatic presence Indian sent two more officials to Iraq in November 2014.²⁶ The IS leadership has also openly threatened to launch strikes on India. In June 2014, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi stated that Muslim rights are seized in India and many other countries around the world and appealed them to take up arms against the non-believers.²⁷ The reports of some Indian youths, though a small number, being inspired by the IS and have joined the organisation is a concern for India.²⁸ India has joined the call for international cooperation against the IS and its activities.

Security of the SLOCs: For India, security of the SLOCs is of utmost concern as it remains vital for the trade and energy supply from the region to India. Speaking about the issue at the Manama Dialogue former External Affairs Minister Salman Khurshid stated that "Any disruption to SLOCs can have a serious impact on the Indian economy, including in terms of energy supplies. It is important to keep the region out of bounds for pirates and other nefarious non-state actors. India has the capabilities and the will to not only safeguard India's own coastline and island territories, but also contribute to keeping our region's SLOCs open and flowing."²⁹ As the safety of the SLOCs has direct bearing on the Indian economy, India is serious about any activities that may threaten to disrupt the vital lines.

India has been looking for cooperation with the Gulf countries regarding the issues which are of immediate concern. Terrorism and piracy are two important

issues which have affected both India and the Gulf countries in the past. India has expressed its willingness to cooperate with the Gulf countries to work together to counter terrorism.³⁰ In this regard, India has signed agreements with a number of countries in the region to share intelligence regarding the movement and functioning of the terrorists. Recently there have been a number of success stories of intelligence cooperation where some terrorists wanted in India have been deported following the request of government of India; for example, Indian Mujahideen (IM) terrorist Fasih Mohammed, a key suspect in the 2010 Bangalore blast case was deported from Saudi Arabia in October 2012 and was arrested in New Delhi,³¹ and another IM operative was deported from the UAE in May 2014.³²

Similarly, piracy is another issue India has been seriously wanting to cooperate with the Gulf countries. Both India and the Gulf countries have fallen victims to the pirates in the Gulf of Aden. The region is an important water body for international trade and shipping. Two Indian ships have been patrolling in the deep seas of the Gulf of Aden since 2008 after a number of ships were hijacked by the pirates and heavy ransom were demanded by them.

U.S. Seen as Withdrawing from the Region

The U.S. is the principal security provider in the Gulf region with its forces present in all the GCC countries. Security is the key element in the U.S.-Gulf relationship and it would remain so in the near future. The Gulf countries were apprehensive of the 'pivot to Asia policy' of the U.S. The policy was seen as the U.S. focusing its attention on the Asia Pacific region away from the conflict ridden Gulf region. American policies towards the region following the Arab Spring brought suspicion in the Gulf Arab minds about the seriousness of U.S. regarding the Gulf security and stability. Thus, while on one hand, the region grappled with internal turmoil, regime changes and changing geopolitical dynamics in the region, on the other hand the U.S., its security guarantor, indicating a shift in its policy priority of rebalancing towards the Asia-Pacific region.³³ The Gulf countries alleged the U.S. of abandoning them in times of crisis. Egypt and Bahrain were two such instances where severe differences emerged between the U.S. and the GCC countries. The GCC felt that the U.S. abandoned Hosni Mubarak who was close to both the US and the GCC countries, during the popular protests against him. Similarly, the critical stand taken by the U.S. during the GCC intervention in Bahrain also raised doubts in the GCC minds regarding the seriousness of the U.S. towards the security of the region. Though there are several other issues such as Syria, Iran, Libya Yemen and so on over which both the U.S. and the GCC countries share similar views, the seriousness of U.S. during the early months of the Arab Spring has been tested by the Gulf rulers.

The Gulf countries are also upset with Russia's stand over Syria and thus cannot be trusted with the responsibility of Gulf security. China, so far, has not shown any enthusiasm to play any military role in the region and continues to focus upon strengthening economic partnership with the countries. Such a situation keeps a door open for India to strengthen security ties with the Gulf.

India as a Security Provider in the Gulf

The steady rise of India has been observed very closely by the region. In the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks in the U.S., the GCC countries have started focusing on strengthening ties with major Asian powers, including India. The rising insecurity in West Asia and North Africa has made the Gulf Arab regimes apprehensive and they, too, are looking for more international support.

At present, the level of insecurity among the GCC countries is very high. They are facing both internal and external threats which they themselves are unable to tackle. The Arab Spring has brought the internal dissensions to the fore. The GCC countries allege Iran to be interfering in the internal affairs of the countries of the region.³⁴ They are also concerned about the Iranian nuclear issue³⁵ which they believe is a security threat to the region. For the GCC countries, India is an emerging global power and has huge stakes in the security of the region. Thus, India should contribute to the Gulf security,³⁶ which would boost their position vis-à-vis Iran. The GCC countries would like India to put more pressure on Iran over its nuclear programme and further isolate Iran.

As the Gulf countries are aware of the huge Indian stakes and vulnerabilities in the region, they want India to contribute to Gulf security.³⁷ As both regime security as well as the regional security is a concern for the GCC countries, India's involvement in the region's security would be beneficial for them. They argue that as India has such big interests in the Gulf, it comes as a natural responsibility for India to contribute towards the security of the region.³⁸ India's hesitation and unwillingness to play the role of a security provider in the region makes them believe that India is shying away from its responsibilities in its extended neighbourhood and keeps itself detached from the regional security of the Gulf.

India has been non-intervening in the internal and regional affairs of the Gulf. In the past, there have been opportunities where India could have directly intervened in the security of the Gulf region. The American invasion of Iraq in 2003 was an important point in the region's security and geopolitics and altered the shape of regional geopolitics in the years to come. India was invited by the U.S. to join the bandwagon against Saddam Hussain but India chose not to send its military to Iraq. Considering the close relationship India enjoyed with Saddam Hussain and also keeping in mind the sensitivities of some sections of the Indian Muslims, India refrained from sending forces to Iraq.

In the years following the independence, India did not enjoy a warm relationship with the countries of the region and its relationship with them witnessed many ups and downs for several reasons. It is only in the recent decades with rising stakes in the region that India has cultivated strong political, economic and security ties with them. India's policies towards the region is aimed at securing and promoting its interests without getting entangled in the geopolitical complexities of the region.

But as India's interests and stakes in the region are growing exponentially, the security of the region also becomes a concern for India. There are a number of security concerns for which India is keen to cooperate with the countries of the region. Besides, India has expressed its desire to strengthen the security of the countries of the region by the way of cooperating with them to provide training to their personnel, conducting joint exercises, sharing intelligence, joint production etc.

India has categorically rejected any direct military intervention in the affairs of the region. Speaking at the Manama Dialogue in 2013, India's former Foreign Minister Salman Khurshid stated, "We have never played the classical role of intervening with military assistance in the same way that the U.S. has been doing."³⁹ At the same time, India is also not in favour of any other countries playing such a role in the region. Khurshid stated, "We certainly don't believe that the presence of any other power, such as China or Japan, or what have you, would necessarily contribute to the security of the region."⁴⁰ Further, this would mean huge financial costs and use of modern military technology. The huge costs of military deployment would be a big burden on the Indian economy, and so would make India think many times before taking any such decisions. An established military power with sufficient financial resources to spare such as the U.S. can only think to undertake such a role. India also needs to modernise its military equipments before it can venture into the extended neighbourhood for deployment.⁴¹

India is willing to contribute to further strengthen the security of the Gulf region. India has clarified that it would always be ready to help train, exercise and share intelligence with Gulf Arab forces. But as a matter of foreign policy principle playing security guarantor in the region, "would be a paradigm shift". Further clarifying India's position Khurshid stated, "India has very, very carefully and strictly adhered to certain principles and we would want to continue to adhere to those principles. We have never joined alliances and we have never joined military groups."⁴²

India established first defence cooperation agreement with Oman in 1972. After that similar kind of agreements have been signed with some other GCC countries. Though agreements have been signed with countries such as Oman,

UAE, Qatar and Saudi Arabia, the implementation of the agreements have been rather slow. There have been some success but is still a lot of space for further cooperation. As mentioned earlier, India has been providing training to the armed forces of some of the Gulf countries and has been conducting joint training with their militaries. Joint production of military weapons would be big boost to the existing cooperation India and Gulf but has not yet been fructified. The cash rich Gulf monarchies prefer to buy sophisticated weapons from the West. India needs to develop its domestic defence industry before it can attract the Gulf countries for any sort of joint production of military technologies.

Similarly, sharing of information and intelligence in matters pertaining to security would be able to thwart any potential dangers to regional security. As terror organisations continue to spread their tentacles beyond the region, and piracy continues to remain a challenge to the safety of the SLOCs, sharing intelligence becomes an important area of cooperation for both India and the region.

Besides, the regional political dynamics in the Gulf region is also another issue which deter India to play such a role. India has interests with all the major countries in the region such as the GCC states and Iran. India has been carefully calibrating its policies keeping in mind the present stakes and long term interests with each of them. Building strong military ties with one may affect relationship with others. Iran, unlike the GCC countries, does not want any external forces to play any role in the regional security architecture as it believes that the issues of regional security should be addressed by the countries of the region alone without any involvement of outsiders.⁴³ Thus, Iran expects India to maintain neutrality over regional issues without taking sides. Iran views India as a major power in the region who can mediate and should try to bring together the countries of the region such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Iran to the table. India, therefore, choses to keep a balanced relationship with all the countries of the region to serve its national interests. Therefore, it is prudent for India to maintain a delicate balance in the policies towards the region.

Conclusion

India is steadily cultivating defence and security ties with the Gulf countries. A look at the India's military engagements with the region clearly reflects the forward moving trends with high level engagement in this direction. There is a visible change in the recent years in India's efforts to engage with the countries in defence and security matters and seeking their cooperation in tackling insecurity emerging in the region. From India's side, the level of engagement and talks over the military cooperation has increased over the years. Last few years have witnessed the visits of minister of defence to the region to discuss the matters with their counter

parts in the Gulf. Even Prime Minister Manmohan Singh visited Qatar and the defence cooperation agreement was signed in his presence. This is a reflection of growing Indian interest and in the security of the region. The Gulf countries have also reciprocated Indian moves which have produced positive results.

India is willing to cooperate with the countries of the region to fight common challenges. India is treading cautiously with the region over the sensitive issue of providing security. India's increasing interest to cultivate security ties with the region and engaging the countries in dealing with the immediate threats is driven by its dual intention of securing its interests in the region and contributing to the regional security. Given huge Indian interests in the Gulf region, it seems that in the foreseeable future, India may consider using its defence and security establishment for securing and furthering its national interests in the region. India has contributed moderately to the Gulf security within its limited resources and capability. A major shift in India's policy towards the region and further strengthening its own economic and military capabilities are required to be able to play a more active and determining role in the Gulf security.

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India and Iran: Progress and Prospects of an Evolving Security Relationship

M Mahtab Alam Rizvi

The strategic location of Iran offers great opportunity to India in many sectors, including transit facility in the region, trade and commerce and energy. Both countries also share common concerns in the war-torn country, Afghanistan. Moreover, Iran enjoys special importance for India as it offers unique access to Afghanistan and Central Asia. Leaders of both countries have worked hard to enhance their relations in various fields, including counterterrorism, regional security and stability and energy security. Soon after the election of moderate and middle level cleric Hasan Rouhani as Iran's new President, and its subsequent interim nuclear deal with the West on November 24, 2013, Iran launched a pro-active neighbouring policy and expressed willingness to enhance ties with several Asian countries including India. Rouhani and his administration has been extremely enthusiastic to prove that they are modest, liberal and rational partners and that the new president stands in stark contrast to his predecessor, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. In his first press conference on June 17, 2013, Rouhani stated that he wants a "constructive interaction" with the world through a moderate policy, and that his administration of "Prudence and Hope" will follow a "moderate" policy line in serving national objectives.¹

Despite India's policy of non-interference in region's internal affairs or security issues, the fact remains that New Delhi does get affected from time to time due to emerging political situation in the West Asian region, for example, because of the Arab uprising and present crisis in Iraq and Syria. Further, India had to evacuate its citizens from Kuwait in 1990, from Lebanon in 2006, from Libya in 2011 and from Iraq in 2014.

Therefore, in the light of the emerging political situation in the West Asian

region, there is a strong belief among the strategic community that perhaps India should start getting involved in the regional security of West Asia. As India maintains cordial relations with all the major countries in the region and also with Western countries, it can be a significant player in resolving the nuclear crisis between Tehran and the West. Iran is also one of the major players in the region and strategically important for India.

Considering the importance of Iran, the then Indian Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh said during an interview with *The Washington Post* in 2005, "Iran is the largest Shi'ite Muslim country in the world. We have the second largest Shia Muslim population in our country . . . and I do believe that part of our unique history we can be a bridge."² Observing Iran's strategic importance and its location, Indian Vice President, Hamid Ansari on September 12, 2014 said that Iran is very important for India especially for enhanced cooperation in various sectors, including establishing peace in Afghanistan. Ansari identified four major areas of cooperation with Iran: first, establishing peace, stability and comprehensive governance in Afghanistan, including operationalisation of road and possibly rail links to Afghanistan through the Iranian port of Chabahar; second, functioning of the North-South Transport Corridor through Iran to Central Asia and Europe; third, building of sea gas pipeline from southern Iran to the west coast of India; and fourth, a framework for safeguarding freedom of navigation in the Persian Gulf and the Straits of Hormuz engaging littoral, regional and global powers.³

Defence Cooperation

Defence ties between India and Iran are important for the stability and security of the West Asian region. India with Iranian cooperation could play a significant role in providing security and stability to the West Asian region in general, and Afghanistan in particular. Both countries can also cooperate on terrorism, drug trafficking and sea piracy. Also, both countries could provide security to the Strait of Hormuz—one of the critical sea lanes of communication through which almost the entire oil output of the region passes.

Evaluating the prospects available for defence cooperation with Iran, it is clear that Tehran is looking for persistent help in the modernisation of its defence technologies, which lack access to advanced technology, maintenance and spares support. India could play a crucial role by assisting Tehran not only in the defence sector but also in the advancement of technology. However, India has some limitations when dealing with Iran especially in the defence area. It is noteworthy to mention here that India has also strong defence ties with Iran's arch-rival Israel. Israel is always conscious concerning India's defence ties with Iran, and seeks assurance that its defence technology and equipment is not transferred to Iran.

Israel and its western allies accuse Iran of building nuclear weapons under the umbrella of a peaceful nuclear programme. However, Iran denies it and says that its nuclear programme is purely for civilian purpose.

The defence ties between India and Iran are necessary due to the existing political and strategic situation in Asia, particularly in Afghanistan. The establishment of the Indo-Iran Joint Commission in 1983 was an important step in shaping New Delhi's defence and military ties with Tehran. After the Iran-Iraq War, it was essential for Iran to rebuild its conventional arsenal. For this reason, Iran started the process of buying tanks, combat aircraft and ships from Russia and China. Further, Iran reportedly asked for Indian support in 1993 to help develop new batteries for three Kilo-class submarines that it had bought from Russia. The submarine batteries supplied by the Russians were ill-suited to the warm waters of the Persian Gulf.⁴ In addition, Iran has been also seeking to get Indian help for other upgrades to Russian-supplied military hardware, which includes MiG-29 fighters, warships, subs, and tanks.⁵

The strategic cooperation between India and Iran began after the visit of the Indian Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee to Tehran in 2001. The official visit of Vajpayee to Tehran was considered as a 'turning point' in strategic relationship between India and Iran and an encouragement for 'dialogue among civilisations'.⁶ This rhetoric, broadly exploited by decision-makers on both sides, generated signs manifesting common historical and cultural values while dealing with a growing convergence of interests in various sectors including defence, economic and energy. Iran also expected India's help in acquiring conventional military equipment and spare parts for Tehran, providing expertise in electronics and telecommunications and holding joint training exercises with Iranian armed forces. Tehran also sought from India combat training for missile boat crews as well as simulators for ships and submarines, and expects India to provide midlife service and upgrades for fighters, warship and subs in Indian dockyards.⁷

The strategic relations between the two countries enhanced further especially after the visit of Iranian President Seyyed Mohammad Khatami to New Delhi in January 2003. During his visit to India a landmark agreement, known as the "New Delhi Declaration", was signed between India and Iran under the leadership of Mohammad Khatami and then Indian Prime Minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee. According to the New Delhi Declaration, both countries agreed to utilise the full potential of the bilateral relationship in the interest of the people of the two nations and of regional peace and stability with a vision of a strategic partnership for a more stable, secure and prosperous region and for enhanced regional and global cooperation. In addition, they agreed to explore opportunities for cooperation in defence sectors, including training and exchange programmes.⁸ One of the most important things of the New Delhi Declaration was that both

countries agreed to upgrade their strategic cooperation including their defence ties. The widespread cooperation engaged all three military services: the army, navy and air force.⁹

Both countries also agreed to upgrade defence cooperation in the following areas:¹⁰

- Sea-lane control and security
- Indo-Iran joint naval exercises
- Establishment of joint working groups on counter-terrorism and counter-narcotics

Two months after Khatami's visit to India, in March 2003, Tehran and New Delhi exercised their first joint naval manoeuvres in the Arabian Sea. Another exercise was held in March 2006. Additionally, a naval cadet training ship visited India in 2007, and the Indian Government permitted a limited number of Iranian officers to participate in the joint training courses with officers from several other countries.¹¹ In 2013, a few Iranian naval ships had visited the port of Mumbai. According to some reports, Iran was negotiating for an unspecified number of Upgraded Support Fledermaus radar systems from Bharat Electronics Ltd (BHEL).¹² The two countries also agreed to cooperate in space research work.¹³ No doubt there is considerable potential for further deepening the defence cooperation through exchange of visits, service-to-service level contracts, etc. from both sides. However, both countries declare that India-Iran defence cooperation is not aimed against any third country. Although despite the New Delhi Declaration of 2003, the two countries have not yet materialised their defence cooperation.

Cooperation in Afghanistan

Afghanistan's strategic location is important to both India and Iran. Both nations, India and Iran could play an important role in maintaining peace and stability in Afghanistan, especially after the withdrawal of western troops from the war-torn country. India and Iran are worried about the spread of the Taliban Al-Qaeda in South Asia, especially in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The counter-terrorism can be an important and common area for convergence and integration between India and Iran. This concern led to the formation of a joint committee in 2003. The main objective of the establishment of the joint committee was to eliminate or at least limit the terrorist activities, drug trafficking and smuggling of arms and ammunition. During Khatami visit to New Delhi in January 2003 both countries also agreed to support a united and sovereign Afghanistan and call on the international community to remain committed towards its reconstruction and development.¹⁴ Relations between India and Iran warmed up in the 1990s when both countries supported the Afghan Northern Alliance

against the Taliban. Since 2001 both India and Iran have supported the Hamid Karzai government in Afghanistan and are still helping the Afghan Government. The central government in Kabul is ineffective and incapable of controlling the insurgency and providing the most rudimentary services to the people of Afghanistan. Both India and Iran could still play a part in stabilising the Afghan Government, and even restraining the Taliban after the withdrawal of the US troops from Afghanistan. After all, a Taliban victory in Afghanistan would be dangerous for both the countries.

India and Iran have also committed to substantial economic aid to the Afghan Government. During the Taliban period, when Iran was under a crucial threat from both Pakistan and Afghanistan, it decided to enhance its cooperation with India and Russia, and even helped the US to overthrow the Taliban government.

Iran is politically and ideologically opposed to the Taliban and sees the extremist Sunni group as a tool of its regional rival Saudi Arabia. Iran also perceives the presence of US troops in the region including Afghanistan as a bigger threat amidst rising fears of an attack on its nuclear facilities.¹⁵

Since 2001 Iran has been assisting Afghanistan's economic reconstruction through infrastructure projects in the areas bordering Afghanistan. Iran is one of the most important donors of Afghanistan. Iran has promised nearly US\$1 billion in aid to Afghanistan. In the first decade after the removal of the Taliban government, Iranian aid was estimated at about 12 per cent of the total assistance for reconstruction and development.¹⁶ Iran has built several roads, power transmission lines, border stations and other infrastructure projects to strengthen connectivity between the two countries. Iran also gave more than US\$50 million annually to the Afghan anti-narcotics effort over the last five years.¹⁷

Iran is also a major trading partner of Afghanistan. Iran has considerably increased its trade and investment in Afghanistan. Bilateral trade between the two countries is estimated at over US\$2 billion per year, and expected to rise further. According to a report, nearly 500 Iranian companies were operating in Afghanistan as of July 2013.¹⁸ Both Iran and Afghanistan also expect that bilateral trade between two countries will grow further especially when the Chabahar port will be fully operational.

In 2010, annual bilateral trade stood at US\$1.5 billion and rose to US\$2 billion in 2011. Iran's major investments in Afghanistan are in the infrastructure and education sectors. However, many of these businesses are located in the Shia-dominated Herat region. The Iranian Government has also supported and financed the development of Herat's transport and energy infrastructure. As a result of close links between the two nations, Herat is possibly one of Afghanistan's most developed and prosperous cities. In December 2013, Iran and Afghanistan also signed a new security accord to enhance security cooperation.¹⁹ It is also believe

that Iran is expected to play more active role in Afghanistan especially after the withdrawal of western forces from Afghanistan in 2014.

Similarly, since 2001, India has also been constantly cooperating with the Afghanistan Government and has actively participated in various projects. India has already committed more than US\$2 billion towards reconstruction and developmental activities in Afghanistan since 2001. India is helping to build the parliament building in Kabul. India is also helping to reconstruct schools and buildings in Kabul and assisting with road construction in eastern Afghanistan. India is also training Afghan officials, and will invest billions of dollars to develop the Hajigak iron ore deposit 60 miles west of Kabul. India and Afghanistan also signed a strategic partnership agreement in New Delhi on October 4, 2011.

In addition, Iran could also become a reliable partner of India to enhance its future economic presence in Afghanistan. In 2009, Indian companies built a route from Zaranj to Delaram and also proposed to link it with a railway line to the Iranian city of Bam at the Afghan border.²⁰ According to recent security estimates, the withdrawal of the US troops from Afghanistan would pave the way for the resurgence of the Taliban and the rise of other ethnic militia groups, especially Pashtun militias. Strategic cooperation between India and Iran would help the Afghan government establish a strong and stable government in Afghanistan and avert the Taliban from uniting with other Pashtun insurgents in a military campaign against the central government.²¹

Strategic Significance of Chabahar Port

The development of Chabahar port as well as Indian investment in infrastructure along Iran's border with Afghanistan will provide an alternative route to New Delhi for trade and commerce with Afghanistan and Central Asia.²² The primary step towards trade relations between the two countries was the signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Iran over the development of Chabahar Port and transshipment facility at Bandar Abbas. The Chabahar Port in Iran along with a railway link offers India direct access to Afghanistan and the Central Asian Republics (CARs). Through this project Iran will also be able to access Central Asian countries including Afghanistan. The Chabahar port has been jointly financed by India and Iran.²³

India has recently announced investment of US\$100 million for Chabahar port development. It is important to mention here that on October 18, 2014, the Indian Cabinet cleared the long-stalled strategic investment plan to set up the Chabahar port that would serve as a critical transit route. Indian Finance Minister, Arun Jaitley told the Chabahar port has an 'extreme strategic importance' for India and the Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT) and Kandla port would partner the government in developing the port for which nearly \$86 million are being invested.²⁴

However, despite various discussions between Indian and Iranian officials on Chabahar there is as yet no worthwhile one on Indian investment in the Chabahar Free Zone. The MoU with Iran on the development of Chabahar Port is yet to be signed despite the fact that Chabahar Port was mentioned in the 2003 Delhi Declaration issued during President Khatami's visit to India. Now Iran believes that the MoU on Chabahar was signed during the last NDA government led by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) under the leadership of then Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee. Since the same party (BJP) has again come to power in India, so Iran's expectation has increased, and it hopes that the new government led by of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi would continue the deal and finalise the Chabahar project. In the meanwhile, the Chinese have already entered Chabahar and may soon overtake everybody else unless India moves quickly with substantial sums of investment not only in the development of Chabahar Port but also in the Chabahar Free Zone. A number of Indian officials and private delegations have visited Chabahar in the recent past, but no investment has yet resulted. This has caused acute frustration amongst the Iranians.

It is pertinent to mention here that Chabahar is an extremely important geo-strategic location where India's presence will not only strengthen India-Iran strategic relationship but also have a significant importance on providing stability in Afghanistan.

India's Support to Iran on Regional and International Fora

Iran believes that India is one of the major global players and has the ability to play a decisive role in international and regional forums. Iran also expects India to support Iran on a number of regional and international forums, such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO); The IBSA Dialogue Forum (India, Brazil, South Africa); Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (BRICS); G77; Non-Aligned Movement (NAM); World Trade Organisation (WTO) and United Nations Security Council (UNSC) especially on the nuclear issue. Despite India's three votes against Iran at the International Atomic Energy Agency—September 24, 2005; February 4, 2006; and November 27, 2009—New Delhi supports Iran's nuclear programme for civilian purposes permitted under Article IV of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Along with Southern countries, India has criticised the US Unilateral sanctions and European Union (EU) sanctions, considering them irrelevant and illogical. India has now secured a strong position and privileges cooperation with other emerging powers on international security issues. During the BRICS Summit held in Delhi in April 2012, the five emerging powers articulated a robust consensual position on the Iranian nuclear programme. They extended their support for the development of a peaceful Iranian nuclear programme and their opposition to unilateral sanctions imposed

outside the UN framework.²⁵ India, Brazil and South Africa have recently shown their cooperation and ability to collectively use this 'nook diplomacy'. When they were elected as non-permanent members at the UNSC (United Nations Security Council) in January 2011, the three countries agreed to take similar positions on international issues including Iran's nuclear programme.²⁶

Both India and Iran could contribute and support each other in the SCO especially when they become its members, as expectation has risen in recent months. At the SCO Foreign Ministers' Meeting in August 2014 in Dushanbe (Tajikistan), a decision was taken that the organisation will officially invite India, Pakistan, Iran and Mongolia for full-fledged membership at its next summit. If it would happen both countries would play important role for the regional security particularly in Central Asia and Afghanistan. The entry of India and Iran would become a game-changer for the SCO and the region. It would considerably enhance the momentum toward multi-polarity in world politics by championing the vital role of the UN in maintaining international law.²⁷ Within the SCO framework, India could seek greater access to Afghanistan and Central Asia. India's energy security would be strengthened too. It is a good opportunity to form an SCO energy club, an idea first proposed by the Russian President Vladimir Putin a decade ago. New prospects would also arise for opening trans-regional energy projects under the backing of the SCO, such as the Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline. Finally, the SCO membership would make the existing global situation highly favourable for India's overall development and its rise as an international power.²⁸

Conclusion

Given Iran's geographical location and strategic importance, and ability to play a significant role in the West Asian region, it will be not easy for the global community including India to undermine Iran's role in the region including Afghanistan. India and Iran essentially share some comprehensive common objectives vis-à-vis the region: first, to preclude Afghanistan from returning to a full-scale civil war. Second, to prevent the return of the Taliban as the leading political group. Third, to help Afghanistan attain political and economic stability. Iran also needs India to fight against drug traffickers in Afghanistan. Since the Iranian Revolution, Tehran claims the country has lost more than 3,700 security forces fighting drug traffickers. Iran also claims that it expends around \$1 billion annually on its war on drugs.²⁹

As discussed above, at the end of 2014, Afghanistan entered a new phase of its transition, with the withdrawal of western forces. Now Afghanistan will need some reliable partners to deal with its security challenges and political stability. At this stage, it is essential for India and Iran to work together and make them

feel that both are reliable partners of Afghanistan. Exploiting these opportunities for the good of the Afghan people requires economic and security cooperation between India and Iran. It is also believed that the withdrawal of international forces from Afghanistan and the changing geopolitics of the region will put Iran in a relatively stronger position.

As discussed above India and Iran have the potential to play a pivotal role in a number of regional configurations in the Persian Gulf region, Afghanistan and Caspian Sea Basin area. In the light of the evolving political and economic position, the challenges facing India are to balance its political calculations and economic interests with major regional players, particularly with Iran and external players in the region. The importance of stability of the West Asian region including Iran and Afghanistan is essential for India. In absence of a strong security planning of India especially towards the West Asian region, it is difficult for New Delhi to play an influential role in the region. Therefore, now this is high time for India to rethink its policy towards the region especially towards Tehran. Some analysts also believe that India should start getting involved in the regional security of West Asia. For instance, India has played an important role in fighting sea pirates in the Gulf of Aden. In this sense, it could be argued that in recent years India has appeared as a net security provider to the region. This role is expected to grow in future as our engagement with the countries in the region grows further.

Defence cooperation between India and Iran is also important and needs to be stepped up. There is considerable potential for further deepening the defence cooperation through exchange of visits, service-to-service level contracts, etc. Although it has been observed from the discussion above that India is not net security provider to Iran. But India has helped Iran and will continue to support to Tehran on various issues related to security and stability of the region.

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Equipping to Play the Role: India-Israel Strategic Engagement

S. Samuel C. Rajiv

India's ability to play the role of an effective regional security provider will be severely restricted with deficient strategic capabilities. India's interactions with an important defence partner like Israel has helped in the modernisation of its defence equipment and to overcome deficiencies in its inventory as a result of indigenous short-comings in niche technological areas. The chapter argues that India's strategic engagement with Israel therefore better equips it to play such a role more effectively.

In the aftermath of the Cold War, majority of Indian defence inventory, sourced primarily from the former Soviet Union, was in desperate need of modernisation and upgrade. India was also facing multiple security threats in its immediate neighbourhood as well as internally and was on the lookout for reliable strategic partners who could help it face these threats more effectively. It was in the above context that India-Israel strategic engagement took off in the aftermath of the Kargil War. Israel was at the time a crucial provider of ammunition for artillery guns. Since then, the strategic cooperation between the two countries has become multi-faceted. It has included the buying of niche Israeli defence equipment, joint development of weapons systems, robust institutional interactions between each other's armed forces, and brainstorming on internal security as well as non-proliferation issues, among others.

The paper will firstly delineate the nature of India's strategic engagement with Israel and the benefit of this partnership in bringing Indian strategic capabilities up to speed. It will also indicate pertinent details of four strategic benefits that have accrued to Israel on account of this partnership. These encompass economic (given that India is Israel's biggest export market for defence products);

space cooperation, as exemplified by the launch of the TecSAR satellite in January 2008; India's participation in the United Nations (UN) peacekeeping missions in Lebanon (since 1998) and the Golan Heights (since 2006), both very concrete actions that help maintain peace and tranquillity on Israel's borders benefiting its neighbours as well; and diplomatic comfort in having close ties with a big regional power. The chapter will close by noting the potential of this partnership to help India play a more effective role as a regional security provider.

Nature of the Engagement¹

India shares one of its most important strategic relationships with Israel. Since the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries in January 1992, the relationship has grown exponentially encompassing people-to-people contacts and strategic and economic aspects. On the economic front, bilateral trade has grown from about \$200 million in 1992 to more than \$6 billion in 2013-14. On the people-to-people front, India is the biggest source country of tourists from Asia into Israel, while Israeli tourists make up substantial part of the foreign tourist arrivals from the West Asian region into India.

As for strategic aspects, it is pertinent to note that Israel along with the US, Russia, France, and the United Kingdom are identified by the Ministry of Defence (MOD) as India's 'main defence partners'. The Ministry's Annual Report 2006-07 hopes that the 'rapidly expanding defence cooperation and ties' with these partners 'will enhance not just the security environment in the region, but also the global security scenario'.² Israel is also identified as one of the 'major foreign partners' by the MOD, with which the Directorate of International Cooperation of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) cooperates in the field of defence R&D, along with Russia, the USA, France, Germany, the UK, Singapore, Belarus and Kyrgyzstan. The following paragraphs indicate broadly the contours of the India-Israel strategic engagement.

Procurement and Joint Development

Unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV's), airborne early warning and control systems (AWACS), radars, missiles and missile defence systems have constituted the bulk of defence purchases from Israel. The Israeli UAV's in India's arsenal include more than 150 *Searcher's* and *Heron's* manufactured by Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI). The March 2004 *Phalcon* AWACS deal with Elta worth \$1.1 billion for three such planes has so far been among the biggest deals that both countries have concluded. The first and second AWACS aircraft were delivered on May 25, 2009 and March 25, 2010, respectively. The third AWACS was inducted in March 2011, instead of the earlier delivery schedule of December 2010. The *Rajya Sabha* was informed in May 2010 that additional AWACS aircraft are planned to be procured in the 12th, 13th and 14th Plans.³ It is not clear however

if these will be procured from Israel, as indigenous AWACS, mounted on Embraer aircraft, are currently in an advanced stage of development.

The Indian Air Force (IAF) has bought Aerostat-mounted surveillance radars from Israeli companies like Elta and deployed them on its borders to tackle low-flying as well as surface targets. India and Israel signed a contract for the joint development of long-range surface-to-air missile (LRSAM) for the Indian Navy (IN) as well as the Israeli Navy in January 2006, worth over 2600 crores. The LRSAM system for the IN 'has a range of 70 km using dual pulse rocket motor and active radar seeker in terminal phase and inertial/ mid-course update for guidance'.⁴

The system has made steady progress with two control and navigation flight tests having been successfully completed in Israel in July 2012.⁵ In August 2013, 'home-on-target' flight tests were conducted after the system was integrated onto one warship.⁶ State-run Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) and IAI signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in December 2012 regarding future cooperation in LRSAM projects. Under the terms of the MOU, "BEL will function as the Lead Integrator and produce major sub-systems. IAI will continue to act as Design Authority and to produce sub-systems as a main sub-contractor of BEL."⁷

The LRSAM project is set to be completed by December 2015. The project though has been plagued by delays, forcing India's largest naval destroyer *INS Kolkata* inducted in August 2014 to be equipped instead with the Barak-1 system. Reports noted that the boosters to fire the LRSAM missiles, being made by DRDO, had failed.⁸ The ship is also equipped with the Israeli-made MF-STAR advanced active phased array radar, which is capable of tracking incoming missiles at ranges beyond 250 kms.⁹

The contract for the joint development of medium-range SAM (MRSAM) for the IAF was entered into with the IAI in 2009, worth over 10,000 crores. MRSAM is a land-based air defence system "capable of neutralising variety of targets, like Fixed Wing Aircraft, Helicopters, Missiles (sub sonic, supersonic and tactical ballistic missiles) within a range of 70 km and up to an altitude of 20 km. The Firing Unit is equipped to neutralise threats from multiple targets simultaneously."¹⁰ Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) is the lead system integrator for the missile, along with IAI. The MRSAM development is slated to be completed by late 2016.

The Barak-I anti-missile defence (AMD) system (with a range of 9-10 kms) has been successfully integrated into as many as 14 IN warships, including the aircraft carrier *INS Viraat*. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) launched a probe in 2006 into alleged irregularities involving the October 2000 deal. Reports in 2012 noted that as a result, the IN warships faced a missile crunch to replenish

its stock of missiles for the point-defence system as the government hesitated to buy additional missiles due to the ongoing probe.¹¹ A November 2013 report however indicated that the CBI was set to close the case due to 'paucity of evidence', thus clearing the way for the IN to buy over 250 of these missiles from IAI.¹² The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) eventually cleared the 880 crores deal in September 2014.

Among other defence equipment bought by India include the *Tavor* assault rifles, *Galil* sniper rifles, underwater surveillance systems for the IN, forward-looking infra-red (FLIR) cameras for the Coast Guard, and *Spyder* low-level quick reaction missiles for protection of high-value assets (HVA), to be operated by the IAF. India's Defence Acquisition Council (DAC), headed by the Raksha Mantri, in October 2014 approved the move to buy 8,000 Spike anti-tank missiles for over \$525 million over other options like the US-made Javelin.¹³ 130 mm artillery ammunition has been produced by the Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) in technical collaboration with the Israel Military Industries (IMI). Other joint development programmes have included development of dual colour technology for missile approach warning systems and improving the accuracy of the *Pinaka* rockets, in collaboration with IMI and advanced electronic warfare (EW) suites for the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA).

Financial Volume

India has been variously estimated to have purchased between \$8-10 billion worth of defence equipment from Israel. Then Defence Minister A.K. Antony informed the Rajya Sabha in May 2007 that the 'defence purchases' from Israel during the period 2002-2007 were over \$5 billion.¹⁴ Earlier in August 2005, the then Deputy Defence Minister B.K. Handique informed the Rajya Sabha that "the total value of the purchase contracts, concluded [with Israel] during the last three years [2002-2005] is 11882.54 crores".¹⁵

In August 2013, Antony informed the Lok Sabha in a written reply that the Army spent 56,555 lakhs to buy equipment from Israel during 2010-13, out of its total capital expenditure during the period amounting to 192,928 lakhs, thus constituting about 29 per cent of the total purchases. The list of equipment imported by the IN during this period included *Tavor* assault rifles (11.5 crores); *Galil* sniper rifles (1.8 crores); Integrated Underwater Harbour Defence Surveillance System (IUHDSS) for 264.62 crores; radars for Coast Guard worth over 150 crores, among others.¹⁶

Non-Disclosure

It is pertinent to note that the above have been the few instances when the government of India informed the Parliament of a definitive figure as to the

financial volume of the India-Israel defence cooperation. A common feature across different political dispensations at the centre has been the stress on no-disclosure as regards this cooperation. In November 2001 for instance, the then Defence Minister George Fernandes, in reply to a question in the Rajya Sabha as to whether the volume of defence contracts that India had signed with Israel amounted to \$2 billion replied, "India has been signing contracts with Israel for defence equipment. It is not in the interest of national security to give further details".¹⁷

In reply to a question from Sitaram Yechury of the Communist Party of India – Marxist (CPI-M) in August 2007 enquiring whether the government was purchasing a 'range of missiles' from Israel, the then Defence Minister Antony stated that "divulging details ... would not be in the interest of national security".¹⁸ Antony in response to a question in the Lok Sabha in November 2007 echoed Fernandes's logic when he stated:

Procurement/acquisition of items to meet defence requirements of the armed forces is made from various indigenous as well as foreign sources including Israel. This is a continuous process undertaken to keep the armed forces modernized in order to meet any eventuality. Divulging details in this regard would not be in the interest of national security.¹⁹

When the BJP's Chandan Mitra enquired in the Rajya Sabha in March 2013 whether India and Israel were jointly developing an Indian version of the Israeli short-range anti-missile system *Iron Dome*, Antony insisted that "information cannot be divulged in the interest of national security".²⁰ While such non-disclosure on critical issues of national security is inevitable, it however feeds opacity surrounding the India-Israel defence relationship and becomes convenient fodder to critics of the relationship.

Critics

Among the charges that have been made regarding India-Israel defence cooperation is that India is buying weapons that are not effective or that it is buying weapons that are being used against the Palestinians. An Arab member of the Knesset made these charges at a conference on the Palestine issue in New Delhi in September 2010.²¹ The member most probably alluded to the Hezbollah's strike against the Israeli warship INS *Hanit* which killed four sailors during the 2006 Lebanon War. This warship was equipped with the *Barak-I* anti-missile defence system, which was not in an active mode as a missile attack by the Hezbollah was not expected. In a subsequent investigation, the Israeli Navy blamed 'operational readiness deficiencies' rather than 'technology failure' for the loss of 4 lives.²²

Instances of corruption in defence deals involving Israeli companies further

provide ammunition to the critics. The IMI was blacklisted by the OFB in March 2012 for a period of 10 years following investigation by the CBI which began in May 2009 regarding irregularities involving the supply of bi-modular charge system (BMCS) for OFB, Nalanda.²³ The Rajya Sabha was informed in December 2009 that the CBI was also investigating IAI for its involvement in possible irregularities in the *Barak* anti-missile defence system deal. The 2010 contract with IAI for MRSAM development was criticised by the Left parties due to the then on-going probe against it in the *Barak* contract. However, as indicated above, reports noted that the CBI was set to close the case against the IAI due to 'paucity of evidence'. The CBI had also in September 2011 closed the case against an Indian arms dealer for allegedly receiving kickbacks from the Israeli gun manufacturer Soltam for lack of evidence.

The reaction from regional countries like Pakistan or Saudi Arabia is equally pertinent. The Pakistan Foreign Office in August 2003 charged that the sale of the Phalcon AWACS would "enhance India's arrogance and its intransigence ... destabilise the existing strategic balance".²⁴ Israeli officials in background briefings and bilateral conferences that this writer has attended refer to reports of the growing sense of antipathy in countries like Pakistan as regards Israel's help to India's defence modernisation. They however add that Israel remains committed to meeting India's requirements as a 'true friend'.

It would seem India has been successful in explaining the logic of such cooperation to key regional countries like Saudi Arabia, with which India has concluded a 'strategic partnership'. Then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh told Saudi journalists in February 2010 that India's 'relationship with no single country is at the expense of our relations with any other country'.²⁵

Robust Institutional Engagement

A key feature of the India-Israel strategic engagement is the robust institutional interactions between each other's armed forces as well as security and diplomatic establishments. Since 2001, as many as seven chiefs of defence forces from each side have visited the other country for consultations and to enhance mutual understanding. Then Chief of Army Staff General Bikram Singh was the latest to visit in March 2014 from the Indian side, while the Chief of the Ground Forces of the Israel Defence Force (IDF) visited in November 2013. Service-to-service staff talks are a regular feature of the interactions.

Port visits by IN warships are an integral part of defence diplomacy. INS *Mumbai* and INS *Brahmaputra* visited Haifa in June 2006. These two warships along with INS *Betwa* and INS *Shakthi* were part of 'Op Sukoon' under the command of Rear Admiral Anup Singh that successfully evacuated nearly 1500 Indian and South Asian citizens from Beirut during June 21-23, 2006 in the

wake of the Israel-Lebanon War.²⁶ Two Indian Naval training ships INS *Sujata*, and INS *Shardul* visited Haifa in September 2007. The IN conducted 'passage exercises' with the Israeli Navy during 2009-10.²⁷ INS *Mumbai*, INS *Trishul*, INS *Gomati* and INS *Aditya* paid a goodwill visit to Haifa Port in July-August 2012, commanded by Rear Admiral A.R. Karve, Flag Officer Commanding Western Fleet.

The first meeting of the India-Israel Joint Committee on Defence Cooperation was held in Tel Aviv in September 2002. The Annual Report of the MOD for 2012-13 indicates that the tenth round of the JWG was held in December 2012 in New Delhi. A Sub-Working Group (SWG) on Defence Procurement, Production and Development (DPPD) is also functional, with the eighth meeting held in May 2013. Dialogues on non-proliferation issues as well as a JWG on Counter-terrorism (CT) are functional. The eighth meeting of the JWG on CT was held in February 2013 in New Delhi.

As for Foreign Office (FO) consultations, the 11th round of FO consultations took place in 2008. Other interactions included that of then Foreign Secretary Nirupama Rao with then Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Danny Ayalon in New York in September 2010. Then National Security Advisor (NSA) Brajesh Misra went to Israel in September 1999. Since then, no Indian NSA has visited Israel. It is pertinent to note that when Al Qaeda was attacking New York on September 11, 2001, an Israeli delegation led by their then NSA Uzi Dayan was having a strategic dialogue with their Indian counterparts. Misra though went in 2006 to Tel Aviv University to deliver a lecture in his private capacity. Israeli NSAs have been more frequent visitors, accounting for seven such visits by six NSAs since 2001. While Yaakov Amidror visited in March 2012 in the wake of the bomb attack on an Israeli official in New Delhi in the previous month, Joseph Cohen had wide-ranging discussions with the Indian leadership including Home Minister Rajnath Singh and his counterpart Ajit Doval in October 2014.

Assessment of India-Israel Strategic Engagement

Despite robust institutional cooperation between the armed forces and national security apparatuses, then Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's September 2003 visit to New Delhi remains the only such visit till now from either side. Prime Minister Narendra Modi met with his Israeli counterpart Benjamin Netanyahu on the side lines of the UN General Assembly in September 2014, in a sign of possibly increased political interaction under the BJP government.

No Indian defence minister has ever visited Israel. S.M. Krishna in January 2012 and Jaswant Singh in July 2000 have been the only two foreign ministerial visits to Israel. Home Minister Rajnath Singh visited Israel in November 2014. This was the first such visit since June 2000 when L.K. Advani went to Israel.

India's limited high-level political contacts with Israel while continuing to pursue high-level engagements with the countries of the Arab world as well as supporting the Palestinian cause diplomatically and economically have been characterised as 'the delicate balance' in its foreign policy interactions with Israel.²⁸

The lack of high-level political engagement between the two countries continues to be a sore point though, especially from the Israeli side. At the joint press conference during the then External Affairs Minister (EAM) S.M. Krishna's January 2012 visit, Israeli Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman hoped that such visits would be more frequent.²⁹ Indian positions on the Palestinian issue meanwhile have however been very principled and Israelis have also begun to appreciate that "a strong pro-Palestinian stance is not an obstacle to robust and mutually advantageous relations with Israel".³⁰

The drivers underpinning India's defence cooperation with Israel meanwhile have included indigenous short-comings in producing UAV's, AWACS and AMD systems. An indigenous AWACS mounted on an Embraer aircraft was only received at Bengaluru in August 2012. India also went in for the *Barak-I* AMD due to the failure of the *Trishul* system that was being developed by DRDO. Israel has demonstrated the necessary political will to supply niche equipment like AWACS to India. Similar equipment for instance was denied to China in 2000 on account of American pressure despite both countries signing a contract in 1998.

Lack of viable alternatives has been a factor propelling the India-Israel defence cooperation. Then Defence Minister Fernandes told the Rajya Sabha in 2000 for instance that Russian AWACS did not meet Indian specifications.³¹ Relative price advantage of Israeli equipment has been another positive helping such cooperation. Antony in May 2007 stated that Elta was the 'lowest bidder' in response to a request-for-proposal (RfP) for medium-power radars for the IAF.³²

Strategic Benefit to Israel

Economic

The Israeli defence industry thrives on exports. Israel's biggest industrial exporter IAI exports more than 70 per cent of its sales (76 per cent of \$3.3 billion in 2012; 73 per cent of \$3.6 billion in 2013) to foreign markets.³³ The arms industry is viewed as a crucial incubator and employer of high-technology that continues to have significant civilian spin-offs as well. Therefore, maintaining and further developing its close ties with a large market like India is in the interests of the Israeli defence industry. This is especially so as Israel continues to be constricted in its defence dealings with other big markets like China on account of American pressure.

Further, Israeli expertise in such niche spheres as UAV's has been tapped by

many other countries for their strategic benefit. Israel is not only the biggest supplier of UAV's in the world but its air force marked the 40th anniversary of the use of UAV's in October 2011. Such long-standing use and focus on niche technology areas coupled with strong investments in R&D (IAI for instance invests 5 per cent of its budget on R&D) are expected to further sharpen the cutting-edge of Israeli technology and serve its business interests better in the near future.

Space Cooperation

Israel has benefited strategically in other equally critical ways from its close ties with India. The launching of the military surveillance satellite (TecSAR) by the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) in January 2008 is one such example. Prior to the TecSAR launch, Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)'s first commercial launch was that of an Italian satellite in April 2007. India and Israel signed an agreement for cooperation in peaceful uses of outer space in 2002. While commercial considerations have been an important part of ISRO's efforts to garner a slice of the space launch vehicle market since 1992 (when its commercial arm Antrix was started), it is pertinent to note that reports indicated that TecSAR was primarily geared towards surveillance activities vis-à-vis Iran.

An important reason why Israel turned to India to launch the satellite was that it had encountered problems with its indigenous *Shavit* launcher. It lost the *Ofeq-4* satellite during launch in 1998, followed by the loss of *Ofeq-6* in September 2004. Reports noted that the latter failure resulted in a financial loss of nearly \$100 million to the Israel Space Agency (ISA).³⁴ These losses also deprived the country of an important means to gather intelligence on Iran, which was increasingly being seen as an existential threat due to its missile and nuclear programmes.

The cost factor was also a consideration in Israel deciding to launch its satellite with the PSLV. While the *Shavit* launch would cost between \$15-20 million per launch, the PSLV was nearly \$5 million cheaper.³⁵ Reports also noted that launching satellites from spaceports in India had the added advantage of negating the geographical constraints encountered by the ISA in launching westwards over the Mediterranean Sea.³⁶

The efforts of both countries to launch another experimental satellite Tel Aviv University Ultra Violet Explorer (TAUVEX), along with its Indian partner the Indian Institute of Astrophysics, Bangalore on board the Geo-Synchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV) however has been less successful. While the initial agreement was concluded in 2003, the satellite was expected to be launched in 2009.

However, the satellite was removed from the GSLV to lighten the payload and subsequently reports noted that Israel had decided to bury the project on account of continued uncertainty regarding the GSLV launch programme.³⁷ It

has to be emphasised though that while this was cooperation in a strategic field, the launch involved a scientific satellite without strategic significance. Further, after the failure of *Ofeq-6* in 2004, Israel has subsequently launched satellites from its Palmachim spaceport, including an advanced surveillance satellite *Ofeq-10* in April 2014.

UN Peacekeeping Missions on Israel's Borders

India has been an active participant in UN peacekeeping missions around the world since 1950. Over 165,000 Indian troops have served in various UN missions. MOD Annual Report 2012-13 notes that there were 6800 Indian troops serving in six locations across the world.³⁸ At the 1250-strong UN Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) mission in Golan Heights on the Israel-Syria border, India has deployed a logistics contingent comprising 195 troops since 2006. The commanding officer of this UN mission since August 2012 is an Indian officer Lt. Gen. Iqbal Singh Singha of Rajputana Rifles. The mandate of this UN mission which began in 1974 includes maintaining ceasefire between Syria and Israel.

Though both countries have maintained the status quo in the area of disengagement, after the outbreak of the Syrian War in 2011, the role of the UNDOF mission has come under increased scrutiny and pressure. Many participating countries like Croatia and Canada withdrew from the mission. Reports noted that Israel informed the UN that it would respond to cross-border fire from Syrian territory even though the UN peacekeepers were present.³⁹ Apart from the danger of being caught in a possible cross-fire between Israel and Syrian forces/rebels therefore, the peacekeepers have faced the threat of kidnapping.

In March 2013, 21 UN peacekeepers were taken captive by Syrian rebels and were freed unharmed after three days. In August 2014, 47 Fijian peacekeepers were kidnapped by the Al Nusra Front, a rebel group operating in Syria against the Assad regime. Controversy surrounded subsequent skirmishes between the rebels and Filipino peacekeepers with the Filipino army accusing Gen. Singha of ordering them to lay down arms so as not to bring harm to the captive Fijian peacekeepers. The UN however denied that Gen. Singha gave such an order.⁴⁰ The captured Fijians were subsequently released in September 2014.

At the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) which was established in 1978, nearly 900 Indian soldiers are present. It is pertinent to note that Indian contribution to UNIFIL from 1998 onwards predates the Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon in 2000. In the aftermath of the 2006 Israel-Lebanon war, the 2,000-strong force was expanded to 15,000, with contingents from France, Italy and Spain bolstering those already present from Ghana and India.⁴¹ The MOD's Annual Report 2011-12 describes the functions of the Indian battalion (INDBATT) thus:

The Indian Army's contribution to UNIFIL includes one Infantry Battalion Group, one Level I Hospital and Staff Officers. INDBATT Area of Operations (AO) is in the Eastern part of the UNIFIL AO. The Battalion is deployed in mountainous terrain and INDBATT XIV has an AO of approximately 100 sq kms. ... INDBATT is holding 10 UN position apart from 9 Temporary Observation Posts (Ops) along the blue Line, which is the highest number of posts held by a single unit in entire UNIFIL AOR, thus dominating the Blue Line against any violation of the line of withdrawal between Lebanon and Israel occupied Cheeba Farms Area, ... The battalion has been successful in maintaining peace and stability in its AO through relentless patrolling activities which includes a daily schedule of 26 day/night patrols in the battalion AOR including Counter Rocket Launching Operations (CRLOs) and blue Line Patrols in close coordination with Lebanese Armed Forces.⁴²

Indian peacekeeping missions, as well as robust anti-piracy missions in the Gulf of Aden (with the IN escorting over 2000 merchant ships of varying nationalities since October 2008), are efforts by India to help maintain stability in a region of vital importance to its national security goals. The MOD Annual Report 2008-09 notes that "India has had historical links with West Asia and has vital interests in the region, including in the energy and food security areas. India therefore, seeks promotion of stability in the region".⁴³

Diplomatic Benefit

Finally, close strategic engagement with India provides much needed diplomatic comfort in having growing ties with one of the biggest countries in the region. India along with Turkey has been two big regional countries that Israel has consciously developed good relations with over the past decade. Israel though has experienced intermittent hiccups in its relationship with the Turks, especially after the ascendance of the Islamist AKP party. Given that other countries in the big arc from the Mediterranean to the Arabian Sea continue to have adversarial relations with it, Israel lays much store on its vibrant relationship with India.

Israel however has expressed some degree of unhappiness at India's continued anti-Israeli voting behaviour at international fora like the UN. India for instance has repeatedly criticised Israeli settlement policies in Palestinian territories, has voted to support Palestinian move to secure 'observer status' at the UN General Assembly (UNGA) in November 2012, has voted at the UN Human Rights Commission in August 2014 for instance supporting the move to establish a commission of enquiry to investigate 'war crimes' during the July-August 2014 'Operation Protective Edge' that led to the death of over 2000 Palestinians.

Earlier in October 2009, India supported the UN-appointed Goldstone report that investigated Israeli and Hamas actions during the December 2008-January

2009 Gaza conflict that led to the death of over 1400 Palestinians. Israel's then Deputy Foreign Minister Danny Ayalon criticised the Indian move and stated that India should have acted with "more discretion" as Goldstone report "denies democracies the right of self-defence".⁴⁴

A month later however, the leader of the Indian delegation at a special session of the UNGA clarified that India had "reservations in making unqualified endorsement of the various recommendations ..." of the report and urged the concerned parties to "take firm action against those responsible for violation of international humanitarian law and human rights".⁴⁵ An important diplomatic concession however is the crucial change in Indian behaviour at the UN where it is no longer sponsoring the annual anti-Israel and pro-Palestinian resolutions, though it continues to support such resolutions. The government denied reports in December 2014 that it was contemplating a change in India's voting behaviour on Palestinian-related resolutions at the UN.⁴⁶

In Conclusion

There continues to be a perfect fit between Israeli niche capabilities in the defence sector and such requirements for India, coupled with Israel's willingness to share it with India. Just as India has benefited immensely from its strategic cooperation with Israel, it has been in Israel's interest to continue to develop its economic and strategic relationship with India. Then Israeli Finance Minister Yuval Steinitz on a visit to New Delhi in December 2011 characterised the India-Israel relationship as second only in importance to the Israel-US relationship.⁴⁷

The next stage of India-Israel strategic engagement could bring greater focus to not only joint development but joint production as well as marketing of defence equipment. Some elements of such cooperation have indeed taken place. It is pertinent to note that India and Israel have jointly marketed the *Dhruv* helicopter, manufactured indigenously by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL). The helicopter is currently in the service of the armed forces of Bolivia, Burma, Israel, Maldives and Nepal, apart from India. India's DAC gave the approval for the purchase of 41 additional *Dhruv* helicopters in January 2014.

It is pertinent to note that when the IAI awarded the contract to HAL for Boeing 737 conversion kits and wheels and brakes way back in 2002, it marked the first time that the company entered the international market. The potential exists for India therefore to develop as a hub for maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) of aircrafts and possible Israeli cooperation in this regard should be fully exploited. This is especially pertinent given that many regional air forces have Russian aircraft in their inventory, which could be modernised and upgraded with Indian and Israeli assistance.

There is no reason to suggest that the pragmatic reasons which drive the

relationship on both sides as indicated above would not continue to be operative for each other's mutual benefit into the foreseeable future. Enhanced Indian strategic capabilities as a result of the robust engagement with a key strategic partner like Israel will continue to add heft to its evolving role as a regional 'security provider'.

ENDNOTES

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NUCLEAR

Global Centre for Nuclear Energy Partnership: India's Gift Basket of Nuclear Security

Reshmi Kazi

Nuclear security risks constitute to be one of the biggest challenges of the 21st century. Today, nuclear security faces challenges that are essentially asymmetric and complex in nature. As of January 2013, the global stockpile of highly enriched uranium (HEU) is estimated to be about 1,390 tonnes.¹ The global stockpile of separated plutonium is about 490 tonnes, of which about 260 tonnes is the material in civilian custody.² A very small amount of this bomb-making raw material if appropriated by terrorists can spell catastrophe for the entire mankind. Several documents have indicated terrorists' desire to acquire fissile materials. The militant group, Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) is reportedly planning on seizing Tehran's nuclear secrets. If successful ISIS terrorists might establish a nuclear-capable Caliphate beyond their Middle East base. Arguably, the threat of nuclear terrorism is much reduced with the death of Osama bin Laden. The al-Qaeda (AQ), which is known to have avowed an interest in obtaining and using nuclear weapons is now believed to be weakened. However, there is no way to authenticate this. The AQ chief, Ayman al-Zawahiri has recently announced establishing a new branch on the Indian subcontinent to "revive jihadist activity".³ He has exhorted "large Muslim populations in Burma and Bangladesh; in the Indian states of Assam and Gujarat; and in the Kashmir region" to unite for armed jihad. AQ operates through numerous sleeper cells that are spread all over the world with very little known about them. What is known is that there has been no change in their ideology and purported goals of unleashing catastrophic terror against their "perceived" enemies even if that costs innocent human lives.

Challenges Faced by Nuclear Security

Nuclear security faces significant challenges that need to be identified and addressed. Nuclear security systems face considerable threats from nuclear terrorism, illicit nuclear trade, insider threats, poor material accountancy and lack of adequate commitments from several states possessing nuclear capability and insider threats. Most recorded cases of pilferage of nuclear materials are committed by either insiders or outsiders in collusion with insiders' help. Several times, disgruntled employees working inside nuclear facilities have perpetrated incidents of nuclear sabotage. The Kaiga incident of November 2009 in which the potable water was spiked with radioactive tritium by some unidentified employees "added another dimension" to the security of nuclear power plants by highlighting the "need for vigilance in nuclear plants".⁴ Such incidents highlight the enormous dangers that could potentially arise from insiders with malicious intent. It is also indicative of poor nuclear governance and existing vulnerabilities in the nuclear security system.

Nuclear security faces substantial challenges from States supporting terrorist organisations aspiring to acquire nuclear/radiological materials by providing them safe havens on their soil. The confluence of "a lack of strong centralised authority, weak or permissive security services and complicit or repressed local populations"⁵ provides terrorists with the desired safe havens from where they operate their malicious plans. Safe havens provide terrorists potential opportunities to draw new recruits, acquire new weapons and materials, funds, local support and other necessary aid to pursue their objectives. These resources enthuse terrorists with confidence and significantly enhance their operational capabilities.

Several reports indicate that AQ's leadership in Pakistan is not yet defunct. The AQ is rapidly spreading its influence by forging alliances with a growing number of Pakistan-based militant groups, such as the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), Haqqani network and Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) on Pakistani soil.⁶ The withdrawal of the US from Afghanistan by the end of 2016 may facilitate AQ to regain its influence in Pakistan region. AQ would target impoverished states with weak governance (Afghanistan, Yemen, Maghreb and Somalia) and States possessing nuclear/radioactive weapons and materials (Pakistan, Yemen and Syria) for unconventional weapons, new recruits and safe havens.⁷ Documents recovered after the killing of Laden revealed his conviction about the safety of havens in Pakistan. A document dated August 27, 2010 expressed Laden's concerns for the safety of his fighters and followers in Pakistan: not because they might be arrested or detained by the authorities, but because of the torrential rains and flooding then afflicting that country.⁸ AQ's continued links with Pakistan-based militant groups indicate that it continues to have the same confidence in Islamabad as it did under Laden's leadership.

The recent news about the ISIS acquiring some 40 kilograms of depleted uranium from a university, when it besieged the city of Mosul, raised concerns about terrorists gaining large territories. Experts have raised concerns that such large territories are ideal as “safe haven for people from other groups and countries to train and plot complex attacks”.⁹ With little or no government influence and authority over such large territories, terrorists have added advantage to execute their plans with reduced risk of being detected. It was from the caves of Afghanistan that terrorists were successfully able to execute the 9/11 attacks on the Twin Towers in New York and the Pentagon.

Persistent destabilised political situation, prolonged internal conflicts and civil strife in countries possessing nuclear/radiological materials can substantially heighten risks to nuclear security. Countries with poor nuclear security provide a potential pathway for the terrorists’ acquisition of nuclear/radiological materials. In 2010, WikiLeaks revealed that poor security at Yemen’s¹⁰ National Atomic Energy Commission (NAEC) facility housing radioactive materials makes these dangerous materials vulnerable to terrorist access. Georgia has become a transit point for illicit trafficking of unsecured nuclear/radiological materials.¹¹ It has struggled to combat the illicit trafficking of nuclear/radiological materials, with 13 criminal cases brought against suspected smugglers of radioactive materials between 2002 and 2010 alone.¹²

Nuclear security in Pakistan is challenged by the confluence of incessant terrorist attacks and prevailing political instability. Several attacks perpetrated by terrorists operating from within the Pakistan soil indicate their intention is to sabotage vital installations including nuclear facilities of the country.¹³ The TTP’s June 2014 attacks on Karachi’s Jinnah International Airport further reignited security concerns about Pakistan’s sensitive installations.¹⁴ The TTP’s repeated attacks on airports and naval bases have successfully exposed the capacity gaps in Pakistan’s security apparatus. It cannot be ignored that TTP militants might next be emboldened to target Pakistan’s nuclear weapons installations¹⁵ Several terrorist groups like the LeT and its front group Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD), with the support of the Pakistan military are reported to try acquiring WMD: “The JuD believes it is likely to acquire access to nuclear technology by not going against the Pakistani State.”¹⁶

Nuclear security is further challenged by the rising demand for nuclear energy to meet growing economic demands. Demand for nuclear energy is likely to grow more rapidly in Asia than any other region in the world.¹⁷ Asia alone houses 17 nations¹⁸ that are associated with nuclear/radiological weapons, materials or technology and the numbers might inflate in future. Significantly, Asia remains the focus of nuclear power expansion wherein nuclear energy is expected to play a central role in the rising economic aspirations of Asian nations.¹⁹ Nuclear power

facilitates enrichment and reprocessing capabilities, which poses risks of dissemination of proliferation-sensitive nuclear technologies. The entire fuel cycle from the “front end” and the “back end” unless adequately safeguarded can be misused by wrong people for malicious purposes. How best to curb the menace depend on maintaining effective control over these sensitive technologies.

Nuclear security faces further challenges from porous borders that facilitate the wilful illegal movement of nuclear/radioactive materials across international borders.²⁰ According to the Incident and Trafficking Database (ITDB), from January 1993 to December 2013, out of the 2,477 reported incidents, 424 involved illegal possession, movement or attempts to illegally trade in or use nuclear material or radioactive sources.²¹ Sixteen incidents in this category involved HEU or plutonium.²² The above statistics indicate that ineffective border control measures provide wrong people access to unsecure nuclear/radioactive materials.

Nuclear Security and the Indian Position

India, in accordance with the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540, acknowledges that global nuclear security is vulnerable to several challenges. These challenges add new facets to the risk of nuclear security worldwide including India. India’s geographical location bordering Pakistan—a State with a prevailing confluence of terrorism, political instability and an expanding nuclear arsenal, heightens significant nuclear risks in the subcontinent. There exist substantial apprehensions about sensitive nuclear/radiological materials being misappropriated by terrorists.

The international community shares India’s concerns of global nuclear security threats. The international community has held periodic nuclear security summits since 2010. Subsequent Nuclear Security Summits held in Washington (2012) and Seoul (2014) effectively endorsed that states have a fundamental responsibility “to maintain at all times effective security of all nuclear and other radioactive materials, including nuclear materials used in nuclear weapons, and nuclear facilities under their control”. Effective nuclear security not only helps in combatting the threat of nuclear terrorism but plays a pivotal role in enhancing a strong security culture. An effective security culture is capable of thwarting potential nuclear risks, and hence must be institutionalised. In consonance, the Nuclear Security Summits of 2012 and 2014 welcomed the establishment of the “Centres of Excellence” (CoEs) for developing and operationalising an effective nuclear security culture.

India has decided to contribute its services in enhancing nuclear security in the region and the world. This is evident most in the field of strengthening and reinforcing nuclear security culture and also in other related fields. India persistent efforts in enhancing nuclear security culture demonstrate the importance it attaches

to its national nuclear security. The Indian position on nuclear security reiterates its commitment to strengthen and improve nuclear security and contribute to the enhancement of the global nuclear security architecture.

Nuclear Security Culture

Perhaps the greatest challenge to nuclear security is the lack of effective nuclear security culture and best practices among educational institutions, nuclear facilities and research laboratories at national and international levels. Lack of effective nuclear security culture increases various vulnerabilities to nuclear security. For example, a weak Personal Reliability Programme²³ can heighten risks of nuclear security being breached in sensitive installations thereby posing catastrophic consequences. Inadequate security measures raise the risks of pilferage of nuclear/radiological materials for malicious purposes. Such reasons mandate a strong culture of nuclear security to be established by every state possessing or aspiring to possess nuclear capabilities.

Nuclear security culture is defined as “the assembly of characteristics, attitudes and behaviour of individuals, organisations and institutions which serves as a means to support and enhance nuclear security”.²⁴ A dynamic nuclear security culture ensures that personnel, organisations and institutions dealing with sensitive nuclear assets remain guarded and undertake continuous measures and actions to preclude and resist any theft of or sabotage involving nuclear/radiological materials. To successfully prevent any possible nuclear sabotage, the nuclear security system must be vigorously strengthened with “legislation and regulation; intelligence gathering; assessment of the threat to radioactive material and associated locations and facilities; administrative systems; various technical hardware systems; response capabilities and mitigation activities”.²⁵ All these facets of security requires proper coordination for ensuring effective nuclear security governance. The practice of sustained coordination among the various facets develops a security culture that permeates through all departments/agencies constituted for resilient nuclear security.

Centres of Excellence—Meeting the Nuclear Challenge

The nuclear security situation as it appears within the Indian sub-continent and elsewhere in the world faces complications galore. These complications need to be dealt with timely to mitigate the growing challenges to nuclear security. One method of doing so would be to implement an effective nuclear culture that would permeate through all the agencies/departments governing nuclear security. This can be expected to produce sustainable and constant improvement in nuclear security. However, such goals can be achieved within an established framework and hence need to be institutionalised. The most meaningful way to achieve

these goals is through the establishment of CoEs for enhanced nuclear security. Since the 2010 and 2014 Nuclear Security Summits, 33 countries have either announced or established COEs or training programmes related to nuclear security.²⁶ These individual centres are in different stages of development; some are already conducting courses emphasising technological skills, and providing training in detection technology and first responders to nuclear incidents.

The principal role of the CoEs is to improve awareness about nuclear security and non-proliferation through education, quality training programmes and technological support. It emphasises on practical training through experimental facilities. The CoEs play a cardinal role in enhancing understanding and responsiveness to proliferation risks and consequent threats to nuclear security. The CoEs facilitate conduct of degree courses in collaboration with universities that assists development of a dedicated body of technologically trained specialists for improved functioning of the nuclear industry. These centres also play a crucial role in providing regular exercises and conduct programmes to build efficient technical personnel trained to prevent potential thefts, sabotage and deal with the threat of nuclear terrorism. CoEs thus promote practices that ensure effective physical protection of nuclear facilities and materials. They play a crucial role in facilitating the development of appropriate accounting of nuclear materials and promote technical capacities to expedite the same. They are extremely useful for research and development (R&D) that assist in maintaining database of nuclear material signatures. This database helps in developing nuclear forensics technology that is effective in detection of nuclear materials and nuclear detonation. They have the potential to effect enhanced coordination with the nuclear industry and improved nuclear governance. These measures strengthen export controls and prevent illicit trade of nuclear materials. The CoEs are of critical importance to reinvigorate the non-proliferation regime and heightened nuclear security.

Global Centre for Nuclear Energy Partnership (GCNEP)

To achieve the objectives of safe and secured nuclear system and combat the existing challenges to the physical security of nuclear materials and facilities India approved the establishment of the Global Centre for Nuclear Energy Partnership (GCNEP) at the Nuclear Security Summit in September 2010. In June 2011, Russia signed an agreement with India to cooperate on establishing four of the GCNEP schools. In January 2014, then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh laid the foundation of the Centre in the Jasaur-Kheri village of Haryana announcing that the Centre “aims to continue strengthening the security of its nuclear power plants and nuclear materials...together with the development of human resources in the field of nuclear energy”.²⁷ The primary mission²⁸ of the GCNEP is to:

- “conduct research, design and development of nuclear systems that are

intrinsically safe, secure, proliferation resistant and sustainable” with the aim of strengthening nuclear security in the future and

- “organise training, seminars, lectures and workshops” on critical issues by Indian and international experts and build a group of trained human resource.

The GCNEP is visualised to be a state of the art facility premised upon international participation from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and other interested foreign partners. The GCNEP related Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and other cooperation arrangements have been signed with France, Russia, US and the IAEA.²⁹ The Centre houses five schools to conduct research into advanced nuclear energy systems, nuclear security, radiological safety, as well as applications for radioisotopes and radiation technologies. These schools include:

- Advanced Nuclear Energy System Studies;
- Nuclear Security Studies;
- Nuclear Material Characterisation Studies;
- Radiological Safety Studies; and
- Studies on Applications of Radioisotopes and Radiation Technologies.

This centre will become an important platform for India to interact with the world community in all aspects of peaceful uses concerning nuclear energy, including nuclear security, safety and non-proliferation.³⁰ It will support international cooperation in nuclear energy applications and facilitate the establishment of “extensive facilities” related to advanced education, research and training in the field of proliferation resistant nuclear system designing in nuclear power plants, nuclear security, radiological safety, nuclear material characterisation and applications of radiation technologies and radioisotopes.³¹ The Centre will also focus on improved technologies for cutting-edge nuclear energy systems, advanced nuclear forensic, establishment of accreditation facilities for radiation monitoring.

India as a Security Provider

The GCNEP is a specialised R&D unit under the guidance of the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE). It is expected to be an effective forum to highlight India’s progress and development in the field of nuclear safety, security, and advanced nuclear and radiation technologies. It will help build capacity in technology training and human resource development for enhanced nuclear security. The GCNEP will be used for research by Indian and visiting international scientists; training of Indian and international participants; international seminars and group discussions by experts on topical issues; and

development and conduct of courses in association with interested countries and the IAEA.³² The centre will be boosted by bringing together Indian and international scientists for their research and training programs.³³ Training facilities are to include virtual reality laboratories and a radiation monitoring, calibration and accreditation laboratory.³⁴ The GCNEP thus upholds India's pledge to be a "responsible state with advanced nuclear technology"³⁵ by harnessing ways to explore international nuclear best practices.

GCNEP—Role of the Outreach Programme Cell

The GCNEP has a dedicated Outreach Programme Cell that will promote publicity of technologies developed by DAE for training in several areas like physical protection of nuclear material and nuclear facilities, prevention and response to radiological threats, nuclear material control and accounting practices, protective measures against insider threats, radio chemistry and application of radio isotopes, applications of radioisotopes in agriculture and radiation processing of food and public awareness program on DAE technologies for rural India. The outreach cell holds regular courses, symposiums and workshop and assist in capacity building by providing training to nuclear security professionals.

At the international level, India has sought to internalise and further develop security practices related to nuclear security, nuclear safety and nuclear non-proliferation. The GCNEP has undertaken collaborative research and detailed studies from time to time. During October 4-12, 2004, India and IAEA organised a regional training course on "Physical Protection of Nuclear Installations", in Mumbai.³⁶ The course was arranged with 16 lecture sessions, two workgroup sessions, one workgroup presentation session by course participants, a plenary session and a field visit to Kakrapar Atomic Power Station.³⁷ There were 25 participants in the course including 13 foreign (from Bangladesh, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines and Thailand) and 12 Indian participants.³⁸ The course covered wide-ranging topics under nuclear security like physical protection concern, nuclear fuel cycle activities, safety-design and evaluation of physical protection system, International Physical Protection Regime, IAEA activities in nuclear security, security technologies, design basis threat, security and control of radioactive materials, safety- security interface, nuclear material control and security, security culture, etc.³⁹ India, along with the IAEA, also organised an International Workshop on "Safety of Multi-Unit Nuclear Power Plant Sites against External Natural Hazards" at Mumbai, during October 17-19, 2012. The Workshop addressed the complex task of safety evaluation of a multi-unit site with respect to multiple hazards, such as earthquake, tsunami and fire. The Workshop was attended by experts from regulatory authorities and plant operators from different countries as well as the IAEA.⁴⁰

As a step towards strengthening nuclear security, India recognises the importance to develop and conduct courses in association with interested countries and the IAEA. India “called on the nuclear agency to recognize centres of excellence for human resources development under the Technical Co-operation for Developing Countries (TCDC) programme and offered training facilities to scientists and engineers from developing countries”.⁴¹ In 2000, the DAE signed an MoU with the IAEA for co-operation in connection with the Agency’s regional and inter-regional training events, individual and group fellowships training programmes carried out as part of the Technical Co-operation activities of the IAEA.⁴² The MoU is an important milestone in India-IAEA cooperation and formalises New Delhi’s long standing offer to make the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) a “centre of excellence/Regional Resource Unit (RRU)” under the Agency’s Technical Co-operation for Developing Countries (TCDC) programme.⁴³

Importance of Training

As a continuation of the cooperation, in November 14–18, 2011 at New Delhi, the GCNEP organised an “off-campus” Regional Training course on “Physical Protection of Nuclear Facilities against Sabotage, Assessing Vulnerabilities and Identification of Vital Areas” for 25 participants, including 17 foreign nationals and eight Indian participants.⁴⁴ India has so undertaken six courses on topics related to physical protection of nuclear material and facilities, prevention and response to radiological threats, nuclear material accounting, computer security controls, etc.⁴⁵ The Centre plans to hold four additional courses in 2014.⁴⁶ These courses are to deal with critical issues like prevention, preparedness and responses involving malicious acts with radioactive materials, medical management and safeguard practices. India has consistently supported IAEA’s goal in assisting national efforts to strengthen nuclear security and in promoting effective international cooperation. As a partner to the IAEA-US Regional Radiological Security Partnership (RRSP), India has organised several international training courses in India in collaboration with the IAEA.⁴⁷ Through the IAEA-US conducted RRSP, India extended help and cooperation for the “search and recovery of orphan radioactive sources in countries which were unable to effectively deal with them and had sought such assistance”.⁴⁸ In the trilateral meeting held in February 2005 in New Delhi, “The US and the IAEA representatives welcomed India’s participation in the RRSP programme as a Regional Partner and discussions were held to work out the modalities of this cooperation.”⁴⁹ New Delhi has offered “providing infrastructure and expertise on a regular basis for conducting international training courses in India under the aegis of the IAEA on issues related to the security of radiological sources and materials as also for locating orphan radioactive sources in countries which are

unable to effectively deal with them and which seek assistance from the IAEA".⁵⁰ The three sides agreed to continue further discussions on the subject. India is also on record for conducting nine regional training seminars on nuclear security in cooperation with the IAEA. During August 26-30, 2013, the GCNEP organised a National Programme on Prevention and Response to Radiological Threats. Two other programmes, one on food irradiation, and the second on radiological safety, were also organised in the same year. There are expectations that the conclusion of Practical Arrangements between GCNEP and the IAEA would further strengthen India's collaboration with the IAEA in the future.⁵¹ India thus has been part of several training activities "including participation in the IAEA effort to take nuclear security training to different member states and to make it really global".⁵² India as a security provider has demonstrated sufficient ability to:

- build skills and capabilities through regular training,
- spread awareness of the necessity for securing nuclear/radiological materials, and
- strengthen an effective and dynamic nuclear security culture within its own nuclear establishment.

These measures are exemplary and provide a template to other countries for effective management of their nuclear security.

School of Radiological Safety Studies (SRSS)

Under the GCNEP, the SRSS is designed to contribute significantly to nuclear security, particularly in the area of radiation source security. The mission is to carry out R&D on radiation detection systems and dosimetry.⁵³ Under the guidance of BARC, in Kalpakkam, and in several other institutes in India, significant work is being conducted to improve radiological safety. These include "assessment of radioactivity releases integrated with geographical information systems with nationwide radius and background mapping; ensure the safety of radioactive nuclear material; address emergency preparedness and response, medical management of radiation emergencies, and conduct fixed field exercises on radiological safety, and emergency response".⁵⁴ BARC is also to conduct radiation safety training courses from time to time.⁵⁵ The SRSS is expected to man an emergency response centre. There are currently 12 emergency response centres across India, and they are monitored by the emergency response monitoring network, and have all the modules for mobile and aerial searches, monitoring at ports, and a facility for air monitoring of stand-alone detectors, which communicate using the Global System for Mobile Communications (GSM) or Code Division Multiple Access (CDMA) networks.⁵⁶ India also houses a National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) that could be called at the request

of the state authorities or of the Indian national government.⁵⁷ The NDRF seeks to examine whether a radiological dispersal device (RDD) element existed at the explosion site.

Security of Digital Assets

In India, plant computer systems are connected to digital networks that interconnect various functional aspects (performing safety, security and emergency preparedness tasks) within the nuclear power. Protecting these critical digital assets and the information they contain against sabotage or malicious use is called cybersecurity. India has cooperated with the IAEA to improve instrumentation and control (I&C) of nuclear power plants. During September 23-27, 2013, IAEA in cooperation with the BARC held a Technical Meeting on the “Guiding Principles on applying Computer Security Controls to Instrumentation and Control Systems at Nuclear Facilities” under the aegis of the GCNEP.⁵⁸ The objective of this meeting is to review and update a draft document entitled “Applying Computer Security Controls to Instrumentation and Control Systems at Nuclear Facilities” (to be issued as a Technical Guidance publication within the IAEA Nuclear Security Series), and provide technical comments.⁵⁹ The document focuses on cybersecurity matters that are crucial in the “lifecycle of digital I&C security associated with nuclear power facilities systems applied at nuclear facilities”. The participants are encouraged to present their relevant experiences and strategies in the fields of the interface of safety and cybersecurity; analysis of hazards that may result from computer compromise of I&C systems; cybersecurity in the I&C lifecycle; and cybersecurity during operations and maintenance.⁶⁰

Nuclear Medicine

India’s role in the field of nuclear medicine has benefitted patients worldwide. India has closely cooperated with IAEA’s Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy (PACT).⁶¹ The PACT facilitated the inking of tripartite agreements between India and the IAEA, Sri Lanka and Namibia to provide New Delhi’s indigenously developed Cobalt teletherapy machine—Bhabhatron II—for purposes of inexpensive cancer treatment.⁶² A similar machine was offered by India to Vietnam in 2008.⁶³ India has assisted IAEA’s efforts in cancer management by delivering education and training programmes for physicians and technologists in the field of nuclear medicine. The Radiation Medicine Centre (RMC) of BARC in Mumbai leads these efforts, including those under various IAEA programmes.⁶⁴ RMC-trained specialists are providing medical services in India as well as in several other neighbouring countries like Bangladesh. In the field of radiodiagnosis and therapy, RMC is a regional referral centre of the World

Health Organisation for South East Asia.⁶⁵ The RMC is also a training hub for fellows from the IAEA for varying periods from three months to a year.⁶⁶ Doctors and scientists of the RMC serve as experts for the IAEA and are frequently on its RCA's and Coordinated Research Projects.⁶⁷ The Tata Memorial Centre (TMC), an autonomous institution under the Indian Department of Atomic Energy, continues to play a major role in developing cost-effective methods for cancer diagnosis and treatment.⁶⁸ TMC provides low-cost testing procedures for cervical cancer using acetic acid. In a recently published study carried out over 12 years covering 150,000 women, it has been shown that the use of this technique has resulted in reducing mortality by 31 per cent.⁶⁹

India as a Security Provider

India's progress in nuclear technology is sought after by several nations like France,⁷⁰ Russia,⁷¹ Republic of Korea,⁷² United Kingdom,⁷³ Australia⁷⁴ and Kazakhstan.⁷⁵ China has also expressed desire to open talks on cooperation in a sector that New Delhi sees as the solution to its chronic power problems. Recent nuclear cooperation agreements entered into by several nations with India are an indicator of the belief that New Delhi's advanced nuclear technology and experiences are advantageous to their enhanced security. In November 2012, India and Canada announced the conclusion of negotiations for the Administrative Arrangement that will allow the implementation of the Nuclear Cooperation Agreement (NCA), signed between the two countries in June 2010. The NCA will allow Canadian firms to export and import controlled nuclear materials, equipment and technology to and from India to facilities under safeguards applied by the IAEA.⁷⁶ The NCA will "further build on Canada and India's relationship and allow both countries to share expertise in areas such as research and development, safety, and next generation nuclear facilities".⁷⁷ India and Bangladesh have agreed to enhance cooperation in nuclear science and technology.⁷⁸ India has also agreed to enhance bilateral cooperation with Sri Lanka in the fields of civil nuclear energy and science and technology.⁷⁹ In October 2014, India and Finland signed 19 agreements including one for peaceful use of nuclear energy as well as radiation safety regulations related to nuclear installations, emergency preparedness, and radioactive waste management associated with the operation of nuclear power plants.⁸⁰ Interestingly, India's expertise in civilian nuclear technology and radiation safety is not only being provided to its neighbouring states but other nations as well.

Possible Shortcomings: India-Pakistan Nuclear Capacity Collaboration

India's recognises the critical importance of strengthening nuclear security at both

national and international levels. The series of measures undertaken by the GCNEP are expected to enhance coordination of efforts at the national, sub-regional, regional and international levels. Expectedly, these measures can strengthen a global response to the serious challenge of proliferation of nuclear weapons and materials threatening international security. However, just as there is no room for complacency in nuclear security, India's nuclear CoE has certain challenges to meet. The first being addressing the nuclear problem that is closer home. India has been successful in entering into collaboration with several countries for exchange of ideas and exploring international best practices. It would be a challenge for India to negotiate similar outreach programme with Pakistan facing acute nuclear security challenges. Being Pakistan's neighbour, several experts will raise questions about the possibility of collaborative programs between the Indian and Pakistani CoEs. Collaborative programmes between the Indian and Pakistani CoEs would definitely reinvigorate nuclear security not only in South Asia but possibly at the global level too. It may strengthen global response against proliferation of sensitive nuclear materials and might be a welcome regional development. There exists a common cause for both the nuclear-capable countries to join their nuclear expertise and excellence in combating the existing problem of terrorism existing in both nations. However, how far the political establishment of both the countries and the Pakistan military will be supportive of this step is something that might be contingent upon the bilateral ties between the two neighbours. Presently, India and Pakistan have signed the Agreement on Reducing Risk from Accidents Relating to Nuclear Weapons in 2007. However, apart from reaffirming the agreement for another five years in 2012, no other step has yet been undertaken to operationalise the institutional measures for dealing with nuclear events. Presumably, the Agreement was able to get India an assurance from the Pakistan that any accidents relating to nuclear weapons emanating from the Pakistani side cannot be simply attributed to a mere terrorist attack and absolve Islamabad from any culpability. For Pakistan, the signing of the Agreement was a reiteration of their commitment for having peaceful nuclear relations with India. Having achieved a win-win situation, the Agreement has not progressed much further. Long-standing differences between India and Pakistan over regional security proposals like nuclear-weapon-free-zones and other issues of political disparities and mutual distrust have further prevented implementation of effective nuclear confidence building measures. It remains a challenge for the GCNEP to act as a nodal centre for effecting India-Pakistan nuclear collaboration for capacity building that will be mutually beneficial to the nuclear situation of both the nations.

Nuclear Forensics

Nuclear forensics is an important aspect in strengthening nuclear security. Scientific techniques help investigators to get facts from the accused, which could be the best source of information about the crime. GCNEP must undertake appropriate measures to enhance the effectiveness of nuclear forensics to respond to incidents of illicit nuclear trade and transportation risks. The Directorate of Forensic Science Laboratories (DFSL) in Bangalore has drawn up a comprehensive perspective plan including the aim to take forensic sciences to a global level with the establishment of a centre for nuclear forensic science. The plan is expected to take off by 2018-19, but the proposal is still pending with the state government.⁸¹ The home department said that Karnataka, with its vast potential for academic avenues both in science and technology, can lead the way in nuclear-forensic sciences expertise in the country as well as to meet global demands in the field.⁸² It remains the prime responsibility of the CoE to coordinate and expedite the DFSL plan as implement a dedicated nuclear forensic science centre in India.

Conclusion

As a security provider, the GCNEP is consistently engaged in enhancing nuclear security both at national and international levels. The CoE is a state-of-the-art facility that will help in capacity building, in association with the interested countries and the IAEA, involving technology, human resource development, education and training and giving a momentum to R&D in enlisted areas. These aspects are extremely important to raise awareness and constitute the key to improved nuclear security. It also emphasises on security training of the protective forces manning sensitive posts to enhance the existing security culture. Persistent training assists in vulnerability assessments of security situations effective responses. The Centre has already acquired qualitative experience in conducting effective training programmes for enhanced nuclear security. Through consistent efforts, the GCNEP will provide intrinsically safe, secure, proliferation resistant and sustainable nuclear safeguards. The GCNEP is involved in ongoing efforts to consolidate some of these activities and encourage global participation.

ENDNOTES

1. "Fissile Material Stocks", International Panel on Fissile Materials, at <http://fissilematerials.org/> (Accessed July 4, 2014).
2. Ibid.
3. Ellen Barry, "Al Qaeda Opens New Branch on Indian Subcontinent", *The New York Times*, September 4, 2014, at http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/05/world/asia/al-qaeda-announces-new-branch-on-indian-subcontinent.html?_r=0 (Accessed September 4, 2014).
4. The water cooler in the Kaiga atomic plant was spiked with radioactive tritium by some

- unidentified employees as suspected by the AERB and DAE officials. Subsequent investigation made clear that the person who introduced the tritium into the water cooler had knowledge that tritium dissolves in water. See “Kaiga incident: Wake Up Call or Tempest in Teapot?” *The Hindu*, December 3, 2009, at <http://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/energy-and-environment/kaiga-incident-wake-up-call-or-tempest-in-teapot/article59238.ece> (Accessed July 4, 2014).
5. “The Future of Al-Qaeda: Results of a Foresight Project”, Canadian Security Intelligence Service, May 2013, p.9 at https://www.csis-scrs.gc.ca/pblctns/cdmctrch/20130501_eng.pdf (Accessed August 21, 2014). Safe havens are obtainable where there exists a vacuum in the State security system.
 6. Seth Jones, “Al Qaeda Is Far From Defeated”, *The Wall Street Journal*, April 29, 2012, at <http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702304723304577369780858510366> (Accessed January 23, 2014). The WMD Commission reports that Pakistan is at the “geographic crossroads for terrorism and weapons of mass destruction”. See Graham Allison et al., “World at Risk: The Report of the Commission on the Prevention of WMD Proliferation and Terrorism”, p. 65, at <http://a.abcnews.go.com/images/TheLaw/WMD-report.pdf#http://a.abcnews.go.com/images/TheLaw/WMD-report.pdf> (Accessed January 25, 2014).
 7. *Ibid.* In February 2008, Mike McConnell, the Director of National Intelligence, testified to the House intelligence Committee: “The FATA [Federally Administered Tribal Areas] serves as a staging area for Al Qaeda’s attacks in support of the Taliban in Afghanistan as well as a location for training new terrorist operatives for attacks in Pakistan, the Middle East, Africa, Europe, and the United States.” A year previously, his office had published a National Intelligence Estimate asserting that al Qaeda “has protected or regenerated key elements of its Homeland attack capability, including: a safe haven in the Pakistan Federally Administered Tribal Areas.”
 8. Bin Laden’s letter is indicative of his reliance on the Pakistani Government to provide them safe havens. See “SOCOM-2012-0000003-HT”, p. 1, as stated in “The Future of Al- Qaeda: Results of a Foresight Project”, No. 5, p. 28, at <http://assets.nationaljournal.com/pdf/OBL1.pdf> (Accessed January 23, 2014).
 9. Matthew Bunn, “ISIS Seizes Nuclear Material—but That’s Not the Reason to Worry,” *National Interest*, July 11, 2014 at <http://nationalinterest.org/feature/isis-seizes-nuclear-material%E2%80%94that%E2%80%99s-not-the-reason-worry-10849> (Accessed August 17, 2014).
 10. The location in Yemen is obviously of particular concern since AQ in the Arab Peninsula has an active base there. A senior government official in Yemen, the lone guard standing watch at Yemen’s National Atomic Energy Commission (NAEC) facility had been removed from his post and that its only closed circuit TV security camera had broken down six months previously and was never fixed. See Karen McVeigh, “WikiLeaks cables: Yemen Radioactive Stocks ‘Were Easy al-Qaida Target’”, *The Guardian*, December 19, 2010, at <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2010/dec/19/wikileaks-cables-yemen-al-qaida> (Accessed February 21, 2014) and “US Embassy Cables: Yemen Sounds Alarm over Radioactive Materials”, *The Guardian*, December 19, 2010, at <http://www.theguardian.com/world/us-embassy-cables-documents/242991> (Accessed February 21, 2014).
 11. Georgia’s proximity to Russia, unsecured borders alongside South Ossetia and Abkhazia, political instability, abject poverty, corruption, existing trade routes opening into Asia and Europe makes it a thriving black-market hub for illicit trafficking of either unknown or suspected to be diverted nuclear and radioactive materials from Moscow via Tbilisi. See Alexander Kupatadze, “Organized Crime and the Trafficking of Radiological Materials: The Case of Georgia”, *The Nonproliferation Review*, 17, July 2010, p. 220.
 12. *Ibid.*, p. 222.

13. The attacks on the Kamra military air base in August 2012 renewed concerns about the threat that terrorists could pose to the security of the Pakistani nuclear arsenal.
14. On earlier occasions, the TTP has attacked several heavily guarded State installations—the Mehran Naval Base in 2011, the Minhas Airbase (possibly a nuclear weapons storage base) and the Peshawar Airport in 2012.
15. Reshmi Kazi, “Pakistan’s Nuclear Security Faces Insider Threat”, *Hindustan Times*, June 19, 2014, at <http://www.hindustantimes.com/comment/analysis/pakistan-s-nuclear-security-faces-insider-threat/article1-1231378.aspx> (Accessed July 4, 2014).
16. Arif Jamal, *Calls for Transnational Jihad: Lashkar-e-Taiba 1985-2014*, AvantGarde Books LLC, 2014, p. 282.
17. Sharon Squassoni, “Building a Nuclear Security Framework from the Ground Up: Encouraging Coordination among Centers of Excellence in Northeast Asia”, *Policy Analysis Brief*, The Stanley Foundation, March 2013, p. 2 at <http://www.stanleyfoundation.org/publications/pab/SquassoniPAB313.pdf> (Accessed July 4, 2014).
18. These nations are China, India, Pakistan, Israel, Iran, Japan, South Korea, North Korea, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, the Philippines, Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, United Arab Emirates, Bangladesh and Taiwan.
19. Several Asian nations including China India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Iran are rapidly installing new reactors. The Fukushima Daiichi accident intensified public concern over nuclear power safety but it has not reversed interest in nuclear power. “Nuclear continues to represent a major energy source, supplying about 14 per cent of the world’s electricity, and 21 per cent in OECD countries.” See Patrick Fragman, Senior Vice-President, Nuclear Business, Alstom, “Has The Nuclear Industry Emerged from the Cloud of Fukushima?” *Power Engineering International*, January 27, 2014, at <http://www.powerengineeringint.com/articles/print/volume-22/issue-1/talking-point/has-the-nuclear-industry-emerged-from-the-cloud-of-fukushima.html> (Accessed January 27, 2014).
 “As of January 10 2014, there are 438 nuclear reactors operating in the world. Total global capacity, which had fallen from 375 GW at the end of 2010 to 369 GW at the end of 2011, has since gradually risen to 374.3 GW today. Over the past two years, an upward trend in the number of new reactors can be seen. Having dropped from 16 in 2010 to four in 2011, construction starts increased to six in 2012 and reached ten in 2013. As many as 71 reactors were under construction as of January 10, 2014, the highest number since 1989. As in previous years, Asia, particularly China, remains the focus of expansion and of near and long-term growth prospects. Indeed, of those 71 reactors, 47 are in Asia. Similarly, 43 of the last 53 new reactors to be connected to the grid since 2000 are also in Asia. Growth in nuclear power following Fukushima is expected to continue, however at a rate slower than estimated prior to the accident.” See Jong Kyun Park, Director, Division of Nuclear Power, IAEA, “Has the Nuclear Industry Emerged from the Cloud of Fukushima?” *Power Engineering International*, January 27, 2014, at <http://www.powerengineeringint.com/articles/print/volume-22/issue-1/talking-point/has-the-nuclear-industry-emerged-from-the-cloud-of-fukushima.html> (Accessed January 27, 2014).
 “In World Nuclear Association’s new report, *The Global Nuclear Fuel Market: Supply and Demand 2013-2030*, world nuclear generating capacity is projected to increase 72 per cent, from 334 GWe today to 574 GWe by 2030 in its reference scenario. The calculation includes an assumed reopening schedule for Japanese reactors not included in the 2013 capacity total.” See “WNA Weekly Digest Archive 2013”, *World Nuclear Association*, 2014, at <http://www.world-nuclear.org/WNA/Publications/Weekly-Digest/Archive/Archive-2013/> (Accessed January 27, 2014). “There is no doubt that the impact of Fukushima has been significant, and there are still some challenges that lies ahead for the industry. However, there is no question that the nuclear energy perspectives remain solid. Nuclear growth has been confirmed by the International Energy Agency. As in many other aspects of the global

- economy, the biggest growth will be driven by Asia, where half of the new constructions are expected to be built.” See Tarik Choho, Chief Commercial Executive Officer, AREVA, “Has The Nuclear Industry Emerged from the Cloud of Fukushima?” *Power Engineering International*, January 27, 2014, at <http://www.powerengineeringint.com/articles/print/volume-22/issue-1/talking-point/has-the-nuclear-industry-emerged-from-the-cloud-of-fukushima.html> (Accessed January 27, 2014).
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 22. *Ibid.*
 23. Personnel Reliability Programme involves a psychological evaluation programme, designed to permit only those individuals who demonstrate emotional stability, physically capability and fulfil other standards of individual reliability like integrity, most trustworthy, professional competence and unquestioned loyalty for performing specific duties relating to nuclear weapons, chemical weapons and biological weapons.
 24. “Nuclear security culture”, IAEA Nuclear Security Series No. 7, International Atomic Energy Agency, Vienna, 2008, p. 3, at http://www-pub.iaea.org/MTCD/Publications/PDF/Pub1347_web.pdf (Accessed July 4, 2014).
 25. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
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 27. “Indian Research Centre Takes Shape”, *World Nuclear News*, January 03, 2014, at <http://www.world-nuclear-news.org/NN-Indian-research-centre-takes-shape-0301144.html> (Accessed July 4, 2014).
 28. “Global Centre for Nuclear Energy Partnership (GCNEP)”, Government of India Department of Atomic Energy, at <http://www.gcnep.gov.in/about/about.html> (Accessed July 4, 2014).
 29. “Nuclear Security Summit 2014 National Progress Report India”, p. 2, Nuclear Security Summit 2014, at <https://www.nss2014.com/sites/default/files/documents/india.pdf> (Accessed July 4, 2014).
 30. R.B. Grover, “The Technological Dimension of Nuclear Security”, *Strategic Analysis*, 38(2), 2014, p. 155, at <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/09700161.2014.884434> (Accessed September 4, 2014).
 31. “Global Centre for Nuclear Energy Partnership”, Government of India Department of Atomic Energy, Rajya Sabha, Unstarred Question no. 3724, p. 1, at <http://dae.nic.in/writereaddata/rsus3724.pdf> (Accessed July 4, 2014).
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33. Ibid.
34. Ibid.
35. "Joint Statement between President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh", Department of Atomic Energy, Government of India, July 18, 2005, at <http://dae.nic.in/?q=node/61> (Accessed July 4, 2014).
36. A total of four foreign faculty members were arranged by IAEA, two were IAEA staff members, one was from Sandia National Laboratory, US, and one from Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPANSA), Australia. Ten faculty members from India took part in this training course.
"Regional Training Course on 'Physical Protection of Nuclear Installations'", at <http://www.barc.gov.in/publications/nl/2005/200503-8.pdf> p.1 (Accessed July 4, 2014).
37. Ibid.
38. Ibid.
39. Ibid.
40. "Statement by Dr. Ratan Kumar Sinha, Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission and Leader of the Indian Delegation", International Atomic Energy Agency 57th General Conference, Vienna, September 18, 2013, p.2, at http://dae.nic.in/writereaddata/gc2013_stmt.pdf (Accessed July 4, 2014).
41. "Nuclear India", Department of Atomic Energy, Government of India, 34 (5-6), Nov-Dec 2000, at <http://dae.nic.in/?q=node/168> (Accessed July 4, 2014).
42. Ibid.
43. Ibid.
44. The course was attended by 17 foreign participants and 8 Indian participants. Amongst foreign participants, five were from Indonesia, three from the United Arab Emirates, two each from Thailand, Bangladesh and the US, one each from Malaysia, the Philippines and Korea. Among the Indian participants, three were from BARC, two from Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd (NPCIL), one each from Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB), Bharatiya Nabhikiya Vidyut Nigam Ltd (BHAVINI), Heavy Water Plant, Kota, Rajasthan, There were two observers from the US. See "Report on Regional Training Course on Physical Protection of Nuclear Facilities against Sabotage, Assessing Vulnerabilities and Identification of Vital Areas", International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and Global Centre for Nuclear Energy Partnership (GCNEP), India, November 14-18, 2011, at <http://www.gcnep.gov.in/programs/details/ReportRTConPPS2011.pdf>, p.3 (Accessed July 4, 2014).
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55. *Ibid.*, p. 95. Some of the training courses conducted in radiological safety are for the National Disaster Response Force, state police, firefighters, civil defence, Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) Emergency Response Team and medical professionals.
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62. *Ibid.*
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64. "Statement by Official Spokesperson on India-US-IAEA meeting on Regional Radiological Security Partnership", No. 50.
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19

Concluding Assessment

Vivek Chadha

The role of India as a security provider has increasingly been discussed and debated over a period of time. This has received a fillip as a result of India's growing capabilities, both economic and military. More importantly, these have been recognised as elements of India's benign and constructive role in humanitarian and stabilisation missions.¹ It is for this reason that India's presence has more often than not been welcomed, given its non-threatening character which has been a consistent element of India's foreign policy.

Of late, India's increasing influence has been accompanied by calls to undertake greater responsibility and a larger role as a security provider. This has been reiterated by contributing authors of this publication. However, there is a need for greater clarity regarding both the nature of role envisaged, as well as India's outlook in this regard and its capacity to undertake greater responsibilities. In the absence of this fundamental demand and supply paradigm, there remains a degree of uncertainty on both sides. This is also accompanied at times by unrealistic expectations and at others, by concerns regarding the impact of India's presence in a region. These questions became the basis of the focus of this year's *Asian Strategic Review on India as a Security Provider*.

India's role as a security provider has been analysed by the contributors with respect to specific countries as well as regions. It emerges from their observation that this role is increasingly being influenced by the emerging trends in Asia's security. Three fundamental factors have had an impact on India's role in the region. *First*, there has been an increasing desire of the U.S. to push for greater participation by countries in the region to shoulder responsibilities. This is based on the reality that *one*, the U.S. can no longer afford to undertake the nature of global security responsibility, as it did in the past. And *two*, it needs both allies and partners in pursuit of its envisaged role. This has led to the desire to deepen partnerships, especially with India. *Second*, the rise of China and its aggressive

attempt at forcing the course of events both in case of bilateral and multilateral disputes has been a cause of worry for countries of the Asia-Pacific region. This has led them to seek balance in the region through greater support for a rule based approach to the existing differences. India emerges as a logical choice given its benign military role, size, capability and location in the region. *Third*, there has been growing willingness on India's part to increase its outreach and play a more substantive role in positively influencing the security concerns of the region. This stems from an understanding that a rule based regional order is not only in the interest of the region, but also serves India's strategic interests.

The convergence of interests on the broad principles of an enhanced role for India as a security provider was therefore seen as a logical and mutually beneficial way ahead. However, there are challenges that need to be addressed before the expectations of countries in the region and the reality of India's role can achieve equilibrium. These are related to *first*, bridging the gap with countries and regions, which have misgivings regarding India's role and intent, which the preceding papers on Nepal, Sri Lanka and South Asia suggest, remains a recurring theme. *Second*, there is a need for India to balance its domestic compulsions, if it has to emerge as a security provider, unencumbered by local politics. This is evident in case of Sri Lanka, wherein the Tamil sentiment driven political compulsions continue to impact decision making. *Third*, there is a need to create necessary capacities in order to fulfill the nature of responsibilities that India is expected to undertake. The country's existing capability is more focused towards challenges on its borders, areas of interest immediately beyond and the open seas in the Indian Ocean region. *Last*, India needs to balance the desire to emerge as a credible net security provider with the overall direction of its foreign policy. There cannot be contradictions between desirability and reality, especially when it comes to the challenge of meeting increasing demands and expectations. This is most obvious in relation to calls for an active security role in the region and its fallout on relations with China, which could misinterpret India's proactive stance as a potential rise of a challenger.

The papers clearly illustrate the scope of India's role and interests in different regions, as an extension of its foreign policy objectives. In case of Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Mauritius and Afghanistan, India has emerged as an *active security provider*. In all these countries, India has maintained a direct role, at times, including the employment of military force, in order to overcome security threats. This was witnessed both in case of Sri Lanka and Maldives. This also influences the nature of India's humanitarian and security support traditionally provided to these countries. In the case of Maldives, India answered the call for military assistance against an attempted *coup-de-tat* in 1988.² The swift action by the forces was successfully able to avert a security crisis in the country,

emphasizing India's reach and capacity to assist its neighbours. More recently, India's humanitarian assistance to Maldives after its water desalination plant was affected due to a fire reinforced its role and capacity.³

It needs little emphasis that since these countries individually and collectively represent India's immediate neighbourhood, hence the regional security environment is influenced by events there. In certain cases, it also directly affects India's security interests. This is in relation to their procurement of weapon systems, provision of port facilities, establishment of bases and deepening military ties to include exercises in vicinity of Indian territorial limits.

These regions collectively represent the inner most concentric circle of India's area of influence. Therefore, it is in India's interest to remain engaged as a security provider. This has been constrained by a few factors in the past and has adversely affected India's ability to retain the role of a security provider. *First*, it has been affected by India's inability to instil a sense of being a constructive partner to its neighbours. Some, including Sri Lanka and Nepal continue to harbour misgivings regarding India's patronising attitude and interference in their affairs. Dr Nayak reiterates, Nepal has indicated on more than one occasion, the lopsided nature of the India-Nepal Agreement of 1950. Sri Lanka has resented India's interference in their internal affairs, which according to them includes pressure to reach a settlement with the Tamil minority in the country. *Second*, there has been a distinct gap between the expectations of some of these neighbouring countries and India's ability to fulfil these. Newly elected President Ashraf Ghani of Afghanistan in a clear sense of exasperation, decided to revisit his country's request for arms, after India's inability to supply the same to them.⁴ Sri Lanka's frustration was similar, with India limiting its supplies to non-lethal equipment in their fight against the LTTE. Nepal was yet another example, wherein, the Royal Nepal Army's (RNA) fight against the Maoists, according to them was constrained at crucial times by India's tight tether policy on weapon and ammunition supplies. Evidently, irrespective of the rationale for these decisions, some of these countries do not see India as a reliable partner for provision of security, when the need arises. This further links with the comparatively more forthcoming attitude of countries like China, which have a no-string attached approach to foreign policy. *Third*, India's actions continue to be affected by the impact of domestic politics. This has been most pronounced in case of Sri Lanka, where the interests of Tamils have been closely linked with the domestic pressures of Tamil Nadu in India. *Fourth*, as Dr. Pattanaik indicates in her paper, India's ability to emerge in line with expectations is also affected by limited means to support aspirations. This yet again is in contrast with capacities available with China to support its foreign policy initiatives through security assets.

The limits to India's capacity and domestic compulsions have led to the

creation of a vacuum, which has been filled to an extent by China. The growing support that China enjoys in the sub-continent for its membership in the SAARC, as witnessed during the Kathmandu summit in November 2014, is a clear indicator of the impact of India's inability to retain its influence. This has been evident through the increasing role of China in most of these countries. As compared to India, China does not have major differences with any of these countries regarding the direction of their internal political churning. This insulation has helped China build a strictly business like approach with the government of the day, thereby ensuring an all-weather relationship. Its support has not been influenced by domestic pressures inside China, nor political dispensations in South Asian countries. This has been backed by China's immense economic capacity and a swift agreement to implementation cycle, thereby displaying the ability to deliver on its promises and agreements. This focus is beginning to pay dividends. China's trade with SAARC countries has risen from \$40 billion in 2006 to \$85 billion by 2011. This is in comparison to India's \$17 billion trade in 2012-13.⁵ The contrast in terms of arms transfer data is even starker, with Bangladesh, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Seychelles emerging as major recipients. Bangladesh received arms worth \$943 million from 2010-2013, while, Myanmar received for \$ 912 million. Both Sri Lanka and Seychelles received weapons worth \$5 million. In comparison, for the same period India supplied arms worth \$2 million to Afghanistan, \$9 million to Maldives, \$3 million each to Seychelles and Nepal.⁶ This provides a reflection of both India's capability and desire to emerge as a viable security provider.

The role undertaken by India in the Indian Ocean region (IOR), Southeast Asia, East Asia, West Asia and Central Asia reflects a more *benign character*, aimed at contributing to humanitarian efforts, undertaking security responsibilities against common threats like piracy, enhancing military cooperation, and rule of the law in international waters. The only exception to this has been the support provided to neighbours like Maldives and Seychelles.

India has been keen to ensure its presence and influence in the IOR, as Cdr Abhijit Singh highlights in his paper. Amongst the countries in the region, India's security assistance has been most pronounced in case of Maldives and Seychelles, wherein, India has not only provided military hardware, but has also actively supported both the countries in safeguarding their security interests. Besides this active bilateral support, India's role has been restricted to contributing towards security of global commons and threats. India has been active in undertaking anti-piracy operations off the coast of Somalia since 2008. This has led to the successful prevention of 40 piracy attempts by the navy over the period, contributing to the safe mobility of merchant vessels.⁷

India's presence in Southeast Asia has also been aimed at improving defence

cooperation on issues like anti-piracy operations, joint exercises, mutual visits and humanitarian support operations as highlighted by Dr Rahul Mishra. The shift from “look” east to “act” east is likely to move beyond symbolism with growing Indian capacity and a will to have a visible impact on regional issues. This has been augmented in the recent past with sale of military hardware and extension of credit line to countries like Vietnam, which indicates a desire on India’s part to upgrade its security relationship in the region. However, India remains steadfast in balancing its relationship with countries in the region in a way that it is not directly involved in disputes such as countries like Vietnam and Philippines are with China. India’s role therefore remains that of an emerging power which believes in the rule of law. This has been reiterated by India both during its bilateral interactions and at multilateral fora. India’s enhanced role in Southeast Asia, along with the IOR is likely to become the test case of India’s desire to upgrade its ability to provide security, besides its immediate interests in its neighbourhood. The shift in security relations with Indonesia, Singapore, Vietnam as highlighted by Dr Mishra and Dr Panda, are all indicators of this evolutionary trend. It is also reflected in the enhanced engagement with the U.S. in the region and its desire to project India as a critical partner for its pivot to the region.

The nature of India’s interaction with countries of East Asia is similar with growing engagement and cooperation, yet at the same time balancing ties in a manner that these do not indicate an attempt at creating a China focused relationship. This in real terms finds engagement in activities like enhanced port calls, visits by senior military and political leadership, joint exercises, training and trade in military equipment. As Dr Panda reinforces, India’s role in the region can best be described as “cautious” and a “passive respondent to security dynamics” thereby limiting its role as a security provider in the traditional sense of the term. The recent initiative by Prime Minister Modi to upgrade relationships in the region, especially with Japan and Australia reflects a desire to bring India’s ability as a security provider into focus, and also lend a voice to maintenance of a rule based order.

The third category includes countries like Israel, wherein, India has more of a *military partnership*, which aims to specifically address the security needs of each country. For India, a major component of this partnership relates to sharing of technology and equipment for perceived threats. India’s relationship with Israel falls in this category. India cannot be considered as a security provider to Israel in the strict definitional terms. However, the growing partnership has strengthened India in terms of high quality defence purchases from Israel. Simultaneously, there is greater understanding of the peculiar conditions under which Israel ensures the security of its citizens. Despite the fact that India does not necessarily agree

with some of the methods employed by Israel, yet, both countries have developed a better understanding of each other's realities and compulsions.

India's relationship with the U.S. is difficult to define within the parameters of the three categories. There is little doubt that this relationship has deepened in the recent past and displays a degree of maturity. There is also a clear indication that the U.S. is keen on India taking greater responsibility in line with its growing stature and capacity. Therefore, while India is not a security provider to the U.S., it is clearly contributing to security in regions, where the U.S. is keen to encourage greater participation by its partners. From India's perspective, this U.S. desire does not imply spectrum wide involvement of India, especially given the differences on position of the two countries on issues like sanctions against Iran, Russia and even the approach towards China. Thus, India fulfils the role of a security provider by reinforcing the principle of respecting rule of law, freedom of navigation, anti-piracy role and contributing towards a degree of strategic balance in the Asia Pacific region.

India also emerges as a security provider with not only countries like the U.S., but also Iran by collectively working towards achieving mutual security interests in a country or region. India and Iran have cooperated for ensure stability in Afghanistan with converging concerns. While India's interests in Afghanistan could vary with different countries, yet, there have been areas where India has worked with China and Central Asian countries to resist the export of terrorism and stabilizing the region.

While this provides an overview of the nature of India's engagement as a security provider, the means employed to implement it are primarily four fold in tangible terms.⁸ *First*, India has undertaken the role of humanitarian assistance with a large number of countries in these regions, effectively employing its national capacity in general and military capacity in particular. The recent efforts to support rescue of the ill-fated MH-317 is a case in point in this regard. *Second*, there has been an attempt to build capacities through training in India at military establishments, location of training teams in countries and joint exercises, both at a bilateral and multilateral level. As an illustration, the Indian training team in Bhutan has helped build capacities of the Royal Bhutan Army, while officers from countries like Iran, Iraq, Israel, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Maldives etc. have undergone a number of training routines in India. *Third*, India has provided military hardware to foreign armed forces to help support their operational responsibilities. Examples of Sri Lanka, Nepal, Maldives etc. have been cited in preceding chapters. *Finally*, in rare cases, India has also been involved directly in aid of countries in crisis, as in the case of Maldives and Sri Lanka.

Besides these tangible means employed, India's role in support of countries in the international fora, has helped reinforce their security. The consistent position

taken by India in favour of respecting international laws for the resolution of territorial disputes in Southeast and East Asia has indirectly opposed unilateral action by China to change status quo. Similarly, despite forcefully rejecting the option of use of force against Iran, India has voted against it on the issue of nuclear proliferation.⁹ Thus, India reinforced Iran's security through its diplomatic support, even as it worked for a larger goal of global security and nuclear non-proliferation, by voting against it in the IAEA.¹⁰ India's support for the U.S. initiated war on terror, including the escorting of U.S. warships reinforced the global and U.S. efforts in this direction. Yet, India maintained its disagreement with U.S. soft peddling of Pakistan's role in supporting terrorism in India.

Despite the clear segments in which India seems to operate as a security provider or partner, there continues to remain ambiguity regarding the nature and scope of impact and influence that India aims to attain in the neighbourhood and extended neighbourhood. This as the contributors suggest is related to the clear identification of India's strategic interests and the means required to achieve them. While there have increasingly been assertions of India's role as a security provider, as highlighted by Brig Dahiya in his paper, however, these have rarely been followed up with more concrete ideas for achieving them in terms of enhancing capacity. In the absence of a clearly enunciated policy, one of the indicators is clearly the nature of acquisition of military assets that India has undertaken in the recent past. These assets provide out of area capabilities in terms of carriage of forces, surveillance, heavy lift of stores, maintaining logistics, refuelling etc. Yet quite clearly, these acquisitions are initial building blocks, which would need to be enhanced if India desires a greater role as a security provider, especially in the far seas.

A more important indicator of a focused approach to emerging as a security provider flows from a cohesive all of government approach to this complex requirement. The lessons from previous operations highlighted glaring weaknesses in terms of coordination and joint planning. While there have been improvements in this regard over the years, yet, a seamless structure does not exist for undertaking complex operations. This became evident during HADR operations undertaken to evacuate Indians from conflict zones like Kuwait and more recently Libya. While the success of the operation indicates impressive capabilities, yet, it was also characterised by event specific spur of the moment planning, instead of a more rationalised and structured process. In this regard the questions raised by Brig Dahiya while concluding his chapter need to be addressed deliberately, failing which, India's role could well remain episodic without the necessary clarity needed for playing a major role as a security provider.

India's growing profile and status as an engine of economic growth, as well as an influential diplomatic voice at various international fora cannot but be

accompanied by an equally robust security role. The calls for India to undertake greater responsibility in this regard have already become more frequent as well as louder. India's size and capacity coupled with its benign influence places it in a unique position wherein, constructive cooperation and participative capacity building can best employ the intrinsic capability of India. However, these attributes can be exploited in an environment where India's role and responsibility is articulated with greater clarity and transparency. While this is important in all regions where India plays a significant role, it is particularly relevant in the immediate neighbourhood, where past mistrust and anxieties have bedeviled relationships. India's role as a security provider can only be realised if its benign intentions are reinforced and the willingness to support governments is backed by the will and capacity to deliver in time.¹¹

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ANNEXURES

Defence Cooperation with Foreign Countries 2002-03

S. No.	Country	Joint Exercises	Agreements Signed	Any Other
1	China			Visits
2	Bhutan			Visits
3	Nepal			Visits
4	Bangladesh			Visits
5	Myanmar			Visits
6	Sri Lanka			Visits
7	Maldives			Visits
8	Tajikistan		India and Tajikistan signed a Defence Cooperation Agreement in April 2002.	
9	Uzbekistan			
10	Kazakhstan		A Defence Cooperation Agreement signed with Kazakhstan in June 2002	
11	Oman			Visits
12	Israel			Visits
13	Iran			Visits
14	Singapore	The tenth India-Singapore joint naval exercise was held in Kochi in March 2003		
15	Laos		An Agreement on defence cooperation between India and Laos was signed during the visit of prime minister to Laos in November 2002.	
16	Philippines			Visits
17	Malaysia			Visits
18	Japan			Visits

(Contd.)

<i>S. No.</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Joint Exercises</i>	<i>Agreements Signed</i>	<i>Any Other Visits</i>
19	Australia			Visits
20	Russia			Visits
21	Ukraine			Visits
22	Belarus			Visits
23	Poland		An agreement on cooperation in the field of defence was signed between India and Poland in February 2003	
24	France	A joint naval exercise, "Varuna" was conducted off Goa in May 2002 witnessed by the French Navy Chief and a major joint air exercise 'Garuda' was conducted at Gwalior in February 2003		
25	UK			Visits
26	Italy		A Defence Cooperation Agreement intended to step up defence cooperation was signed in February 2003.	
27	Germany			Visits
28	USA	Joint air exercises with the U.S. were conducted at Agra in May and October, 2002. Airborne exercises consisting of Indian Army and Air Force units and U.S. ARPAC units were held in Alaska in October, 2002. The fourth Indo-U.S. bilateral naval exercises conducted off Kochi in September-October 2002.		
29	South Africa			Visits
30	Mauritius			Visits

*No equipment was given to any country.

*No port visits took place.

Defence Cooperation with Foreign Countries 2003-04

<i>S. No.</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Equipment Given</i>	<i>Joint Exercises</i>	<i>Training</i>	<i>Agreements Signed</i>	<i>Port visits</i>	<i>Any Other</i>
1	Armenia				MoU on defence cooperation signed with Armenia (May 2003)		
2	UAE				MoU on defence cooperation signed with UAE July 2003)	A UAE Naval ship visited Kochi in March 2003	
3	Seychelles				MoU on defence cooperation signed in September 2003	March 2003	
4	Tanzania				MoU on defence cooperation signed in October 2003		
5	Singapore		Joint naval exercise (March 2004)		MoU on defence cooperation signed (October 2003)		
6	Czech Republic				MoU on defence cooperation signed (October 2003)		
7	Hungary				MoU on defence cooperation signed (November 2003)		
8	Brazil				MoU on defence cooperation signed (December 2003).		
9	USA		Cooperative Cope/Thunder-03 multilateral exercise conducted in Alaska in June 2003 and the Exercise Cope India -04 bilateral Dissimilar Air-Combat Training (DACT) exercise at Gwalior in February 2004; joint and combined				

(Contd.)

<i>S. No.</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Equipment Given</i>	<i>Joint Exercises</i>	<i>Training</i>	<i>Agreements Signed</i>	<i>Port visits</i>	<i>Any Other</i>
			counter-insurgency exercises led by the army with the U.S. at Vairengre, Mizoram in April 2003 and High Altitude Area Exercises at Leh in September 2003; and joint and combined exercises led by the navy with U.S. Special Forces at Ratnagiri in March 2004. Joint naval exercise U.S. (October 2003)				
10	Tajikistan		Joint and combined exercises involving army and air force in Tajikistan in July-August 2003				
11	Oman		Joint naval exercise (April 2003)				
12	Russia		Joint naval exercise (May 2003)				
13	UK		Joint naval exercise (November 2003)				
14	China		The first India-China Naval Search and Rescue Exercises were conducted off Shanghai in November 2003 during the visit of Indian Naval ships INS Ranjit and INS Kullish in November 2003			November 2003	
15	Mauritius	The Mauritius Coast Guard ship, CGS Vigilant and a helicopter were repaired in India				March 2003	

16	Brunei		October 2003
17	Cambodia		October 2003
18	Thailand		November 2003
19	Vietnam	Certain naval spares were gifted to the Vietnamese Navy during the visit of INS Magar to Vietnam	December 2003
20	Mozambique	Training to 100 personnel of the Mozambique Navy	Two Indian Naval Ships, Ranjit and Suvarna were deployed in Mozambique
21	Indonesia		Indian and Indonesian Naval ships conducted the third India-Indonesia Coordinated Patrol in March 2004
22	Bhutan	An Indian Army Training Team assists the Royal Bhutanese Army	
23	Nepal		Visit
24	Bangladesh		Visit
25	Myanmar		Port call by the Indian Navy to Myanmar in December 2002
26	Sri Lanka		Visits
27	Maldives	The installation of a radar by the Indian Air Force to meet the Maldives' security needs	
28	Israel		Talks/Visits

(Contd.)

<i>S. No.</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Equipment Given</i>	<i>Joint Exercises</i>	<i>Training</i>	<i>Agreements Signed</i>	<i>Port visits</i>	<i>Any Other</i>
29	Philippines					Indian Naval and Coast Guard ships transited through the Philippines	
30	Malaysia						The INS Delhi and Kora participated in the LIMA-03 Exhibition at Langkawi, Malaysia in September-October 2003
31	Japan		Japanese Maritime Defence Agency ships and Indian Naval ships conducted basic exercises during a transit visit to Kochi in November 2003				
32	ROK					Two Indian Naval ships called at Pusan, ROK, in October 2003	
33	Mongolia						Visit
34	Australia						Visits
35	Czech Republic				A defence cooperation agreement was signed with the Czech Republic.		
36	Ukraine						Visits
37	Belarus						Visits
38	Poland						Visits

39	Hungary	An Agreement on Defence Cooperation was signed with Hungary during the visit of the prime minister of Hungary to India in November 2003	
40	Armenia	An MoU on defence cooperation between India and Armenia in May 2003	
41	France	A joint naval exercise, 'Varuna' in May 2003 following up the major joint air exercise 'Garuda' conducted at Agra in February 2003	
42	South Africa		Visit
43	Italy		Visits
44	Germany		Visit
45	Sweden		Visit

Defence Cooperation with Foreign Countries 2004-05

S. No.	Country	Joint Exercises	Training	Port Visits	Any Other
1	USA	India and the U.S. held five joint exercises, including Ex 'Cooperative Cope Thunder' in Alaska from July 15-31, 2004 (between the Air Forces); Ex 'Yudh Abhyas' in Hawaii July 12-31, 2004 and Ex 'Balance Iroquois' Ex 'Vajra Prahar' in Leh from September 5-15, 2004 (between the Armies); and Ex 'Malabar' from October 5-10, 2004 and Ex 'Flash Iroquois' in October 2004 (between the navies)			
2	Singapore	The Republic of Singapore Air Force (RSAF) and the IAF participated in a bilateral Dissimilar Air Combat Training Exercise 'Ankush/ SINDEX-04' at Air Force Station, Gwalior, from October 11-26, 2004. The army conducted artillery and armour exercises with the Singapore army in Deolali and Babina ranges in India in March 2005. The eleventh IN-Singapore annual exercise was held off Kochi from March 7-19 2004. The 12th exercise was held in the South China Sea in March 2005			
3	South Africa	Air Defence Exercise 'Golden Eagle' with the South African Air Force			
4	France	The Surya Kiran aerobatic team performed along with the French Air Force aerobatic team Patrouille-de-France on November 7, 2004 at Hindon Air Base. The annual Indo-French exercise VARUNA 04 was held from April 7-14 2004. VARUNA 05 held in March 2005 focused on Mine Counter Measures (MCMEX)			
5	UK	The first bilateral joint exercise with the Royal UK Navy codenamed KONKAN 04 was held off Chennai from April 17-19, 2004			
6	Oman	An Indo-Oman Joint Exercise Thammar-Al-Thayib was held off Oman from February 20-22, 2005			

7	RoK	Three Indian Naval Ships to Pusan (RoK)	
8	UAE	INS Mumbai, INS Aditya, INS Talwar and INS Pralaya to Abu Dhabi from September 19-23, 2004	
9	Djibouti	Indian Navy ship, INS Dunagiri, visited Djibouti in May 2004	
10	Indonesia		The fourth India-Indonesia Coordinated Patrol called 'INDINDOCORPAT' was conducted from September 1-30, 2004
11	Mozambique	More than 100 Mozambican Naval personnel were also imparted training during the period of deployment.*	IN Ships Sujata and Savitri were deployed at Maputo, Mozambique, from June 2-27, 2004 to provide maritime security during the World Economic Forum Summit

*Read in conjunction with the last column of the same row.

*The Indian Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard and Army deployed some 20,000 troops, 40 ships and 32 aircraft (including helicopters) in the national and international effort that included Sri Lanka, Maldives and Indonesia, in their response to requests for assistance after the December 26, 2004 Tsunami.

*No equipment was given to any country. No agreements were signed.

Defence Cooperation with Foreign Countries 2005-06

<i>S. No.</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Equipment Given</i>	<i>Joint Exercises</i>	<i>Training</i>	<i>Agreements Signed</i>	<i>Port Visits</i>	<i>Any Other</i>
1	Chile						Visits
2	France						Talks/Visits
3	UK						Talks/Visits
4	Russia		Indo-Russian Naval and airborne exercises were conducted in October 2005 off the Visakhapatnam coast and at the Mahajan Firing Ranges in Rajasthan		The signing of the bilateral Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) agreement with Russia		
5	Uzbekistan				An agreement between India and Uzbekistan on cooperation in military and military-technical areas was signed on April 5, 2005		
6	Kyrgyzstan						Visit
7	Singapore		A joint naval exercise hosted by the Singapore Navy was held in the South China Sea from February 26 -March 2, 2005. The first joint air exercise was held in October 2004 and the second air exercise was held in January 2006. The first-ever joint army exercise involving armour and artillery was held in India in March 2005				
8	Republic of Korea		Indian Coast Guard ship "Samar" paid a visit to ROK from November 21-24, 2005 and held joint exercises with the Korean Coast Guard (KCG) at the port of Busan.		India signed an MOU on Defence Industry and Logistics Cooperation in September 2005		

		Visits
9	Mongolia	The second Indo-Mongolian joint exercise was held in December 2005 at Vairangte.
10	Maldives	
11	Oman	The Indo-Oman Joint Naval Exercise has been institutionalised under the name of Thammar Al Tayyib, meaning "the Best of the Dates". The first combined exercise took place in 1993 and the last exercise was held from 21-22 February 2005 in the Gulf of Oman
12	China	Indian Armed Forces officers participated as observers in the second phase of the India-Russia joint exercise held at Qingdao, Shandong (China) in August 2005 and the Exercise "North Sword 2005" in Beijing Command, China in September 2005
13	Nepal	Training programmes are continuing as in the past
14	Pakistan	Indian Director General of Coast Guard visited Pakistan in October 2005 to sign a MOU on the establishment of a communication link between the Indian Coast Guard and the Pakistan Maritime Security Agency. An agreement on prevention of incidents on and over the sea has been signed between India and Pakistan.

(Contd.)

<i>S. No.</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Equipment Given</i>	<i>Joint Exercises</i>	<i>Training</i>	<i>Agreements Signed</i>	<i>Port Visits</i>	<i>Any Other Talks</i>
15	Bhutan						Talks
16	Bangladesh					Ship visits of the Indian Navy and Coast Guard	
17	Sri Lanka		Two Indian Naval ships INS Sukanya and INS Kirpan and three Sri Lankan vessels participated in Sri Lanka-India Naval exercise (SLINEX)				In the face of the Asian tsunami that befell Sri Lanka in December 2004, the Indian Navy assisted in relief operations
18	South Africa		The IAF carried out joint exercises with the Air Force of South Africa				The first ever Tri-Nation Sailing Regatta under the auspices of IBSA (India, Brazil, South Africa) was conducted in South Africa from September 20-26, 2005

Defence Cooperation with Foreign Countries 2006-07

<i>S. No.</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Joint Exercises</i>	<i>Training</i>	<i>Agreements Signed</i>	<i>Port Visits</i>	<i>Any Other</i>
1	Russia					Talks/Visits
2	France			An agreement on defence cooperation was signed on February 20, 2006 between the two countries		
3	USA					Talks/Visits
4	UK					Talk
5	Mozambique			MOU with Mozambique for cooperation in the field of defence in March, 2006		
6	South Africa			An MOU for cooperation in defence training was signed in July 2006		
7	Germany			An MoU on defence cooperation in September 2006		
8	Japan			MoU between the Coast Guards of the two countries was signed in November 2006		The Coast Guards of the two countries conducted their seventh round of exercise in November 2006 off Mumbai Coast
9	China				The MoU signed on May 29, 2006	
10	Oman					Talks/Visits
11	Singapore	The Indian Navy and the Republic of Singapore Navy conducted joint exercises in February 2006 off the coast of Visakhapatnam. The Indian Army and Singapore Armed Forces conducted third round of Joint Artillery and Armoured exercises in October 2006 in India. Indian Air Force and the Republic of Singapore Air Force conducted joint exercises in January 2006 and December 2006 at Kalaikunda				

(Contd.)

<i>S. No.</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Joint Exercises</i>	<i>Training</i>	<i>Agreements Signed</i>	<i>Port Visits</i>	<i>Any Other</i>
12	Malaysia					Talks/Visits
13	Vietnam					Talks/Visits
14	Myanmar					Talks/Visits
15	Australia			MoU on defence cooperation with Australia in March 2006		
16	Republic of Korea (RoK)	The second round of joint exercises between the Indian Coast Guard and the Korea Coast Guard was held off the coast of Chennai in July 2006		MoU between the two Coast Guards was signed in March 2006		
17	Mongolia					Talks/Visits
18	Central Asia					A joint mountaineering expedition was conducted in India with Kazakhstan Army personnel in September-October, 2006.
19	Chile			An MOU was signed between India and Chile on furthering defence cooperation in the areas of teaching and academic activities, defence equipment and hardware, sports and adventure activities, production, co-production, joint ventures etc		

Defence Cooperation with Foreign Countries 2007-08

S. No.	Country	Joint Exercises	Agreements Signed	Port Visits	Any Other
1	China			Indian Naval ships visited the Qingdao port in China in April 2007 on a goodwill visit	Visit
2	Nepal				Visit
3	Sri Lanka				Visit
4	Bhutan		In February 2007, a revised Indo-Bhutan treaty was signed		
5	Maldives				Visit
6	Myanmar				Visit
7	Mauritius				India caters to major part of Mauritius's training and equipment requirements related to defence
8	US				Talks/Visits
9	UK				Visits
10	Germany		An agreement on mutual protection of classified information was signed on October 30, 2007		
11	France				Talks
12	Russia	India-Russia joint naval exercises were held in the Sea of Japan on April 24-27, 2007. A joint exercise INDRA-07, was conducted by the Indian and Russian armies in Russia during September, 2007			
13	Italy				Talks
14	Singapore		Bilateral agreement for the conduct of joint military training and exercises between the air force of the two countries in India and its associated protocols were signed in October 2007		

(Contd.)

<i>S. No.</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Joint Exercises</i>	<i>Agreements Signed</i>	<i>Port Visits</i>	<i>Any Other</i>
15	Malaysia		Protocol between India and Malaysia on the conduct of training of Royal Malaysian Air Force personnel by the Indian Air Force in India and in Malaysia was signed on December 5, 2007		
16	Vietnam				Talks/Visits
17	Republic of Korea (ROK)				Visit
18	Japan	First goodwill naval exercises between Indian and Japanese Navy off the Japanese coast in April 2007			
19	Australia		An arrangement for reciprocal protection of exchanged classified information of defence interest between India and Australia was signed on July 11, 2007		
20	Oman				Talks/Visits
21	Dubai				Visit
22	Mongolia	Joint military exercise Nomadic Elephant was conducted from August 27 to September 5, 2007 in Mongolia			
23	Congo				Visit
24	Indonesia				Talks/Visits
25	Qatar				Visit
26	Israel				Talks/Visits
27	Nigeria		An MOU on defence cooperation with Nigeria was signed on October 15, 2007		
28	Cambodia		An agreement on defence cooperation between India and Cambodia was signed in December 2007		
29	Colombia				Visit

*No equipment assistance was given to any country during the year.

Defence Cooperation with Foreign Countries 2008-09

<i>S. No.</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Joint Exercises</i>	<i>Agreements Signed</i>	<i>Port Visit</i>	<i>Any Other</i>
1	Afghanistan				Visit
2	Bangladesh				Visit
3	China	The second joint army training exercise 'Hand in Hand' on counter terrorism was held from December 4-13, 2008 at Beigaum, India			
4	Maldives				Visit
5	Singapore		Bilateral agreement for joint army training and exercises was signed in India on August 12, 2008 along with associated protocols		
6	Malaysia				Talks/Visits
7	Vietnam				Talks/Visits
8	Japan				Talks/Visits
9	Australia				Talks/Visits
10	Oman				Talks
11	Qatar		An agreement concerning defence cooperation was signed with Qatar on November 9, 2008 during the visit of prime minister to Qatar		
12	UAE		India and UAE signed an MoU on defence cooperation in 2003. In terms of this MoU, a Joint Defence Cooperation Committee (JDCC) has been set up		
13	Israel				Talks/Visits
14	Egypt				Talks
15	South Africa				Visits
16	Russia				Talks/Visits
17	Poland				Talks/Visits
18	Bulgaria				Talks

(Contd.)

Defence Cooperation with Foreign Countries 2008-09

<i>S. No.</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Joint Exercises</i>	<i>Agreements Signed</i>	<i>Port Visit</i>	<i>Any Other</i>
19	Belarus				Talks
20	Hungary				Talks
21	UK				Talks/Visits
22	France		An agreement between India and French concerning the protection of classified information and material in the field of defence was signed on January 25, 2008		
23	Germany				Talks/Visits
24	Italy				Talks/Visits
25	Finland				Visit
26	Norway				Visit
27	Sweden				Visit
28	US				Talks/Visits
29	Canada				Visit
30	Colombia		A memorandum of understanding in defence cooperation with Colombia was signed in Colombia on February 4, 2009		

*No port visits and transfer of equipment took place during the year.

Defence Cooperation with Foreign Countries 2009-10

S. No.	Country	Joint Exercises	Training	Agreements Signed	Any Other
1	Afghanistan		Training of Afghanistan National Army		
2	Bangladesh				Talks/visits
3	China				Talks/visits
4	Maldives	The second Indo-Maldives joint Training/Exercise 'EKUVERIN-09' was held from October 19 to November 1, 2009 at Belgaum, Karnataka. The naval exercise 'Dosti-X' was held at Maldives from November 30 to December 3, 2009			
5	Mongolia	The fifth joint military exercise, 'Nomadic Elephant' was conducted from September 11-27, 2009			
6	Singapore	Both sides conducted armoured and artillery joint exercises, "Ex- Bold Kurukshetra" from February 11 to March 29, 2009 and "Ex-Agni Warrior-09" from October 9-30, 2009			
7	Malaysia				Talks/visits
8	Vietnam			MoU on defence cooperation was signed by the two defence ministers on November 5, 2009	
9	Indonesia	The Indian Navy and the Indonesian Navy held a bilateral exercise, India- Indonesia Coordinated Patrol (Ind-IndoCORPAT) from October 18 to November 5			
10	Japan	The trilateral exercise 'Malabar CY 09' involving Indian Navy, U.S. Navy and Japan Maritime Self Defence Force was held off Okinawa from April 26 to May 3, 2009			
11	Australia				Talks/Visits
12	Oman	The first IAF-Royal Oman Air Force Joint Air Exercise 'Eastern Bridge' was held in Oman from October 22-28, 2009			
13	United Arab Emirates				Talks

(Contd.)

<i>S. No.</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Joint Exercises</i>	<i>Training</i>	<i>Agreements Signed</i>	<i>Any Other</i>
14	Israel				Talks/Visits
15	Egypt				Talks/Visits
16	South Africa				Visit
17	Namibia			MOU on defence cooperation was signed with Namibia on August 31, 2009	
18	Russia				Talks/Visits
19	Belarus				Talks/Visits
20	Czech Republic				Talks
21	Bulgaria				Talks
22	USA				Talks/Visits
23	Colombia				Visit
24	Canada				Visit
25	UK				Talks/Visits
26	France				Visits
27	Italy				Visit
28	Germany				Talk
29	Sweden			India and Sweden signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on defence co-operation on November 5, 2009	

*No port visits took place during the year.

Defence Cooperation with Foreign Countries 2010-11

S. No.	Country	Equipment Given	Joint Exercises	Training	Agreements Signed	Any Other
1	Afghanistan			Training to Afghanisran National Army		
2	Bangladesh		An Indo-Bangladesh joint exercise SANDHI-2010 was conducted at Jorhat from November 3-14, 2010. The Bangladesh Navy participated in Indian Naval Exercise, MILAN 2010, held in February 2010			
3	Bhutan					Visits
4	Maldives	Coast Guard ship 'Huravee' of the Maldives National Defence Forces (MNDF) was handed over to the MNDF after successful refit				On the request of Maldives Government, Indian Naval ships undertook maritime surveillance operations around Maldives in February, June, September and December 2010. Surveillance was also carried out by Indian Navy aircraft in August and October, 2010
5	Myanmar					Visits
6	Nepal					Visits
7	Sri Lanka					Visits
8	Indonesia					The 16th Coordinated Patrols (CORPAT) was held in November, 2010
9	Japan					Talks/Visits
10	Malaysia					Talks/Visits
11	Republic of Korea (RoK)					A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Defence Cooperation and another MoU on Defence Research & Development (R&D) Cooperation were signed

<i>S. No.</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Equipment Given</i>	<i>Joint Exercises</i>	<i>Training</i>	<i>Agreements Signed</i>	<i>Any Other</i>
12	Singapore		The joint exercise Bold Kurukshetra (Armoured Ex) at Babina from March 26-27, 2010. The Indian Air Force and the Republic of Singapore Air Force held joint training during December 2-17, 2010 at Kalaikunda, West Bengal			
13	Thailand		MAITREE-10, a joint exercise in counter insurgency/counter terrorism was conducted in India from September 16-29, 2010			Talks/Visits
14	Vietnam					Talks
15	Australia					Talks
16	Egypt					Talks
17	Israel					Talks
18	Oman					Talks
19	Qatar					Talks
20	Russia		INDRA 10, a joint army exercise in counter insurgency/ counter terrorism was conducted in India from October 15-24, 2010			
21	Mongolia		A joint army exercise namely Ex-NOMADIC ELEPHANT was conducted in India from December 6-19, 2010			
22	Bulgaria					Talks
23	USA					Talks/Visits
24	European Union					Visit
25	France					Talks/Visits
26	Germany					Talks/Visits
27	Italy					Talks
28	Sweden					Talks
29	UK					Visit
30	Mozambique					Talks
31	Seychelles					Talks/Visits
32	Brazil					Talks/Visits

*No port visits took place during the year.

Defence Cooperation with Foreign Countries 2011-12

S. No.	Country	Joint Exercises	Training	Agreements Signed	Port Visits	Any Other
1	Afghanistan		Training of Afghanistan National Army			
2	Bangladesh	An Indo-Bangladesh Joint Army exercise 'Sampriti-II' was held at Sylhet, Bangladesh from October 8-23, 2011				
3	Bhutan		Indian Military Training Team (IMTRAT) assisted Royal Bhutanese Army in training			
4	China					Visits
5	Maldives					On the request of the Government of Maldives, Indian Navy undertook maritime surveillance operations around Maldives in November, 2011
6	Myanmar					Visits
7	Nepal	An India-Nepal Joint Army Exercise was held at Counter Intelligence and Jungle Warfare School, Vairengte from March 14-27, 2011. The second joint training exercise with the Nepal Army was held at CIJW Amlekhgunj in Nepal from December 9-22, 2011				
8	Pakistan					12th Round of Siachen Talks
9	Sri Lanka	An India-Sri Lanka joint naval exercise 'SLINEX-2011' was held in Sri Lanka from September 19-23, 2011				
10	Indonesia					The Indian Navy and the Indonesian Navy conducted Coordinated Patrols [CORPATs] during September 28 –October 13, 2011

(Contd.)

<i>S. No.</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Joint Exercises</i>	<i>Training</i>	<i>Agreements Signed</i>	<i>Port Visits</i>	<i>Any Other Visits</i>
11	Japan					Visits
12	Malaysia					Talks
13	Philippines				The Indian Navy ships visited ports in Philippines in March, 2011 and May, 2011	
14	Singapore	The armies of the two countries conducted an artillery exercise at Deolali [Ex Agni Warrior] during January 4-21, 2011 and an armored exercise at Babina [Ex Bold Kurukshetra] during March 1-31, 2011. The joint exercise [SIMBEX] between the Indian Navy and the Republic of Singapore Navy was conducted during March 18-25, 2011. The joint military training between the Indian Air Force and Republic of Singapore Air Force was held at Kalakunda from October 14 to December 9, 2011				
15	Thailand	The Joint Exercise, 'Maitree', between the Indian Army and Royal Thai Army was held in Thailand in September, 2011				
16	Vietnam					The sixth India-Vietnam Security Dialogue was held in Hanoi on September 14, 2011
17	Australia				The Australian ship HMAS Stuart visited Mumbai from June 3-6, 2011	
18	New Zealand					Visit
19	Israel					Visit/Talks

20	Oman	The second Joint Air Exercise "Ex-Eastern Bridge" was held in Jannagar in October, 2011	The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Military Cooperation, signed on December 6, 2005, was extended for a further period of five years.
21	UAE		The fourth India-UAE Joint Defence Cooperation Committee meeting was held at Abu Dhabi on April 10, 2011
22	Russia		Visits/Talks The Defence Ministers of both countries signed a Protocol at the conclusion of 11th IRIGC-MTC Meeting
23	Turkmenistan		Visit
24	Kyrgyzstan		Visits
25	Tajikistan		Visit
26	Kazakhstan		The second meeting of the India-Kazakhstan Joint Working Group on Military Technical Cooperation was held in New Delhi on September 6-7, 2011
27	Mongolia	The Joint Exercise 'Nomadic Elephant' between the Indian Army and Mongolian Armed Forces was held in Mongolia in September, 2011	
28	Czech Republic		Talks
29	Slovakia		Visit
30	USA		Visits/Talks

(Contd.)

S. No.	Country	Joint Exercises	Training	Agreements Signed	Port Visits	Any Other
31	UK					Visits/Talks
32	France					Visits/Talks
33	Germany					Visits/Talks
34	Norway					Visit
35	Turkey					Visits
36	Mozambique					Visit
37	Namibia					Visit
38	Seychelles	An India-Seychelles Joint Army Exercise 'Lamitye-11' was held at Seychelles from November 14-27, 2011				
39	Brazil					Talk
40	Republic of Ecuador			MoU on defence co-operation between the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Ecuador and the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of India was signed on March 2, 2011		

*No equipment was given to any country.

Defence Cooperation with Foreign Countries 2012-13

S. No.	Country	Joint Exercises	Training	Agreements Signed	Port Visits	Any Other
1	Afghanistan		Afghanisan National Army			
2	Bangladesh					Visits
3	Bhutan		Indian Military Training Team (IMTRAT) assists Royal Bhutanese Army in training			
4	China					Port call of Indian Navy ships Rama, Shivalik, Shakti and Karmuk at Shanghai port. Visit of a PLA navy training ship 'Zheng He' at Kochi port
5	Maldives	Fourth joint Army exercise 'EkuVerin' was held from November 12-25, 2012 at Belgaum India				
6	Myanmar					Visits
7	Nepal	Two army joint exercises were held with Nepal from June 15-28, 2012 and December 3-16 in India and Nepal				
8	Sri Lanka					Visits
9	Indonesia	An army joint exercise 'Garuda Shakti' was held from February 20 to March 3, 2012 in India				
10	Japan	The first joint exercise 'JIMEX' was held between the two navies on June 9, 2012, off the coast of Japan				
11	Malaysia	A joint army command post exercise was held in October 2012, in Malaysia				

(Contd.)

<i>S. No.</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Joint Exercises</i>	<i>Training</i>	<i>Agreements Signed</i>	<i>Port Visits</i>	<i>Any Other</i>
12	Philippines					1 st India-Philippines joint defence cooperation meeting at Manila in January 2012.
13	Republic of Korea (RoK)					Visit.
14	Singapore	Two army joint exercises "Bold Kurukshetra" and "Agni Warrior" were held in India in March 2012 and in December 2012. The joint exercise 'SJMBOX' was held between the two Navies in India in March-April 2012. An air force joint military training exercise was held from October 20 to December 2, 2012 in India				
15	Thailand	Joint army exercise 'Maitree' in India in August 2012				
16	Vietnam					Visits.
17	Australia					Talks/Visits
18	Israel					Talks/Visits
19	Oman					Talks
20	Qatar					Talks
21	Saudi Arabia					Talks
22	UAE					Talks
23	Russia	The joint exercise 'Indra' was held between the two armies in August 2012 in Russia. A joint Navy exercise 'Indra' was held off Mumbai in December 2012				
24	Kazakhstan	A joint special forces (army) exercise was held in India in December 2012				

25	Mongolia	Two joint army exercise 'Nomadic Elephant' was held in August 2012 in India and 'Khan Quest' in August 2012 in Mongolia	Bilateral agreement on defence cooperation	Visit
26	Ukraine			
27	Bulgaria			
28	USA	Three joint army exercises were held with USA 'Yudh Abhyas' in March 2012 in India, 'Shatruijeet' in March-April, 2012 in USA and 'Vajra Prahar' in India in October-November 2012. Two joint naval exercises were held, 'Malabar 12' in April 2012 and 'SMASHEX' in October-November 2012, both in India		
29	UK	Joint naval exercise 'Konkan' was held in October 2012		
30	France	Joint naval exercise 'Varuna 12' was held from July 19-22, 2012, near France		
31	Germany			Talks
32	Spain		An MoU was signed on October 26, 2012	
33	Turkey			Visit
34	Mozambique			Visit
35	Nigeria			Visit
36	Seychelles			Visit
37	South Africa			Visit
38	Brazil			Visit

*No equipment was Given to any country.

Defence Cooperation with Foreign Countries 2013-14

<i>S. No.</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Equipment Given</i>	<i>Joint Exercises</i>	<i>Training</i>	<i>Agreements Signed</i>	<i>Any Other</i>
1	Afghanistan			Training to Afghan National Army (ANA)		Medical Assistance to ANA
2	Bangladesh					Visits and talks
3	Bhutan			Indian Military Training Team (IMTRAT) assists Royal Bhutanese Army in training	Agreement on Border Defence Cooperation	Visit of Maj Gen. Baroo Tshering of Bhutan
4	China		Third joint exercise 'Hand in Hand' in November 2013 in China			Fifth Annual Defence Dialogue (ADD).
5	Maldives					Mutual visits
6	Myanmar					Inaugural Coordinated Patrol (CORPAT) between the two navies held in March 2013. Mutual visits.
7	Nepal		First battalion level joint army exercise 'Surya Kiran' in India in October 2013. Second battalion level joint army exercise in Nepal in March 2014			
8	Sri Lanka		Joint exercise 'SLINEX' between the two navies in November 2013.			
9	Indonesia		Joint exercise 'Garud Shakti' in November-December 2013 in Indonesia			21 st cycle of Coordinated Patrol (CORPAT) between the two navies in May 2013 and 22 nd in September 2013. Indian Navy's participation in multilateral exercise "Komodo" conducted by Indonesia in March-April 2014.
10	Malaysia					Tenth Malaysia-India Defence Cooperation Meeting (MIDCOM) was held in New Delhi on June 21, 2013.

11	Singapore	The joint exercise 'SIMBEX' was held between the two Navies from May 16-30, 2013 in South China Sea. Exercise "Bold Kurukshetra" [Armoured Exercise] was held at Babina from March 1-31, 2014	Seventh India-Singapore Defence Working Group meeting was held in New Delhi on January 28, 2013
12	Thailand		16th cycle of Coordinated Patrol (CORPAT) between the Indian Navy and the Royal Thai Navy was held from April 18-26, 2013 and the 17th cycle was held from November 13- 21, 2013.
13	Vietnam		The eighth India-Vietnam Security Dialogue was held in Vietnam on November 8, 2013
14	Australia		The third session of the India-Australia Defence Policy Dialogue was held in India on October 4, 2013
15	Japan	The Joint exercise 'JIMEX' was held between the two navies from December 19-22, 2013 off the coast of Chennai	
16	Republic of Korea (RoK)		An Agreement on Protection of Classified Military Information was signed between the two countries on January 16, 2014 during the visit of the President of RoK to India
17	Oman	The Indian Navy and Royal Navy of Oman conducted exercise 'Naseem Al-Bahr-13' off the coast of Oman from September 23-26, 2013. The Indian Air Force and Royal Air Force of Oman conducted the third joint air exercise 'Eastern Bridge' at Masirah Island from October 2-12, 2013	

(Contd.)

<i>S. No.</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Equipment Given</i>	<i>Joint Exercises</i>	<i>Training</i>	<i>Agreements Signed</i>	<i>Any Other</i>
18	Qatar					The third India-Qatar Joint Defence Committee (JDC) meeting was held in Doha on September 16, 2013
19	UAE					The sixth India-UAE Joint Defence Cooperation Committee meeting was held in Abu Dhabi on October 27, 2013
20	Israel					Talks and visits
21	Saudi Arabia				MoU signed on defence cooperation on February 26, 2014	
22	Central Asian Republics (CARs)		A joint special forces exercise was held between the armies of India and Tajikistan from October 26 to November 7, 2013 in India			
23	Mongolia		The ninth joint exercise 'Ex-Nomadic Elephant' between the Indian Army and the Mongolian Army was held in Mongolia during June 11-23, 2013			
24	Russia		The joint exercise 'Indra' was held between the two armies from October 16- 28, 2013 in India		The defence ministers of both countries signed a Protocol at the conclusion of 13th IRIGCMTC meeting.	
25	France		A joint army exercise 'Shakti 2013' was conducted in France from September 9-21, 2013.			
26	Norway					Mutual visits
27	UK		A joint army exercise 'Ajay Warrior' was held with the UK from April 3-30, 2013 in India. A joint naval exercise 'Konkan' was held from October 14-19, 2013 off the coast of Goa			Indian Army participated in ex 'Cambrian Patrol' from October 10-18, 2013 in the UK

28	USA	Two joint army exercises were held with USA, 'Yudh Abhyas' from May 3-17, 2013 in USA and 'Shantijeer' from October 3-6, 2013 in India. Two joint naval exercises were held, 'Malabar 13' from November 5-11, 2013 in India and 'Sangam' from November 5-13, 2013 in the USA.	
29	Brazil		The third India-Brazil Joint Defence Committee meeting was held in New Delhi on May 21, 2013
30	Peru		Defence relations with Peru were formalized with the signing of the India-Peru Defence Cooperation Agreement on October 28, 2013
31	Algeria		Visit
32	Egypt		The fourth meeting of the India-Egypt Joint Defence Committee (JDC) was held in New Delhi on May 1, 2013.
33	Kingdom of Lesotho		Visit
34	Mauritius		Visit
35	Nigeria		The inaugural meeting of India-Nigeria Joint Defence Cooperation Committee (JDCC) was held on April 22, 2013 in New Delhi.
36	Seychelles	A Dornier-228 aircraft was handed over by India to Seychelles	The joint army exercise 'LIMITER' was held in Seychelles from December 2-15, 2013
37	Sudan		Visit
38	Tanzania		Tanzanian delegation visited India.

(Contd.)

<i>S. No.</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Equipment Given</i>	<i>Joint Exercises</i>	<i>Training</i>	<i>Agreements Signed</i>	<i>Any Other</i>
39	ADMM Plus		Indian Armed forces participated in the Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief/ Military Medicine (HADRM/MM) exercise held from June 10- 22, 2013 in Brunei. Indian Armed Forces participated as observer in Counter Terrorism Exercise (CTX) held in Indonesia from September 7-13, 2013. Indian Navy participated in Maritime Security Field Training Exercise (FTX) held off the coast of Australia from September 28 to October 1, 2013.			
40	IBSA					The fifth meeting of the IBSA Joint Working Group on Defence (IBSA DJWG) was conducted on May 23-24, 2013

*No Port visits took place during the year.

Source: Annual Reports (MoD).

Compiled by Amit Kumar, Research Assistant, IDSA.

Index

- Act East Policy, 161
Admiral D K Joshi, 150
Admiral Nirmal Verma, former Naval Chief, 4
Afghan Air Force (AAF), 88
Afghan Border Police (ABP), 88
Afghan National Army (ANA), 91
Afghan National Army Special Operations Command (ANASOC), 89
Afghan National Police (ANP), 88, 91
Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), 83, 86, 87, 88
Afghan Taliban, 91
Afghan Uniformed Police (AUP), 88
Afghanistan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP), 88
Afghanistan, 41, 44, 46, 48-49, 83, 86-87, 177, 237
Afghanistan's National Directorate of Security (NDS), 85
Afghanistan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement (APTTA), 98
Africa, 7, 46
Afro-Pacific-Caribbean (APC), 21
Al-Qaeda, 82, 89
Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW), 201
Antony, A.K., India's then Defence Minister, 2, 74
Arabian Peninsula, 12
ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting plus (ADMM+), 194, 215, 221-23, 226
ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), 5, 153, 194, 215, 221, 226
ASEAN+6, 223, 225
ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit, 153, 208
Asian Development Bank (ADB), 166
Asian Development Outlook (ADO), 166
Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), 234
Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), 204
Asia-Pacific, 152, 194
 India's Maritime Outreach in, 151
Association for Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), 19, 72, 193, 221
Assurance Policies, 3
Australia Group (AG), 171
Australia, 3, 75
Automatic Identification System (AIS), 42
Bandaranaike, Sirimavo, 125
Bangladesh Liberation War, 16
Bangladesh, 2, 3
Bangladesh, China, India, Myanmar Forum (BCIM), 73, 218, 236
Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA), 183
Bengal Initiative for Multisectoral Technical Economic cooperation (BIMSTEC), 73, 218
Berlin, Donald L, 12
Bhutan, 2, 5, 21, 46, 107
Boao Forum for Asia (BFA), 234
Border District Coordination Committee (BDCC), 116
BRAHMOS missiles, 205
Brewster, David, 12, 21, 181
Brunei, 154

- Cambodia, 154
 Central Asia, 46
 Central Asian Republics (CARs), 97
 Centre for Naval Analyses (CNA), 89
 Chandra, Vishal, 84, 94
 China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC), 238
 China, 1, 5, 16, 36, 41, 71, 75, 97, 110, 125-26, 149, 161, 181, 222
 Occupation of Tibet, 33, 106, 107
 China's North Industries Corporation (NORINCO), 76
 China-Nepal borders, 242
 CHT Accord, 51
 Clinton, Hillary, former US Secretary of State, 177
 CLMV (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam), 204
 Cold War, 5, 12, 122, 193
 Cold War-led military blocs, 5
 Communications Interoperability and Security Memorandum of Agreement (CISMOA), 183
 Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), 234
 Congo, 20
 Coordinated Maritime Patrols (CORPATs), 218
 Coordinated Patrol (CORPAT), 48, 74
 Cyprus, 20

 Dawei Deep Sea Port, 70
 Defence Cooperation Agreement (DCA), 129
 Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DBKA), 70
 Development Partnership Administration (DPA), 48, 49
 Dhruv advanced light helicopters (ALH), 151
 Digital Assets, Security of, 339
 Dixit, J N, National Security Adviser, 17
 DRDO, 155

 East Asia Summit (EAS), 194, 215

 East Asia, 214
 Defence and Security Partnership, 216
 India's Multilateral Presence, 220
 East Asian Integration (EAI), 221
 Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF), 127
 Eelam War, 128
 Evolving Regional Security Landscape, 269
 Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF), 152

 Foreign Policy and Security Dialogue (FPSD), 224
 France, 160
 Fraser Tytler, 86
 Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES), 90

 Gandhi, Indira, 31, 44, 125
 Gandhi, Rajiv, 36, 42
 Gates, Robert, US Secretary of Defense, 1
 General B C Joshi, 73
 General Bikram Singh, 74
 General Maung Aye, 73
 General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA), 171
 General V.P. Malik, 17, 23, 73
 General Zia-ul Haq, 86
 Global Centre for Nuclear Energy Partnership (GCNEP), 334
 Goh Chok Tong, Former Prime Minister of Singapore, 201
 Gulf of Aden, 18, 157
 Gurkha Prisoners of Wars (POW), 111

 Hagel, Chuck, US Secretary of Defence, 169
 Hezb-e Islami, 91
 Himalayan Frontier Policy, 106
 HIT (highways, infoways, and transways), 242
 HIV/AIDS, 70
 Hizb-il-Tahrir, 178
 Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR), 14, 20, 22, 209, 218, 234

- India initiated its 'Look East' Policy, 5
- India, 2, 19, 41, 48, 72, 176
- Look East Policy, 6, 36, 72
 - military
 - 36 Infantry Divisions, 15
 - 4 Infantry Divisions, 15
 - 54 Infantry Divisions, 15
 - 57 Mountain Division, 15
 - Role in Afghanistan's Security, 94-95
 - Security Role in the Pacific, 159
 - Security Ties
 - India and Oman, 287
 - India and UAE, 289
 - India and Qatar, 290
 - India and Saudi Arabia, 290
 - India and Yemen, 291
 - Stabiliser of Regional Balance, 160
- India's Potential Leadership Role, 223
- India-Afghanistan
- Security Cooperation, 92-93, 95-98
- India-ASEAN Commemorative Summit, 215, 220
- India-China
- maritime dynamic, 158
 - matrix, 231
 - war, 115
 - overlapping interests of, 236
- India-Indonesia
- defence ties, 217
 - relations, 194
- India-Indonesia Coordinated Patrol (INDINDO CORPAT), 197
- India-Iran
- Defence Cooperation, 302
 - Cooperation in Afghanistan, 304
 - Strategic Significance of Chabahar Port, 306
 - India's Support on Regional and International Fora, 307
- India-Israel
- Strategic Engagement, 318
 - Space Cooperation, 320
- India-Japan
- Maritime Cooperation, 156-57
 - Security Cooperation, 276
 - Tracing the Trajectory of, 274
 - bilateral relations, 225
- India-Japan-Australia-US quadrilateral partnership, 181
- India-Japan-US trilateral partnership, 181
- India-Lanka Accord, 35, 40, 128
- India-Myanmar
- Bilateral Security Cooperation between, 73
- Indian Air Force (IAF), 15
- Indian Armed Forces, 9, 19
- Indian Maritime Doctrine, 14
- Indian Military Training and Advisory Group (IMTAG), 34
- Indian Military Training Team (IMTRAT), 43
- Indian Navy, 13, 125, 128, 148, 150, 155, 206
- Indian Navy's Maritime Doctrine, 14
- Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS), 48, 159, 198, 221
- Indian Ocean Region (IOR), 9, 13, 22, 150, 172, 214, 217, 218
- Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), 158, 198, 221
- Indian Ocean
- India as a Security Provider in, 149
- Indian Ocean, 149
- Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF), 15, 17, 33, 37, 39, 128
- India-Nepal
- Bilateral Consultative Group (BCG), 43
 - Defence Cooperation, 112
 - Defence Cooperation, 112-15
 - Defence Relations, 243
 - Joint Committee on Inundation and Flood Management (JCIFM), 117
 - joint military training
 - Exercise Surya Kiran-V, 114
 - Ex-Surya Kiran-VII, 15
 - Security cooperation, 105
 - Collapse of Mutual Security, 110
- India-Nepal relationship, 111
- India-Pacific, 161

- Geopolitics of, 147
- India-Pakistan
Nuclear Capacity Collaboration, 340
War, 203
- India-Singapore relations, 198
- India-South Korea
Bilateral Strategic Interests, 251
Defence and Security Cooperation, 255
- India-Soviet Treaty, 16
- India-Sri Lanka
bilateral relations, 239
Defence Cooperation, 129
post-LTTE Period, 130-32
- India-US
Defence Cooperation Agreement, 167
Energy Cooperation, 204
Joint Statement, 7
Security Relationship, 169, 180
Security Cooperation in
South Asia, 174
Central Asia, 177
West Asia, 179
South East Asia, 180
Relations, 37
- Indonesia, 19, 194
Economic Aspects, 195
Strategic Dimension, 196
- INDRA-14, 160
- INS Airavat, 197, 206
- INS Amar, 150
- INS Chakra, 196
- INS Jalashwa, 15
- INS Kadamba, 6
- INS Sindhuvir, 201
- INS Sudarshini, 197
- INS Vikramaditya, 2, 15, 152
- INS Virat, 196
- Intelligence, Surveillance and
Reconnaissance (ISR), 89
- International Maritime Boundary Line
(IMBL), 197
- International Maritime Organisation
(IMO), 42
- International Tribunal for the Law of the
Sea (ITLOS), 70
- Internationally Recognised Transit
Corridor (IRTC), 18
- Iraq, 21
- Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, 91, 178
- Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), 82,
177, 179
- Israel, 3, 36, 72
- ITEWC, 209
- Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP), 36,
123, 125-27
insurgency, 33
Janes Defence Weekly, 76
- Japan, 3, 75, 160, 181
- Japanese Maritime Self-Defence Force
(JMSDF), 156
- Japan-India Maritime Exercises (JIMEX),
157
- Joint Working Group (JWG), 74, 116, 225
Journal of Defence Studies, 18
- Kachin Independence Army (KIA), 69
- Kampuchea, 21
- Karl Jackson, 71
- Kerry Longhurst, 10
- Khaibar, 90
- KOMODO, 198
- Korea, 20
- Kulandaswamy, M.S., 123
- Laos, 5, 154
- LAPAN-TUBAT, 209
- Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (LeT), 85, 91
- Lashkar-i-Jhangvi, 91
- Latif, S. Amer, 12
- Latin America, 46
- Lesotho, 21
- Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE),
17, 33, 37, 39, 123, 124, 128, 130,
240
- Lintner, Bertil, 72
- Logistics Support Agreement (LSA), 183

- Long Range Identification and Tracking (LRIT), 42
- Look East Policy (LEP), 151, 180, 193
- Mahajana Eksath Peramuna (MEP), 125
- MALABAR, 156, 157, 160
- Malacca Dilemma, 240
- Malacca Straits, 1, 6, 207
- Malaysia, 5, 126, 217
- Maldives, 2, 14, 21, 42, 49
- MALSINDO, 207
- Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA), 42, 241
- Maritime Silk Route (MSR), 149, 158, 234
- Mauritius, 14
- Medcalf, Rory, 13
- Mekong Ganga Cooperation (MGC), 73, 204, 218
- Middle East, 20
- MILAN, 74, 155, 198, 206, 207, 220
- Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), 32, 47, 48, 50
- Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), 171
- Modi, Narendra, Prime Minister of India, 2, 47, 152, 167, 216, 225
- Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT), 73
- Myanmar Defence Service (MDS), 69, 73, 75
- Myanmar, 2, 5, 46, 48, 49, 72, 73
 - Armed Forces, 69
 - Exclusive Economic Zone, 70
 - Implications for India, 70
 - Navy, 75, 76
 - Regional Security, 70
 - Security Situation in, 68
- National Democratic Alliance (NDA) Government, 193
- National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Isak Muivah (NSCN-IM), 75
- Nationalist Socialist Council of Nagaland-Khaplang (NSCN-K), 77
- Nation-wide Ceasefire Coordination Team (NCCT), 69
- NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation), 87, 177
- Naval Diplomacy, 292
- Nepal, 2, 5, 43, 49, 107, 109, 117, 242
- Nepalese Army (NA), 105, 116
- Nepal-India Bilateral Consultative Group on Security Issues (NIBCGSI), 116
- New Silk Road Economic Belt, 234
- Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), 110, 125
- Non-combatant Evacuation Operations (NEOs), 14
- North Korea, 72
- Nuclear Forensics, 342
- Nuclear Medicine, 339
- Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), 171
- Obama, Barack, US President, 7, 87, 167, 171-72, 174, 186, 269
- Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV), 124, 218
- Op Cactus, 16, 18
- Op Parakram, 38, 50
- Op Sukoon, 19
- Operation (Op) Pawan, 15-18
- Operation Gambhir, 208
- Operation Golden Bird, 73
- Operations-Other-Than-War (OOTW), 10
- Out-Of-Area-Contingency (OOAC), 10, 14
- Pakistan, 4, 5, 44, 47, 86, 92, 125, 126, 176
- Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence (ISI), 85, 91, 238
- Pant, Harsh V., 3
- Passage Exercise (PASSEX), 197
- People's Liberation Army (PLA), 71, 77, 111, 116, 239
- People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN), 148, 155, 158
- People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (PREPAK), 77
- Philippines, 154, 181

- Post 9/11, 84
 post-American world, 166
 post-Cold War, 118, 123, 206
 Powell, Nancy, 12
 Power Trade Agreement (PTA), 243
 President Barack Obama, 167
 President Jayawardene, 42, 126
 President Karzai, 92
 President Premadasa, 127
 President Xi Jinping, 222, 234, 235
 Press Trust of India (PTI), 75
 Puneet Talwar, 12
- Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), 223
 Responsibility-to-Protect (R2P), 16
RNA strategic review report, 112
 Royal Nepalese Army (RNA), 111
 Royal Singapore Navy (RSN), 201
 Russia, 44, 74, 83, 93, 96, 160, 167, 179, 185-86, 205,
- SAARC, 36-37, 45, 73, 237
 School of Radiological Safety Studies (SRSS), 338
 Sea Lines of Communications (SLOCs), 148-49, 157, 159, 198, 218
 Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, 74
 Seoul Defence Dialogue (SDD), 224
 Serbia, 72
 Severino, Rodolfo C., ASEAN Secretary General, 6
 Seychelles Coast Guards, 21
 Seychelles, 21
 Shan State Army-North (SSA-N), 70
 Shan State Army-South (SSA-S), 70
 Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's (SCO), 178
 Shangri La Dialogue, 216
 Shangri-La Dialogue, 2
 Shangri-La, 37
 Sikkim, 107
 SILINEX, 48
 Singapore, 72, 181, 198
 Defence Science and Technology Agency (DSTA), 155
 Economic Aspects, 200
 Strategic Dimension, 200
 Singapore-India Maritime Bilateral Exercise, 157
 Singh, Dr. Manmohan, the then PM of India, 2, 9, 13, 37, 72, 92, 215, 217, 240
 South Asia Sub-regional Economic Cooperation (SASEC), 46
 South Asia
 India's Defence Relations in, 237
 South China Sea, 152, 156, 158, 205, 216, 217, 226
 South East Asia, 46
 Soviet Union, 5, 35, 122, 125, 170, 256, 312
 Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), 89
 Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP), 122
 Sri Lanka, 2, 3, 5, 14, 15, 19, 21, 35, 42, 48, 49, 124, 239
 Sri Lankan Military, 125
 State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), 71
 Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA), 87
- Taliban, 82, 84-91, 93-98, 238, 304-6, 308
 Tanzania, 21
Tatmadaw, 69, 73, 76
 Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP), 82, 91
 Thailand, 19, 217
 Threat-Cum-Capability-Based Model, 116
 Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), 115
 Tibet-Nepal War, 115
- UK, 5, 36, 74-75, 124-26, 313
 Ukraine, 72
 UN Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKO), 5, 7, 15-16, 20, 22
 United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA), 75, 77
 United National Liberation Front (UNLF), 73
 United Nations (UN), 10, 18, 20, 108, 174, 199, 313

-
- Peacekeeping Missions
 - on Israel's Borders, 321
 - Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI), 176
 - United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), 125, 322-23
 - United Nations Security Council (UNSC), 68, 172, 187, 204, 271, 307-8,
 - United States (US), 11, 16, 36, 75, 113, 125, 160, 166, 168-80, 182, 184-85, 198, 235-36, 268, 272-73, 275
 - Department of Defence (DoD), 89
 - military, 84
 - Navy's RIMPAC, 156, 160
 - United Tajik Opposition, 178
 - United Wa State Army (UWSA), 69
 - UNMIN, 38
 - US Congressional Research Service Report, 87
 - US Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA)
 - Annual Threat Assessment, 89
 - Vice Admiral Thura Thet Swe, Myanmar's Navy Chief, 75
 - Vietnam, 5, 152-53, 155, 181, 194, 203-6, 217-17, 220, 222, 339, 353
 - Economic Aspects, 204
 - Strategic Dimension, 204
 - Wassenaar Arrangement (WA), 171
 - Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), 168
 - West Irian operations, 20
 - Western Pacific Naval Symposium (WPNS), 158
 - Winter, Donald, US Secretary of the Navy, 11
 - World Economic Forum Summit, 21
 - Zambia, 21

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