

INDIA FOUNDATION JOURNAL



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Strengthening Cultural Bonds
- Transforming India's Economic
Architecture
- India-China Economic Relations
and The Persistent Trade Deficit
- Kushok Bakula Rinpoche – India's
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**India
Foundation
Journal**

Vol. VI
Issue No.2

March-April 2018

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India Foundation
New Delhi

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www.indiafoundation.in

for private circulation only

Editor's Note

Dear Readers,

Every nation shapes its foreign policy based on its perceived national interest. It is thus a critical area of policy formulation, with a view to shaping a nation's relationship, reputation and trade status with its neighbours. It also affects a nation's international standing, and how it is viewed by the rest of the world.

In a sense, foreign policy describes the laws, orders or actions of a national government with regard to other nations and international bodies. Activities which fall within the ambit of foreign policy include adherence to international laws and conventions; membership and involvement of multilateral bodies like the United Nations; alliances and security agreements; trade agreements etc.

Indian foreign policy has chartered a remarkably consistent course ever since Independence, regardless of the ruling party in the Centre. A fresh impetus was however given to India's foreign policy by the BJP led NDA government after it came to power in the Centre in the 2014 Lok Sabha elections. As stated by Kanwal Sibal, a former foreign secretary of India, Prime Minister Modi's foreign policy vision is integrated with his domestic agenda, with a focus on development, modernisation, ease of doing business, campaigns such as Digital India, Start Up India, Skill India, and the like. Make in India aims also to secure India's interests in an unfolding uncertain and competitive world. The goal is widening the pool of supportive countries through constructive positions on issues on global agenda. This issue covers the renewed thrust in specific areas in India's foreign policy, which has enhanced India's standing in the comity of nations.



Key Aspects of India's Revitalised Foreign Policy

Sushma Swaraj*



A few days ago, we witnessed an unprecedented sight on Rajpath that would have been unimaginable some years ago: all ten leaders of the ASEAN nations being welcomed as Chief Guests for India's Republic Day Parade. In fact, from the moment the leaders of all our neighbouring countries were invited to the swearing-in ceremony of Prime Minister Modi and his cabinet colleagues, a clear signal was sent that India's approach to the world around us would be one that befits its rising global stature - an innovative, confident, bold and pragmatic approach that welcomes one and all to share in India's growth.

In last three and a half years, the Modi government has presented new approaches and charted new directions with emphasis on operationalisation and implementation. The new energy and visibility in our foreign policy has been noticed all around the world. It is reflected in India's enhanced international standing. *Samridhhi* (economic interest), *Suraksha* (national security), *Samman* (dignity and honour), *Samvad* (greater engagement), *Sanskriti evam Sabhyata* (Civilisational and cultural links) are the driving forces behind India's global engagement today.

There is today a greater expectation of India's role at the international level, as reflected in India

**This article is a summary of the remarks made by Smt. Sushma Swaraj, Minister for External Affairs, GoI on 30th January, 2018 at New Delhi at the workshop on India's Foreign Policy organised by India Foundation in partnership with the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India.*

emerging as a natural participant in several regional and global discourses. Our constructive approach to global issues is widely recognised, and was reflected recently, inter alia, in our entry into the Wassenaar Agreement and Australia Group; our membership of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO); and the coming into force of the International Solar Alliance, a treaty-based international organisation initiated by India.

The primary driver for this change has been the nature of domestic political evolution that India experienced in 2014. For the first time in nearly 3 decades, the people of India brought to power a Central Government with a decisive majority in the lower House of Parliament. The verdict was for change and for good and effective governance. It was also a call for development reflective of growing aspirations of India's youthful millions. The government has responded to the mandate by unveiling a range of measures and initiatives aimed at economic transformation of India. All this has conveyed a message of India as a country with a decisive and energetic leadership and a government which is committed to transformative change.

Another development, not unrelated to the first, has been the way the world has begun to look at India. In the last two years, the "India Story" has revived itself not the least because of the energy and vigour demonstrated by the government. India has emerged as the fastest growing major economy in the world even in face of difficult global economic environment. Rating agencies have upgraded India's rankings as an investment destination and there has been a nearly 40% surge in inward FDI. There has been a

remarkable jump in India's position on the index of ease of doing business. There is a clear sense that these naturally open new opportunities that require a recalibration of our foreign policy to take advantage of these developments, and to buttress them further through proactive and energetic diplomacy.

In terms of our international outreach, there has been an unprecedented expansion of India's diplomatic canvass, including at the highest levels, both in terms of regularity and quality of exchanges. Even as we have engaged with our traditional partners with greater warmth and frequency, the coverage of our diplomatic outreach has extended to new countries and regions. It has also extended in terms of covering countries and regions that had not received adequate attention for a long time. This includes our immediate and extended neighbourhood, West and Central Asia and the Indo-Pacific region.

Earlier in January 2018 in Davos, we heard Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi share India's vision of creating a shared future in an increasingly divided and fractured world. Improving connectivity and facilitating freer movement of goods, people and ideas is a crucial part of this vision. Whether it is domestic, external or regional, in the decades to come, connectivity will determine how India and indeed Asia achieves the goals of growth, employment and prosperity. There is now growing awareness that lack of physical and digital connectivity, both within India and in the larger South Asian neighbourhood and beyond, is a major constraint on both our capabilities and our competitiveness. However, these connectivity initiatives must be based on

universally recognized international norms, good governance, rule of law, openness, transparency and equality, and must be pursued in a manner that respects sovereignty and territorial integrity.

In the past year there has been significant progress in infrastructure and connectivity projects undertaken by India in our neighbourhood. Projects in rail, road, ports, inland waterways, coastal shipping, energy and fuel transmission are being implemented with our partners in the neighbourhood to realise the vision of a modern, secure, economically prosperous and better connected South Asia. Multimodal connectivity projects underway in Bangladesh and Myanmar have the potential of closing the physical connectivity gap between South Asia and the ASEAN region, giving an impetus to our 'Act East' policy. We are working with international partners to further extend this into an Asia-Africa Growth Corridor, which will revitalise the centuries old linkages of trade, commerce and connectivity between the two largest continents of the world.

To the West, we saw last year the inauguration of the first phase of the Chabahar Port project, the inaugural consignment of Indian wheat being delivered to Afghanistan through Chabahar, and the establishment of the India-Afghanistan air-freight corridor. These innovative initiatives, along with our engagement with regional partners in Central Asia on the International North South Transport Corridor, will pave the way for operationalisation of the Chabahar port as an alternate, reliable and robust connectivity hub, and promote trade and transit with Afghanistan and the wider region.

With the historic launch of the South Asia Satellite, India demonstrated its commitment to sharing the benefits of its technological capabilities with its regional partners. As a first responder in emergencies and natural disasters, India's proactive and professional response in providing humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) has underlined its readiness to stand by its friends in times of their need - be it in safe evacuation of civilians from conflict zones, rendering earthquake and flood relief in Nepal and Sri Lanka, organizing special medical camps and delivering fresh water to the Maldives, or providing humanitarian assistance for displaced persons in Bangladesh.

For a developing country like India, diplomacy must, above all, be an enabler of domestic growth. Never has this principle been more salient to the actual working of diplomacy than now. In the past three and a half years, advancement of India's economic and commercial interests has been at the forefront of all Indian diplomatic activity. These efforts have been greatly facilitated by enunciation of domestic developmental objectives into concrete and identifiable flagship programmes by this Government. This has enabled Indian diplomacy to consciously survey the international landscape and identify the best bilateral or institutional partners that can contribute to programmes like Make in India, Skill India, Digital India, Smart Cities, Swachh Bharat, Namami Gange, AMRUT (Affordable Medicines and Reliable Implants for Treatment), etc.

Another equally important focus area for the Modi Government has been rekindling and

strengthening of linkages with Indian Diaspora. As amply demonstrated by the enthusiastic participation in the first ever PIO Parliamentarians Conference in January 2018, many of these children of India have risen to positions of importance in their chosen professions, and can contribute materially to advancing India's relationships with their host nations. Some of them are equally keen to contribute directly to India's growth and social development through their investments, skills, experiences and talents.

The Indian Government has finally put Indians back at the heart of India's foreign policy. Whether it is through increased resources and focus on protection and facilitation of the large community of Indian nationals who live and work abroad, or through transforming the public interface of the Ministry of External Affairs, the Ministry now takes pride in being the "*Madadgar*" Ministry. The passport offices in India and the consular departments of Missions 85 Posts abroad, the visible face of the Ministry seen by our citizens, are being transformed through the use of digital platforms and innovative use of social media. The Ministry is also placing emphasis on creating robust emergency response systems in parts of the world where there is larger concentration of Indian citizens, to protect them in times of crisis.

To sum up, a distinctive change has come about in India's Foreign Policy since 2014. The change can be described in three words - *chaal* (pace), *charitra* (character) and *chehra* (face) - of India's foreign policy. The 'pace' is reflected in the fact that infrastructure projects in neighboring countries taken up by India, which were stuck since very long time and where costs had overrun by 5 times, are nearing completion now because of constant monitoring at the highest level in Government. The pace has become much faster.

Charitra or character can be seen in the logo placed in every Indian embassy saying "*Pardes mei pakka dost, Bhartiya dootavaas*" (Indian embassy is a home away from home). The Ministry has sensitised its embassies to a great extent and has become more helpful. Its portal called '*Madad*' enables Indians abroad to register their requests online and they are thereafter contacted by the embassy staff. Some people choose to tweet, which is also responded to. This is the new sensitivity.

Chehra, the face of India has become more influential. India's image has been enhanced by the manner it successfully evacuated its personnel and those of other countries in conflict zones such as Iraq, Libya and Yemen. This simply reflects a revitalized India's Foreign Policy.



Panchamrit : Recent Innovations in India's Foreign Policy

Ram Madhav*



Foreign policy, at one level is a continuum as it is transferred from one government to another. However, when Prime Minister Modi took over in 2014, he transformed this foreign policy in multiple ways. Although the issues and approaches remain the same, the transformation was clearly visible. Today, India's foreign policy is bold, proactive, innovative and ambitious.

India's foreign policy is bold as it has shown an uncompromising firmness on issues relating to the nation's integrity and honour. The approach

to handling India's two neighbours is distinct from what it used to be. The firmness demonstrated in India's handling of its relations with Pakistan is a clear indicator. Similarly, with China, whether it was the first ever visit of President Xi Jinping to New Delhi or the recent standoff at Doklam, the government has shown required firmness in conveying a strong message to our eastern neighbour. There are many such examples where firmness has been shown, when India's interests are seen to have been affected by some of their actions. The Prime Minister's decision not to

**This article is a summary of the address delivered by Shri Ram Madhav, National General Secretary, BJP and Director, India Foundation on 31st January, 2017 at New Delhi at the Workshop on India's Foreign Policy organised by India Foundation in partnership with the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India.*

include Maldives in his itinerary during his visit to various island nations in the Indian Ocean Region is a case in point which highlights the government's bold and firm foreign policy approach.

Traditionally, India has been looked at as a notoriously reticent nation in international affairs, but today, it is being seen as proactive in its engagement with the international fora. For example, when countries like the United States of America had changing positions over the Paris Climate Summit, the Indian stand remained steadfast. In fact, India played a very crucial role in clinching the Paris Climate deal. Similarly, India has gone ahead and created new forums like the International Solar Alliance and has been proactive in its increased engagement with Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries. India's active presence in successive G-20 forums has been recognised, as has its greater engagement in Davos. All this shows the proactive nature of India's foreign policy, which is now no longer reticent and withdrawn but distinctly proactive.

The next transformative feature of India's foreign policy is ambition. In my view, it is for the first time that India has openly shown its ambition to rise as a global power when, during the Prime Minister's first visit to USA, Mr Narendra Modi, along with the then US President Barack Obama, issued a joint statement in which it was mentioned that India has an ambition to rise as an influential and responsible global power. India's rise, along with being influential, will be responsible and peaceful, and will not give anyone sleepless nights. Therefore,

a responsible but an ambitious rise as a global power is one of India's foreign policy goals.

Foreign policy cannot be romantic or driven by slogans. It must be pragmatic and it has to be blended with a nation's national interests. We have done this with great success and effect. One important aspect of blending foreign policy with national interest is India's policy of de-hyphenation. An emphasis on standalone and bilateral relations without being influenced by any hyphenated factor is a very unique element that has been introduced into India's foreign policy. It began in 2014 when Prime Minister Modi visited New York to deliver his speech at the United Nations General Assembly. There was a suggestion that he should meet with Prime Minister Netanyahu of Israel. As per earlier practises, a meeting with the Israeli leadership would also have entailed a meeting with the leaders of Palestine. It was Prime Minister Modi who took the decision to end this convention, which made it possible to have a standalone meeting with the Prime Minister of Israel.

Similarly, when world leaders would visit India they would balance it with a stopover in Islamabad, regardless of the fact that such a visit to Pakistan was warranted. When President Clinton visited India for three days in March 2000, he made a brief stopover in Islamabad for five hours! Visiting both nations together had become a ritual, but now this too has been ended. Standalone visits and bilateral relationships help both countries. When Prime Minister Modi visited Israel recently, he was the first Indian Prime Minister to step on their soil, and the visit was a

standalone one. In fact, the Prime Minister has also embarked on a standalone visit to Palestine in February 2018. For long, India has been a victim of hyphenation. The present government has ended this policy keeping clear national interests in mind.

India's foreign policy is now also more innovative. Generally, India's foreign policy was understood to rest on two important pillars - economic interest and national security. When the BJP came to power, three more pillars were added. As such, India's foreign policy today is guided by the five pillars of '*Panchamrit*'. While the first two pillars remain economic prosperity (*samridhi*) and national security (*suraksha*), the third pillar added is '*Samman*' or dignity and honour of India. India includes both the citizens of our nation as well as expatriate Indians. Our obligation is to ensure the security, honour, and dignity of all Indians as well as the dignity, security and honour of India. Four years since 2014, we can confidently say that thanks to the efforts of the entire foreign policy establishment, especially the Foreign Minister and the various missions, we have been able to infuse in individuals, pride in their Indian identity. Today, every Indian feels secure and proud of his Indian identity and his Indian connection. Therefore, '*Samman*' is an important dimension.

The next pillar, '*Samvad*,' is about greater engagement. Prime Minister Modi, other leaders and officials no longer only meet just their counterparts, but a variety of other stakeholders too. We now have engagement on multiple levels, from government to government, government to business, government to people, and government

to academics, scholars and the diaspora. This wider engagement has been made a dimension of India's foreign policy approach. At times the Prime Minister, in a single day attends twelve to fourteen engagements. Besides official engagements, meetings are held with a diverse range of people and establishments, which could be Nobel laureates, religious heads, civil society, diaspora and others.

A special attention has been given to engagement with the diaspora. This has helped us in creating fronts across the spectrum in academia and other spheres. As far as the diaspora itself is concerned, it has definitely helped us in two ways. First, the diaspora was and continues to be a divided diaspora, but the government's efforts have helped in creating larger unity within the diaspora community. As a member of the BJP, we used to have this temptation to hold Overseas Friends of BJP events when the Prime Minister went abroad. We were however instructed, that the Prime Minister's event will be for the entire diaspora and will not be restricted to those who support the party. This has helped in creating greater unity within the diaspora community. Through that unity, the diaspora has been able to rise as a political constituency in their respective countries. This will help India in different ways. These efforts have also helped in establishing a good and live contact between the diaspora and the main Indian territory. This neatly ties in with the fifth pillar - *Sanskriti* - using our cultural and civilisational links as a tool of our foreign policy.

In the past, foreign policy had shied away from using our cultural and civilisational wealth as a

tool of our foreign policy, as we assumed that in order to have a secular foreign policy we cannot include culture. Under the Modi government, these have been converted into effective instruments of our foreign policy. The Japanese Prime Minister went to Varanasi and did a Ganga Aarti and the Chinese Premier participated in local festivals in Gujarat. Similarly, Prime Minister Modi visited the Pashupatinath temple in Nepal, a mosque in central Asia, a church or synagogue elsewhere and even played traditional drums in one country! This aspect of making cultural and civilisational wealth of our country an effective diplomatic tool is an important hallmark of our foreign policy. Along with *Samridhhi* (economic prosperity) and *Suraksha* (security), we have created a robust five pronged approach to India's foreign policy.

Finally, India gave the call 'together we grow' in its neighbourhood. This gave confidence to our neighbours that India's rise will help in the rise of our neighbours and vice versa. The Prime Minister gave this call in Bhutan, Nepal and Bangladesh. He spoke to the nations as sovereign equals and not as a big brother. A senior Nepalese leader recently told me (when Gujarat and Nepal were in election mode) that, "Sir, if I go to Gujarat and campaign against your Prime Minister, people will pelt stones at me, but if your Prime Minister comes to Nepal and campaigns against me, I will lose my deposit. Your Prime Minister is so influential amongst the masses in my country". This simply reflects the confidence we have given of 'togetherness'.



India's foreign policy has for a long time been land based as we have traditionally been Westward looking and therefore, our interests have been linked to European and American interests. We have now introduced the policy of ocean-centric approach. Looking to the East calls for a change in our thinking as our issues are different. This change has been brought in over the last three to four years. Today, we value our relationship with ASEAN countries as much as we do our relationship with the European Union or USA. Hence, we had all the ten heads of ASEAN as guests of honour in the 2017 Republic Day Parade. This was done even though some of the countries are small and do not have much dealings with India, such as Laos and Cambodia. The change is underway. India has moved from its policy of 'Look East' to 'Act East,' because we believe that the 21st century global power no longer exists in the Pacific region but is today, in the Indian Ocean region.

In conclusion, India's emphasis on its 'Act East' policy has finally led to the Western world accepting the centrality and primacy of the Indian Ocean to 21st century geopolitics and for the first time, the West has started using the phrase Indo-Pacific instead of Asia Pacific. A case in point is President Trump articulating the phrase Indo-Pacific, as we have made it our foreign policy objective and priority. Today, India's foreign policy is bold, proactive, ambitious and innovative.

Trends in India's Foreign Policy

S. Jaishankar*



All the changes that we are seeing in the world today — the rise of China, events in the US and Middle East and India's growing influence — are all part of a process. Hence, it is important to always keep context in mind. The present international system can be traced back to the breakup of the Soviet Union, the so-called “triumph” of the Western world followed by the rise of Asia and the growth of political Islam. These events created a flatter world, eroding traditional camps and making decision making a much harder process. Therefore, we need to ask ourselves how relevant and adequate non alignment and strategic autonomy are when India itself seeks to be a fixed point and as the world becomes truly multipolar.

For the neighbourhood we generally use the term “Neighbourhood First”. The term means we give our neighbourhood a priority, a degree of

attention, care, consideration, resources and energy. None of this should be confused with optimism. This kind of attention has not been given by previous policy makers. For instance, in Bangladesh alone our commitments increased from around USD 800 million in 2011 to around USD 8 billion today. The second aspect of Neighbourhood First is regionalism. We have not always approached regionalism confidently in the past but today, we are big, secure and confident enough to develop regionalism non-reciprocally. It is in our interest that our neighbours share and grow with the prosperity of India. The third feature is the impact of China. If China is to become a global power it is only natural that it will exert its influence and it will be strongest in the region closest to China. Therefore, we should not be alarmed by the fact that China's influence in South Asia is increasing. Instead we should focus on

**This article is a summary of the valedictory address delivered by Dr. S. Jaishankar, former Foreign Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India on 1st February, 2018 at New Delhi at the Workshop on India's Foreign Policy organised by India Foundation in partnership with Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India.*

whether the influence is good or bad and how to respond to it. We need to work with powers with whom we have converging interests.

Our next policy angle is the shift from Look East to Act East. The two big new elements in our eastern policy are stronger emphasis on physical connectivity and security. If roadways, shipping lanes and rail lines open up towards Vietnam, the entire politics, economics and sociology of that region will change. We have for years allowed our status quo to prevail even rationalising it to somehow be good for India's security. We often joke that the first step of "Look East" is New Delhi having to look east to other parts of India! Unfortunately, the Centre has not adequately done this. However, this is changing and today we are actively thinking about how to promote the Northeast and make them a fulcrum of Act East policy. In fact, Bangladesh can play an important role — its infrastructure can be used to service eastern India's economy — which is why we have put a lot of effort to modernise railways, power connectivity and waterway usage through Bangladesh. The next aspect is security. If you look at the ferment in the Islamic world, that ferment comes up to the Punjab but abruptly stops at the "wall" called India. This wall insulates the entire ferment that is coming from Nigeria all the way up to Pakistan's Punjab. If there are today Islamic societies like Indonesia, Malaysia and Brunei that have relatively been sheltered from the disturbances of the Middle East and beyond, it is in large part because India has absorbed those pressures. For us, security cooperation, both military and intelligence cooperation, is a very important feature of our relationship with Southeast Asian countries. In fact, hosting all the ten ASEAN heads of state itself is a recognition of the fact that ASEAN itself is graduating

into a different level of cooperation with us.

As for the West, there has been a very strong emphasis on the Gulf. Countries like UAE, Qatar and Saudi Arabia with whom our relations were good, but were not fully reflective of the interests of those countries or India's potential. This is something that has changed. Here, the challenge for us is that it is very much a region in ferment, but a region with which we have high economic and energy dependency. Bear in mind that the remittances we receive from the Gulf is roughly the size of the services trade with America. Therefore, just looking at the quantitative aspect it should become clear of how important the Gulf is and should be. For us stability in the Gulf is very important and managing a policy with multiple pulls and pressures is of our greatest concern. When we were a smaller power we could afford to stay away from difficult regions but that option is no longer available to us.

As for Afghanistan and Pakistan, it remains a key security challenge. Looking back, people have underestimated the progress and a part of the reason is very bad handling of these countries by the previous American administration supplemented by NATO powers. The fact remains that there were serious misreadings of the situation. Yet, the reality is that people in Afghanistan welcome the change and India remains a very popular country. It is popular because our image in Afghanistan is of a developmental partner — a country that has largely listened to the Afghans and contributed to a more stable life. For us today, stabilising Afghanistan is of paramount importance. The reality today is that there isn't an Afghan problem but an Af-Pak problem. The heart of the problem lies in Pakistan and there is more recognition of this aspect in parts of the Western world.

The rise of China has been the biggest development in our lifetime and their footprint has increased. We have to recognise that we have as a neighbour, a major influencer and with whom we have a very complex history and differences in interests but one that is also our second largest trade partner and fastest growing investor. It is however not smart analysis to be in denial of or demonise China. The rise of a global power is accompanied by the creation of new institutions. China is, in a departure from the past, suggesting itself as a model. Its viability is an open question. We traditionally thought of China as a power to our North but we must also begin to look at China's maritime presence in the Indian Ocean.

There has been a sharper sense of maritime spaces in our foreign policy. The fact is the Indian Ocean has historically been a community, the people of the region have an interpenetrative culture, it is the largest English speaking lake in the world and much of it is democratic. There is a need to grow the Indian Ocean into something more substantive than it is today.

As for the United States, its decline has been repeatedly foretold but they continue to surprise the world with its ability to reinvent itself and find new sources of strength. In my opinion, the US is still the only global power and will remain for a certain number of years. The US derives its strength from being the greatest centre of innovation and technology. Therefore, the protection of Intellectual Property Rights has become extremely central to American policy. Moreover, the US is now conveying to its allies that its terms are different and has become more demanding. It has also become more pressing of its adversaries and this is visible in its National Security Strategy document. For a country like

India, this change in American policy works fine as we have neither been an ally that has disappointed nor have we been an adversary that has offended. In fact the more America becomes bilateral, the more it will fit into India's preferred way of dealing with them.

As for Russia, we have witnessed a reversal of roles between China and Russia. In the old days, in Eurasia, China was the swing power — when China went towards the West it strategically damaged the Soviet Union — but today, Russia is the swing power. From our point of view, the events of the last few years have not been helpful as our interests do not dictate the kind of pressure that America is putting on Russia.

However, the India - Russia relationship remains one of the dependable factors of our foreign policy. The other power that merits mention is Japan. We have seen a big change in terms of political closeness and Japanese investments and presence going up very sharply. However, impending systemic changes are still unfolding in Japan.

Despite bilateral relations becoming more popular, we should not underestimate the power of multilateralism. The coalition of support that we saw in the International Court of Justice elections was a result of multilateralism and can easily be termed as an election of the old order versus the new order. In the foreign policy business there are two attributes that should be prized more than anything else — between people to people it is chemistry, between nation to nation it is credibility. To be a power, leaders must build the chemistry and the country must have credibility. Moreover, we should continue to be ethical and follow international norms and rules - when others think of us, these attributes must come out clearly.



India's Neighbourhood Policy

Amar Sinha*

How do we define India's neighbourhood? Does it refer to our immediate neighbourhood, is it determined by geography, is it shaped by history or is it shaped by political impulses that are beyond our control? Answering this question is important to not only understand India's core national interest but also in determining India's foreign policy. In British India, our neighbours were different. Post independence, our borders shrunk — we lost direct connectivity to Iran and Central Asia. As history progressed new borders were created and new countries were born. For example China expanded into Tibet and became our immediate neighbour. Therefore, it is clear that the concept of 'neighbourhood' can evolve.

Each impediment leads to innovation. When we lost direct connectivity to Afghanistan it led to a search for alternative routes. As a nation, we are more aware of our neighbours on the west and we have a fuzzy idea of those on the east. This is probably because we have a general awareness of our land neighbours forgetting our maritime neighbours such as Thailand, Indonesia, Oman or even East Africa. It is because of the recognition of such maritime neighbours and neighbours on the East that in foreign policy narrative we see the term 'extended neighbourhood' evolve or the basis of our ACT East policy.

In ancient times our culture and kingdom spread right from Indonesia to Cambodia, all of

which form a part of our zone of influence. Perhaps the British aided in extending our neighbourhood by taking people to Mauritius and Fiji among other countries. Today, we are rightly looking at Indo-Pacific as our extended neighbourhood. Therefore we can define neighbourhood depending on our core national interests, areas to which, as a nation, we feel connected to. All these factors determine our neighbourhood policy. In this context, the Gulf is as much a neighbour as is SAARC.

In the ASEAN context we have the three Cs — culture, connectivity and commerce — that drive our foreign policy initiatives. Similarly we have the five Ss — *samman, samvad, samridhi, suraksha and sanskriti* — as the basis of our foreign policy approach, which to my mind have the greatest salience in our immediate neighbourhood as South Asia is in a way a fragmented India. So, when SAARC was created in 1985 the objective was to boost the three Cs and the five Ss. We can say that connectivity, both people to people connectivity and physical connectivity, is a lynchpin in our South Asian policy. In fact, when we look at SAARC it becomes clear that only India has common borders with SAARC countries, giving India a central role in policy initiatives. Therefore, our policies should not be seen as that of a 'big brother' but rather as a benevolent regional power that is trying to achieve a peaceful, prosperous and integrated neighbourhood. For example, India created a

* This article is a summary of the address delivered by Shri Amar Sinha, former Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India on 28th January, 2018 at New Delhi at the Workshop on India's Foreign Policy organised by India Foundation in partnership with Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India.

special window for all the least developed countries (LDCs) within SAARC and granted a zero duty access to India. It was important that our neighbours have a stake in the large and growing economy as in the past.

However, since SAARC itself later became moribund, we had to evolve a mechanism for SAARC-minus ONE from where sub-regional cooperation initiatives emerged such as BIMSTEC. Our neighbourhood policy is then, driven by our size and centrality and is often based on the principal of non-reciprocity.

Post May 2014, our outreach to the neighbourhood increased and while objectives remained largely the same, security was a new dimension that was added. Security is essential for the continued growth of India. India is also aware that as it rises economically it will necessarily have to carry its neighbours also, for which it will have to open its markets and build consensus among the people. Another key element in the neighbourhood policy is that, India will not pick political winners or losers in the neighbourhood but will focus on building excellent relations with all nations and people within the neighbourhood across the political spectrum.

A major factor that will guide our policy is that India will become a net provider of security and humanitarian assistance in the region. Since we don't have expansionist designs it becomes easy for us to make these interventions in consultation with our partners. The Doklam incident is a clear cut case where India came out in support of a neighbouring country. Similarly, India was the first to reach out to Nepal, Maldives

and Yemen for humanitarian assistance. These are key lessons for policy makers and our neighbours alike, for it is a reflection of our capabilities and a changed India.

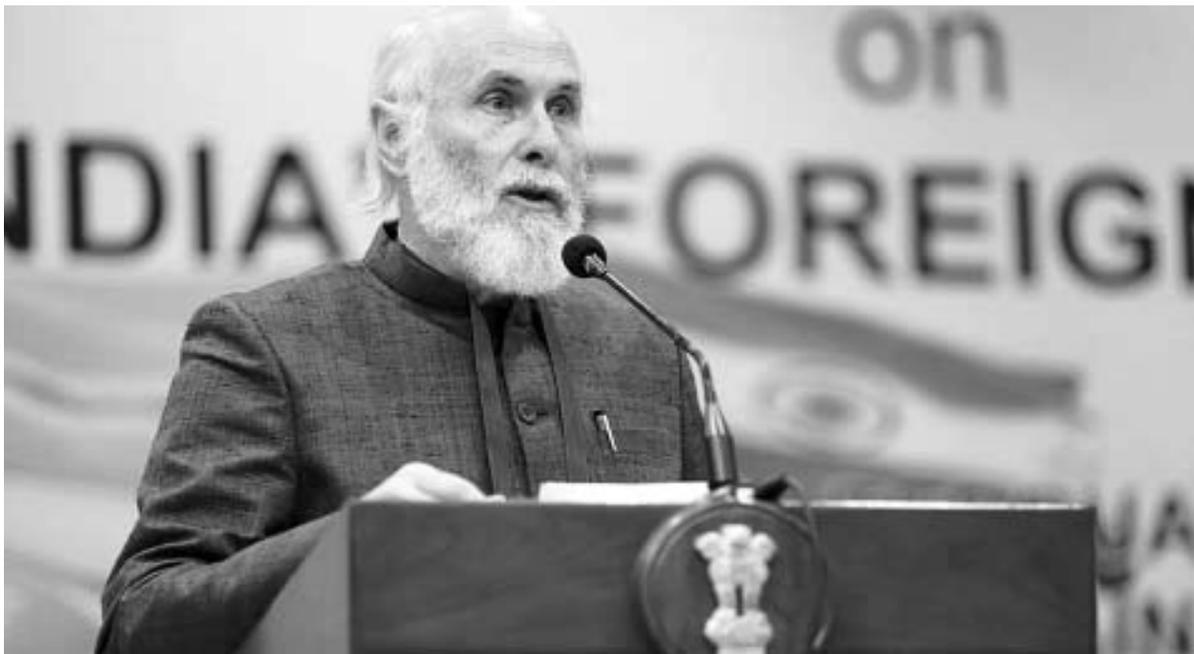
As for domestic politics, we must include bordering states like Bihar, West Bengal, Rajasthan and Punjab in the decision making process. Five of our states share a border with Bangladesh and face problems like immigration, smuggling and drug trafficking. Therefore they must be involved in foreign policy making. A good example when the Centre and a state, West Bengal, looked at an issue in the same light leading to a good outcome is the recent land boundary settlement or the Ganges water sharing treaty with Bangladesh in 1996.

Another advantage we have is in terms of skill development. India has become a hub for education and is attracting people for short term courses like computer skilling, English language, health services, finance and accounting. Protection of our diaspora has also emerged as a very important aspect of our policy. Increasingly it will take on a more important role as it has the potential to increase regional cooperation. Moreover, we have to actively articulate our point of view especially with rogue nations so that the international community takes a tough stance. In the past, we never did it and people would often ask, what does India want? This is changing now and we are more clear and direct on our policy articulation. The dialogue is more open and direct and our partners know what are our redlines. Finally, *samman, samvad, samriddhi, suraksha and sanskriti* should remain the guiding lights of our foreign policy.



India's Soft Power and Cultural Diplomacy: The Role of Yoga and Dharmic Traditions

David Frawley*



Soft Power and Cultural Diplomacy

Soft power is one of the key components of foreign policy in this age of mass communication, global trade and tourism. This soft power includes cultural factors, sharing the intellectual, artistic and spiritual culture of a country with the other nations of the world.

Soft power is part of what we can perhaps better call “cultural diplomacy”, using culture to create a favorable foreign policy image for a country to expand its associations and its interests. Cultural diplomacy aids in educating the people of foreign countries as to the values and heritage of a nation, and can correct negative portrayals in

foreign media, academic and political presentations.

In this multicultural world today, there is a clear and pronounced clash of cultures. If a country today does not communicate and promote its own culture to the world at large, then its culture may be undermined, undervalued or lose credibility even at home. When a country loses its cultural identity, other national interests may come under threat. Cultural diplomacy has many economic, political and social benefits, but also aids in the defense and security of a nation.

Such cultural diplomacy is particularly important in the case of India that is one of the

** This article is a summary of the address delivered by Dr. David Frawley, Founder & Director, American Institute of Vedic Studies on 29th January, 2018 at the Workshop on India's Foreign Policy organised by India Foundation in partnership with Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India.*

world's oldest, most profound and diverse civilisations, with an enduring worldwide impact. India's older civilisational connections with the many countries of Southeast Asia form a common cultural heritage that can aid in favorable relationships and sustain a common regional identity. India can benefit by such cultural alliances with its neighbors, and they can benefit by India as a cultural ally to help sustain their own national ethos from inimical outside forces.

Extending to East Asia that has adopted India's dharmic traditions for many centuries, cultural diplomacy can aid in communication, common values and overcoming clashing national interests for a broader regional consensus. At a global level, India's ancient culture of tolerance, diversity and peace can be a model for creating harmony between competing nations and the different clashing cultures, ancient and modern, of the entire world.

Humanity should strive to preserve the unique cultural heritages of different countries and regions, not simply reduce them to a uniform model in the global arena. This is much like the ecological need to preserve biodiversity. Cultural diversity is under threat in many areas of the world, where languages and local cultures are quickly disappearing with rapid urbanization. This is particularly true in India where many local and tribal cultures are struggling to survive.

Exporting culture, however, requires that the culture within the country is supported as well. If local cultural traditions are not maintained, there will be little of any unique culture to export to the outside. Yet cultural diplomacy also gives value and prestige to the native cultures within the country, particularly when it enables cultural

leaders and groups to travel, teach and perform throughout the world.

India's potential soft power and cultural diplomacy is reflected in its vast and unique heritage that is already influencing the world by its own intrinsic value. This is indicated by the worldwide popularity of India's Yogic teachings and dharmic traditions that historically have been centered in India. This process should be supported in the light of cultural diplomacy.

India's Civilisational Strength

India has a tremendous cultural and civilizational power that has maintained a profound impact on the world for thousands of years. This is most clearly represented by India's great gurus, yogis and dharmic traditions at an inner level, along with a sophisticated intellectual, artistic and material culture outwardly.

India's many-sided civilisation spread to Indochina and Indonesia from the start of their histories and their formative period of development. It had a profound and lasting influence on China, Japan and East Asia, becoming an integral to their own civilizational identities as part of a greater sphere of dharmic civilization. Such historical ties are of great relevance today when Asia is seeking to awaken and reclaim its identity and prestige.

Since the dawn of civilization, India has maintained regular trade contacts with Mesopotamia and the Middle East. India's connections with ancient Iran by language and religion are well known, with the two cultures closely intertwined at many points of time.

India's civilisation was honored in ancient

Greece and Rome on intellectual, spiritual and economic levels. Indo-European traditions that dominated ancient Europe like the Celts, Germans and Slavs had much in common with India's older Vedic culture. India had a significant influence on Central Asia through Afghanistan, which for many centuries was part of an Indic and Buddhist cultural sphere, including the Silk Trail. India's maritime influence along the Spice Trail brought many cultural influences through the Indo-Pacific region as well.

Such Indian civilisational influences flourished from ancient periods up to the Islamic era starting in the eighth century, when these began to decline – a decline that increased during the colonial era when the British suppressed India's native culture and its extensive networks of trade and communication, supplanting them with its own.

Yet while India's civilisational influence declined, it did persist. India's science and medicine reached the Islamic world, like the Arab adaptation of India's decimal system starting in the ninth century. From the eighteenth century, western thinkers came into contact with Hindu and Buddhist thought. One can mention such notable figures as Voltaire, Goethe, Schopenhauer, Emerson and Thoreau among those who expressed their admiration for India.

Modern Yoga and India's Soft Power

Yet it was Swami Vivekananda's travels to the West starting in 1893 that ignited a major resurgence of India's cultural influences throughout the world, led by a global adaptation of Yoga-based teachings and practices. Vivekananda's emphasis on universal consciousness and Self-realisation

paralleled the work of Einstein in breaking down time and space barriers and ushering in a new unitary vision of the cosmos.

Vivekananda was also one of the primary inspirations in India's national awakening that motivated India's Independence Movement. His work spreading Yoga to the West was complemented by his restoring respect within the country for its own Dharmic traditions, which were dismissed as regressive under foreign rule.

The Global Yoga and Dharma Movement

The world Yoga movement continued to expand exponentially throughout the twentieth century. A major upsurge of interest in Yoga and meditation occurred in the West in the nineteen sixties, with a steady growth since. Numerous Indian gurus have traveled throughout the world teaching Yoga and meditation, with Tibetan teachers often joining them.

Today perhaps over a hundred million people throughout the world practice some form of Yoga. Though asanas remain the main focus, pranayama, mantra and meditation are often included. Yoga training programs routinely examine traditional Yoga texts like the *Yoga Sutras* and *Bhagavad Gita*.

Many Yoga students follow gurus and lineages from India and take on Sanskrit names. Great gurus like Paramahansa Yogananda, Ramana Maharshi, Sri Aurobindo, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, Satya Sai Baba, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, Mata Amritanandamayi, Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev, and many others have become recognisable names in numerous countries. For their students, Yoga is not just a

fitness system but a complete culture and way of life.

Yoga has brought with it important aspects of Indian culture including Sanskrit mantras, Hindu kirtans, Indian music and dance, pujas and yajnas, and a new orientation towards Vedic sciences. Remarkably, ancient Ayurveda has emerged as one of the cutting edge forms of mind-body medicine in the world today. The study of Sanskrit at a popular level in the world has increased rapidly.

Independent India's Failure to Develop its Soft Power

Yet during this extraordinary spread of India's cultural traditions through the twentieth century, the government of independent India did little to encourage or to benefit from it. Perhaps no other country in recent times has so ignored the potential value of its soft power and so much neglected the role of cultural diplomacy. Even China, whose culture the Communist Cultural Revolution not long ago tried to eradicate, is now happy to promote its traditional medicine and martial arts, along with Chinese art, dance and commerce.

India's leftist academia has been happier denigrating the country's older culture, than producing any deeper scholarship that worldwide friends of India can appreciate. India's Congress Party rule showed some respect for Yoga, particularly under Indira Gandhi, but did little to actually support Yoga nationally or internationally.

New India and its New Vision of Yoga

The present BJP government is the first to

truly honor India's soft power and proudly share it. The Modi government has emphasised India's cultural gifts to the world, and aimed to strengthen diplomatic connections, particularly with the countries of Asia most influenced by India in the past. Cultural power must form an integral part of any realistic foreign policy.

Narendra Modi's new Yoga initiative, starting with International Yoga Day, is a welcome break from India's prior cultural lethargy. It marks a new era, a new India that honors its millennial civilisation and strives to share it. His government is introducing Yoga training into the schools, not limiting Yoga to exercise but including Yoga philosophy and meditation. Modi's new India is a rebirth of yogic India from its classical era of world influence.

Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR) can play an important role in this new expression of soft power and cultural diplomacy. ICCR has the facilities and associations in the many countries of the world that are necessary to enable it.

It is imperative that India expands its soft power and civilisational strength, both for national unity and to gain the proper place in the world for its magnificent heritage that can benefit all humanity. India has the cultural and civilizational depth to lead the world to a new era of peace and higher consciousness, but needs the political will and the diplomatic skill in order to do so. Developing that is essential and should not be neglected. It requires a new generation of seasoned diplomats with a worldview in harmony with India's civilizational values.



Factors Responsible for Sectarianism in Gilgit-Baltistan Region

Vivek Kumar Mishra*

Introduction

Sectarian conflict is not a new phenomenon and has existed in the culture of the sub-continent for many centuries in one form or the other. In its literal meaning, sectarianism refers to a rigid adherence to a particular sect. It often implies discrimination, denunciation, or violence against those outside the sect. The term is most often used to refer to religious sectarianism, involving conflict between members of different religions or denominations of the same religion. Sectarianism may, in the abstract, be characterised by dogmatism and inflexibility, sentimental adherence to an idea, belief or tradition and idealism that provides a sense of continuity, orientation, and certainty. A sectarian conflict usually refers to violent conflict along religious and political lines. It implies political conflict between different schools of thought such as that between Shia and Sunni Muslims.

In Gilgit-Baltistan, sectarian conflict is a matter of deep concern because it is damaging the fabric of society and is becoming a potent existential threat.¹ It has risen phenomenally in the region over the past few decades and has extended beyond sporadic clashes over doctrinal issues between Sunnis and Shias and metamorphosed into political conflict around

mobilisation of group identity,² with relations among different religious sects and ethnic groups becoming potentially divisive. One irresponsible move against any particular group can easily ignite emotions and shatter relative peace and harmony.³

Political Development in the Gilgit-Baltistan

Gilgit-Baltistan region has never been represented in the Pakistani Parliament. It became a separate administrative unit in 1970 under the name “Northern Areas” and an Advisory Council with 14 elected members was set up, which was subsequently converted into the Northern Areas Council in 1975. It however was devoid of any legislative or executive powers and was presided over by an Administrator appointed by Islamabad. It was formed by the amalgamation of the former Gilgit Agency, the Baltistan district and several small former princely states, the larger of which being Hunza and Nagar.⁴ The region was named “The Northern Areas of Pakistan” and placed under the direct control of Islamabad. Unlike Pakistan’s four provinces, the region has no political representation in the parliament or the federal cabinet and no status under Pakistan’s constitution.⁵

On 29 August 2009, the *Gilgit-Baltistan*

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Empowerment and Self-Governance Order 2009, was passed by the Pakistani cabinet and later signed by the then President of Pakistan, Asif Ali Zardari.⁶ The order granted self-rule to the people of Gilgit-Baltistan, by creating, among other things, an elected Gilgit-Baltistan Legislative Assembly and Gilgit-Baltistan Council. Gilgit-Baltistan thus gained a *de facto province*-like status without constitutionally becoming part of Pakistan. However, the real power rests with the governor and not with the Chief Minister or elected assembly.⁷ Currently, Gilgit-Baltistan is neither a province nor a state. It has a *semi-provincial* status. It is neither a part of what Pakistan calls Azad Kashmir nor is it a province of Pakistan. In fact, Pakistan's Supreme Court pronounced in 1994 that these areas "are part of Jammu & Kashmir state but are not part of Azad Kashmir."⁸

Demography

Gilgit-Baltistan is a multilingual, multicultural and ethnically diverse region. The Shia, Sunni, Ismaili and Nurbakhshi are the four major sectarian groups, found in the region, the Shias at 39 percent being the majority population, followed by the Sunnis with 27 percent and the Ismaili and Nurbakhshi with 18 and 16 percent respectively.⁹ The geographical distribution of the sects reflects the spatial trajectories of Islamisation: The southern district of Diamer is exclusively Sunni. Nagar in the North and Baltistan in the East is mostly Shia (with a small minority of Nurbakhshis) while Ismailis prevail in Hunza in the North and in Ghizer in the West. The city of Gilgit, being the political and economic centre of

the region, which stands at the geographic crossroads of movements from all directions, is religiously mixed. It is roughly estimated that the three major sects are almost equally represented in Gilgit.¹⁰ Skardu has a predominantly Shia population.

Factors Leading to Conflict

All communities in Gilgit-Baltistan were living peacefully in communal harmony till the 1970s as per the Kashmiri tradition prevalent before 1947. Sectarian conflict reared its ugly head only post 1970 and remains a major cause of concern. The factors responsible for the growth of sectarian conflict are:

- Theological differences between Shia and Sunni
- General Zia-ul-Haq Islamisation Policy
- The Role of Madrasas
- Afghan jihad and the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI)
- State Subject Rule (SSR)
- Divide and Rule Strategy.

Theological Differences between Shia and Sunni

To understand the sectarianism in Gilgit Baltistan it is necessary to have at least a cursory understanding of the divisions within the Islamic faith. Islam has two main branches: Shiaism and Sunnism.¹¹ The Sunni population subdivides into four major streams - Deobandis, Barelvis, Ahl-e-Hadith and Wahabis, within which there are dozens of subgroups.¹² Each sect has its own madrasas in which their own version of Islam is taught.

The crux of their differences is rooted in the question of succession and leadership of Muslims after the Prophet's death in 632 A.D. The bone of contention between the Shias and the Sunnis has historically been a dispute over questions of legitimate authority. The Sunnis regard the first four rulers, following the Prophet's death (Abu Bakr, Omar bin Khattab, Osmab bin Affan, and Ali Ibne Abu Talib), as not only legitimate but also as "pious" and "righteous" caliphs worthy of great reverence.¹³ The Shias consider Ali Ibne Abu Talib alone to have been a legitimate ruler and treat his three predecessors as usurpers. They also believe that the first three caliphs were not really true to the Prophet and his mission. Allegedly they speak ill of them in various other ways in their own gatherings and some of them use insulting vocabulary in referring to them. The Sunnis find these Shia attitudes and interpretations to be intolerably offensive.¹⁴ Sunnis regard Ali as one of the four "righteous" Caliphs. One of the major issues of conflict between the two sects is the question of acceptance of the legitimacy of the caliphate.¹⁵

To the Shias, most of the companions of the Prophet (*sahaba*), conspired after the Prophet's death to dispossess Ali (his son-in-law), and after him his descendants, the *imams*, of their divinely ordained right to the Muslim community's leadership. In the Shias view of history, these companions, and their successors, were hypocrites and usurpers who never ceased to subvert Islam for their own interests.¹⁶ Public display of mourning is an essential part of the Shia faith, particularly during *Muharram*, the first month of the Islamic calendar, when they commemorate the

Battle of Karbala (680, in Iraq) in which the Omayyads killed the Prophet's grandson, Hussain, and his family.¹⁷ For Sunnis, especially Deobandis and Ahle Hadith, these Shia beliefs and ceremonies are an insult to their religious sensibilities.

There are also differences of opinion about the merits and functions of the successor to the Prophet. "The Sunni Islam considered the Caliph to be a guardian of the *Sharia* in the community, while Shias saw in the "successor" a spiritual function connected with the esoteric interpretation of the revelation and the inheritance to the Prophet's esoteric teachings."¹⁸ In contrast to the Sunnis, the institution of *Imamate* is fundamental to the Shia Islam. "The *Imam*, besides being a descendant of the Prophet, must possess certain qualities. He must be sinless, bear the purest and cleanest character, and must be distinguished above all other men for truth and purity."¹⁹ Whereas, "the Sunnis believe that the *Imamate* is not restricted to the family of Mohammad, the *imam* need not be just, virtuous, or irreproachable in his life, nor need he be the most excellent or eminent being of his time, so long as he is free, adult, sane, and possessed of the capacity to attend to the ordinary affairs of State, he is qualified for election."²⁰ Later, both the Shia and Sunni schools further split into several sub-sects on different issues related to succession, interpretation of scriptures and political theory of Islam. Each sect blames the violent activities of the other as the reason for its own existence. The fundamental problem of the sectarian organisations is their sectarian identity which cannot be used as an ideology for political mobilisation.

General Zia-ul-Haq's Islamisation Policy

The Islamisation policy of General Zia was state enterprise based on a series of reforms intended to turn Pakistan into a truly Islamic state.²¹ A highlight of General Zia's Islamisation programme was the imposition of *Zakat*, (an Islamic tax) which the government decreed would be automatically collected from people's bank accounts.²² Shia and Sunni schools of law differ quite markedly in their stipulations on *Zakat*, as in many other areas of law.²³ The government's decision to impose *Zakat* and *Ushr* (farming tax) ordinances according to the prescriptions of the *Hanafi* school of Sunni law, created intense resentment among the Shias and proved to be a powerful stimulus towards their political mobilisation in Pakistan. The implementation of the Sunni *Hanafi fiqh* thus became the starting point of Shia resistance in Pakistan.²⁴ Pakistan's Shia minority, who demanded to be exempted from the tax on religious grounds, fiercely resisted General Zia's attempts. Following large demonstrations in 1980, they were exempted from the tax but this sowed the seeds of anti-Shia sentiments and a growing sectarian violence. Over time, these differences were manifested in a growth of new types of movements which were virulently anti-Shia. In 1980, the clash over the *Zakat* issue led to the formation of a Shia movement called the Tehrik-i-Nifaz-i Jafaria Pakistan (TJP).²⁵ Tehrik-e-Nifaz-e-Fiqh-e-Jafaria's (TNFJ's) emergence also marked a radical shift in the intra-Shia scene as the centre of gravity of Shia politics, traditionally associated with big landlords, shifted to the Shia *Ulema* and

the younger militant groups. The increasingly confrontational and aggressive posture of TNFJ, however, led to a Deobandi Sunni backlash that took the form of Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP), founded in 1985.²⁶

The SSP, under the leadership of Haq Nawaz Jhangvi, started a hard-line anti-Shia agenda and demanded that Shias be termed infidels.²⁷ Thus began the strife between the (Shia) TJP and the (Sunni) SSP, in which leaders and followers alike were killed in bloody encounters and outright assassinations. When the SSP leader was killed in 1990, an even more violent offshoot was created in his name, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LJ). The formation of the LJ in turn sparked the formation of another militant Shia organisation, Sipah-e-Mohammedi Pakistan (SMP) in 1993.²⁸ Both the LJ and the SMP are more ruthless than their parent organisations (SSP, TJP). In particular the LJ has proved to be the most violent sectarian organisation ever to have existed in Pakistan.²⁹

General Zia's time is very important to the geopolitical and social dynamics of Gilgit-Baltistan. Immediately after imposing martial law, Zia extended the subjugating rules to Gilgit-Baltistan and supported Sunni Islam to legitimise his rule. However, Zia's support to particular Sunni parties and groups and the existing power vacuum in Gilgit-Baltistan provided an opportunity for the ulema to assert their role in public space.³⁰

The impact of the aggressive Sunni Islamisation drive initiated by Zia fell substantially on the Shia-dominated Gilgit-Baltistan region. The importance given by Islamabad to the Sunni ulema (religious scholars), to the Deobandi extremist

groups, and to the politics played by the regional administrative officers appointed by Islamabad, was largely responsible for fuelling sectarian clashes in the region. Besides, it was always in the interest of the Army in Pakistan to keep Gilgit-Baltistan divided on sectarian lines to retain tight control over this strategically important area.

The armed Sunni extremists had traveled a long way to reach Gilgit without being stopped by the security forces at any point. Mohammad Shehzad has stated in *Friday Times*, “a huge lashkar of 80,000 Sunni extremists was sent by General Zia government to annihilate the Shias. Villages inhabited by the Shias-Jalalabad, Bonji, Darot, Jaglot, Pari, and Manawar, were completely ruined. Even their animals were slaughtered. The laskhar had traveled a long distance from Mansehra to Gilgit and the Government did not stop it. Instead, it put the blame on R&AW (an Indian intelligence agency) and CIA (the US external intelligence Agency).³¹ Besides the Sunni Islamisation policies of General Zia, which were not completely abandoned by the successive governments, Islamabad’s reliance on jihadis for its proxy war in Kashmir and its policy to keep the strategically important region of Gilgit-Baltistan under its absolute control prompted it to fuel the flames of sectarian violence in the region.³²

The Role of Madrasas

A major development that served to raise the level of sectarian conflict was the rapid spread of madrasas. The madrasas, sponsored by politico-religious parties and often funded by donors from the Middle East, instruct their students in

accordance with the sectarian beliefs of the school’s sponsors. They have spread even to small towns and enroll more students than the public elementary and middle schools in Pakistan and in Gilgit-Baltistan. They teach theology, but many of them also teach their students to disapprove of sects other than their own and also impart to them military training. The phenomenal growth of madrasas has contributed to the promotion of sectarian conflict by producing a large number of indoctrinated students with sect oriented education. Hence, these madrasa students are converted into sectarian militants, readily available to fight for their sectarian organisations against the rival sect.

All the madrasas, including the Shia ones, teach the *Dars-e-Nizami* though they do not use the same texts. They also teach their particular point of view (*maslak*) which clarifies and rationalises the beliefs of the sect (Sunni or Shia) and sub-sect (Deobandi, Bareilvi and Ahl-e-Hadith).³³ Moreover, they train their students to refute, what in their views are heretical beliefs and some Western ideas. They have thus become “...a source of hate-filled propaganda against other sects and the sectarian divide has become sharper and more violent.”³⁴ Muhammad Qasim Zaman has aptly remarked “...the madrasas not only have their own exclusivist sectarian affiliations, many of them are also intimately associated with particular sectarian organisations. Much of the leadership of sectarian organisations comes from madrasas. The establishment of new madrasas is likewise often sponsored by these organisations led the growth of the sectarian conflict.”³⁵ The network of madrasas is crucial for

both Shia and Sunni radical groups to exert and extend their influence and both have profusely used the print media to disseminate their ideas.³⁶ Gilgit-Baltistan has witnessed a mushrooming of madrasas that preach sectarian hatred.

The Role of Afghan jihad and The Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI)

The Afghan jihad played an important role in fuelling sectarianism in Gilgit-Baltistan. The USA funded billions of dollars to Sunni sectarian organisations in Pakistan in the cold war politics.³⁷ The Soviet invasion in Afghanistan and the subsequent decision of the U.S. to provide funds to Pakistani authorities, especially the ISI (the intelligence agency of Pakistan), to create a radical Islamist international brigade to fight the Soviet army, worsened the situation in Pakistan by militarising the sectarian groups. The Pakistan's ISI coordinated and distributed this financial and military aid - especially to radical Islamist groups. "Jihad" entered educational institutions especially in the madrasas, deliberately to mobilise fighters against the Soviets.³⁸ The sectarian tensions in Gilgit-Baltistan as well as in other parts of Pakistan are related to this.³⁹ Many local Sunnis who had participated in the anti-Soviet jihad in Afghanistan returned home to join anti-Shia sectarian groups like the SSP and the Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ). Local Shia graduates from Iran's religious schools also returned home and with Iranian financial backing and support joined Shia militant organisations.⁴⁰

State Subject Rule (SSR)

Pakistan occupied Jammu Kashmir (POJK)

is a part of the state of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), and hence it is an integral part of India. "State Subject Rule" was a law passed by the erstwhile Maharaja of Kashmir defining a hereditary state subject, and forbidding employment of non-state subjects in public services. Also, non-state residents were not allowed to purchase land in the State of Jammu and Kashmir. However, under Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, this law was abolished in 1974, which opened the floodgates of immigration for people from different parts of Pakistan to settle in Gilgit-Baltistan. Interestingly, both on the Indian side of the Line of Control (LoC) as well as in other areas of PoJK, the "State Subject Rule" is still in force.⁴¹ This is one of the clearest manifestations of the intent of Pakistan to change the demographic profile of the region. This paved the way for settling outsiders-mostly *Sunni ethnic Pathans* and *Punjabis*- in Gilgit-Baltistan region.⁴²

The attempt by successive Pakistani administrations to bring people from various parts of Pakistan has created fear in the minds of the people of the region that the government is aiming at their ethnic marginalisation in their own traditional homeland. From 1998 to 2011, due to large-scale migration, the population in Gilgit-Baltistan surged by 63.1 percent, as against 22.1 percent in Mirpur-Muzaffarabad (PoJK), where the "State Subject Rule" is still in force. The fact that the population in Sunni dominated Diamer district more than doubled during the period, gives some credence to this allegation.⁴³

Divide and Rule Strategy

The sectarian conflict in the Gilgit-Baltistan

region developed as a strategy of “divide and rule,” employed by the Government of Pakistan, in order to prevent a further joint uprising of the local people of the Gilgit-Baltistan region. Radical Sunni Deobandi ulemas were sent to madrasas in Gilgit to propagate that Shias are not “real Muslims,” and they soon replaced the Bareilvi Maulvis in the mosques. As such propagation became more vocal and frequent, the Shias too reciprocated. This divide and rule policy is effectively being used by the Pakistani establishment to counter the demand for local self-rule by the people of the region. With the sects engaged in settling sectarian scores with each other, they lose out on taking a united stand to pressurise Islamabad to address their genuine long pending political and economic grievances.

Impact of Sectarianism in Gilgit-Baltistan Region

The region has, however, paid a heavy price under Pakistani occupation. It is reported that, as of January 2001, the old population ratio of 1:4 (non-locals to locals) has now changed to 3:4 (non-locals to locals).⁴⁴ The Shia pockets of Skardu and Gilgit are witnessing a constant increase in the population of non-Shias. The Pakistani administration has also been involved in efforts to alter the demographic profile of region, reducing the indigenous people to a minority. It is estimated that more than thousands of lives have been lost since the sectarian conflicts surfaced in this region in 1988.⁴⁵

The entire region does not have any kind of industry and over 85 per cent of the people live below the poverty line.⁴⁶ Due to the limited means

of earning a livelihood, the people of this region mostly depend on government offered jobs and on the tourism industry. The latter has however been badly effected as a result of conflict, which also prevents both foreign and local investors from investing in the region. This in turn increases unemployment, giving rise to further lawlessness and violence in the society.⁴⁷ The region is caught in a vicious cycle and sectarian violence has become a major internal security threat to the Gilgit-Baltistan region.

Conclusion

Gilgit-Baltistan is legally and constitutionally an integral part of India. Unfortunately, successive Indian governments have maintained a stoic silence over the happenings there. Sectarian violence in the region is an attempt by the Pakistani establishment to deny the local residents their legitimate rights by embroiling them in internecine war. By denying Gilgit-Baltistan a constitutional identity, depriving its residents of political rights and recourse to justice and administering it through a highly centralised bureaucracy, Pakistan has created an environment in which increasing numbers, particularly youth, have no outlet to express themselves except through sectarian conflict.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s mention of supporting voices from Balochistan and Gilgit during his 2016 Independence Day speech was seen as a positive signal of a shift in Indian foreign policy. India needs to explore mechanisms to communicate its support to Gilgit-Baltistan’s people. It is high time that India’s diplomatic channels reach out to the voices of Gilgit Baltistan.

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Dharma-Dhamma Links: Strengthening Cultural Bonds

Ram Nath Kovind*



With the fourth International Dharma-Dhamma Conference, which is the first to be hosted by Nalanda University, in the state of Bihar, in a sense, the twin traditions of Dharma and Dhamma have come home. They have come home to the sacred soil of this ancient land of faith, wisdom and enlightenment – the land of Lord Buddha.

In the period of Lord Buddha, well before modern states and state boundaries, the entire region of Bihar was known as Magadha. In those times, Sanskrit and Pali were the principal languages of communication. Dharma is a Sanskrit word and Dhamma is a Pali word. Their meaning

is the same and they have the same root. While travelling through the Magadha region, Lord Buddha and his disciples rested in camps that grew into monasteries. These were called *viharas*. It is from the word *vihara*, that we get the name “Bihar.”

Aside from the location, the timing of this Dharma-Dhamma Conference is very appropriate as it coincides with the 25th anniversary of the ASEAN-India Dialogue Partnership. This conference stands testimony to the abiding friendship and shared values of India and ASEAN – as well as to the spiritual heritage and knowledge that belongs to both the sub-continent and to Southeast Asia.

** This article is a summary of the address delivered by Shri Ram Nath Kovind, President of India, on the occasion of inauguration of the 4th International Conference on Dharma-Dhamma on the theme ‘State and Social Order in Dharma-Dhamma Traditions’ on 11th January, 2018 at Rajgir, Bihar organized by India Foundation in partnership with Nalanda University, Vietnam Buddhist University and the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India.*

Dharma-Dhamma Conference is an attempt at enhancing understanding of the common roots and similarities of the diverse traditions of Dharma and Dhamma. We know them by many names, but they guide us to the same truth. They emphasise the many roads, rather than any one road, that lead us to the same desired goal. The deliberations at this conference will explore that essential truth and will also discuss and debate the role of Dharma and Dhamma in shaping ethical conduct and purposeful statecraft. These themes are universal and eternal. They have survived long periods of external challenge and of self-doubt, and have shown a remarkable resilience through human history.

Nalanda University itself is an embodiment of this spirit. The ancient university that stood here was a marvel of knowledge and wisdom. It was located in this very region of India but had an international character. It attracted students, scholars and pilgrims from all over Asia. Similarly today's Nalanda University represents the everlasting Dharma-Dhamma identity. And it too is a cosmopolitan enterprise. The university's conceptualisation, founding and growth are the result of cherished efforts by India and a host of partner countries, particularly countries from the ASEAN family.

The international delegates attending Dharma-Dhamma Conference from far-off continents, including both North and South America, represent the breadth and diversity of Asia – from Central Asia to Southeast Asia. Each of the countries and societies is unique and has special attributes. Yet, all of them are recipients, in some manner, of the Dharma-Dhamma tradition. All of

them have received the message of Lord Buddha – a message that has travelled across Asia and beyond, and a message that is a binding force for all of us.

That journey of Buddhism as a pan-Asian creed and later a worldwide following began 2,500 years ago in Bihar. As such, the Dharma-Dhamma Conference is a commemoration of a great phenomenon that has its origins right here in this region.

That voyage of Buddhism to the rest of the Asian continent carried more than just the Dharma-Dhamma tradition. It carried a rich cargo of knowledge and learning, arts and crafts, meditation techniques and even martial arts. Eventually, the many roads that the determined monks and nuns - those men and women of faith - carved out came to carry both culture and commerce. They became among the earliest transcontinental trade routes.

Long before the term became popular, Buddhism was the basis for an early form of globalization, and of interconnectedness in Asia. It promoted pluralism and diversity of thought by giving space to multiple ideas and liberal expression. It emphasised morality in individual life, in human partnerships and in social and economic transactions. It urged principles of living, working and cooperating in harmony with nature and the environment. It inspired trade and business links that were honest, transparent and mutually beneficial to sister communities.

At the simplest level, the Dharma-Dhamma tradition tells us of the need and the importance for constant striving to improve oneself – to attain a higher calling and to reach a stage of

enlightenment. It was the reaching of this enlightenment that led Prince Siddhartha to become Lord Buddha or for Ashoka, the warrior king, to become Dhamma Ashoka.

Anyone who has been touched by Lord Buddha has embraced a process of ceaseless and constant striving to become a better person, a more enlightened person and a person who has tried to rise above material ambitions and acquisitiveness. This is true for human beings, but it also applies to societies and nations. We must all appreciate the Dharma or the Dhamma of contentment.

It is estimated that more than half the world's current population lives in regions that have been historically influenced – and in many cases continue to be influenced – by the enlightenment that Lord Buddha attained and placed as a model before humanity. This is the thread that stitches us all together. This is the vision that must inspire us in the 21st century. This is truly what has been described as the "Light of Asia."

India's Act East Policy has to be seen in this context. It is much more than a diplomatic initiative. It is not targeted at just greater trade and investment. Of course all of those aspirations are extremely important for the prosperity and

well-being of the people of India and of all our partner countries. Yet, the Act East Policy aims at sharing not merely economic opportunities but aims at integrating the dreams and hopes of the hundreds of millions who live in India and in Southeast Asia and in other parts of Asia that are covered by the Dharma-Dhamma footprint. Our past has a common source. Inevitably, our destiny too is linked. This conference and the new Nalanda University are symbols of that spirit we share. Our economic and diplomatic endeavours must draw from the same well-spring.

For the states of India's Northeast and east – states such as Bihar – the spiritual, cultural and trade links that were so lovingly created by the monks of Dharma and Dhamma hundreds and thousands of years ago are much more than a historical memory. They are wired into society's DNA. They are a living reality that makes Southeast Asia a natural and irreplaceable partner in the quest for development and prosperity, for peace and pluralism, at home and across our majestic continent. And as such, for all of us here and in any area of human activity, Dharma and Dhamma are both a continuous, eternal journey and a destination.



Transforming India's Economic Architecture

Shaurya Doval*



India is a \$ 2.5 trillion economy that is growing by 7-10% a year. It is the seventh largest economy in the world in nominal terms. It took us 60 years to become a \$1 trillion economy but only seven years after, we added another \$2 trillion. We are expected to become \$3 trillion by 2019-2020 and \$4 trillion by 2024. In terms of global wealth creation our figures are doing what continents do. The other dimension to our economy is that we are still a poor country. Our GDP per capita is \$1600 and this reflects in our rankings. Interestingly, both these facts continue to exist in parallel and the irony is that both are true. Therefore, it will require a lot of time and effort to make a difference to the lives of Indians. We must also be aware while talking about the Indian economy that this is not a normal economy.

It is in this context that the government under Prime Minister Modi was elected. To understand the Prime Minister's reforms we need to

understand “shared economy” — creating prosperity and sharing it. The contours of Prime Minister Modi's economic reforms point to a few trends. First, there is a breakout trend. It is for the first time that India has started to think big about what it wants to achieve. The Prime Minister's Make in India, Jan Dhan Yojana and Smart Cities are all big and ambitious projects.

Second, this government is following a two pronged approach, a top-down along with a bottom-up approach. The bottom-up approach emphasises inclusiveness while the top-down approach emphasises policies that accelerate growth through shared prosperity. Other elements of the top-down approach include unlocking state-controlled resources such as coal, oil and gas and telecom spectrum allocation where we raised \$330 billion, \$40 billion and \$26 billion respectively.

Third, we recognise that we cannot accelerate growth without attracting investment. The dividends of the Prime Minister's push to attract foreign investment are visible today - we are the largest receivers of FDI having doubled from approximately \$30 billion four years ago to \$65 billion today. Fourth, India introduced GST to create a common tax net. This progressive tax system is destination based, multistage and on value addition. Keeping aside the teething problems, GST alone will add \$250 to \$500 billion in incremental GDP and 1.5% to 2% increase in GDP per year. More importantly, it will reduce production costs by 10%. In the Indian context, these are very large numbers.

** This article is a summary of the address delivered by Shri Shaurya Doval, Director, India Foundation on 1st February, 2018 at New Delhi at the Workshop on India's Foreign Policy organised by India Foundation in partnership with the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India.*

Fifth, an increase in GDP will not necessarily result in shared prosperity unless we create employment. The manufacturing sector can alone absorb a million people every month into the workforce but accounts for only 16% of our GDP. Economists suggest we need to increase this to 25-30% of our GDP to add hundred million jobs over the course of the next five years. Unfortunately we have not been able to reach these goals but the government has pushed for a growth in the sector through Make in India and indigenous defence procurement. Yet, constraints like cost of capital, skilled manpower and innovation remain.

Sixth, the government has focused tremendously on the fight against corruption through demonetisation, renegotiation of tax treaties with tax havens, Black Money (Undisclosed Foreign Income and Assets) and Imposition of Tax Act 2015 and Income Declaration Schemes. Corruption is a long haul social fight but fighting corruption will contribute to the growth of our economy, as the economy pays a huge price in terms of innovation and crowds out talent due to corruption. It is estimated that 25% of India's GDP is in the black economy. When "black money" comes back into the system it can be used for more productive purposes to boost the economy. Therefore, combating corruption will play a role in helping India's transition from a \$3 billion economy to \$4 billion economy.

Seventh, one of the biggest challenges that prohibits us from becoming a globally competitive economy is that our cost of capital is very high, making it difficult for the Indian entrepreneur to become globally competitive. Therefore, reforming the banking sector is necessary to lower

the cost. In the next three to four years we will be able to see the impact of the changes in the banking sector. The progress that our country has achieved in the last four years is unprecedented.

These initiatives will allow greater wealth to be created. More importantly, it will allow for shared prosperity as one cannot have islands of prosperity in a sea of poverty. Lack of shared prosperity leads to violence and Maoism. In 2011, could lead out of 250 million households, 145 million had access to banking. In rural areas out of 170 million households, 90 million had access while in urban areas out of 80 million households, 53 million had access. From 2014 to 2018, 308 million bank accounts had been opened of which 180 were in rural areas and 126 million in urban areas, which is more than what India achieved in the first 65 years of independence. Moreover, 90% of the newly opened bank accounts are being used and 232 million RuPay debit cards were issued. With opening of these accounts, benefits can be directly transferred saving the government about 57,000 crores. Unsurprisingly, the number of beneficiaries also increased from 10 crore to 65 crore people. Therefore, when India transitions into its 75th or 100th year, it will not be a small transition but will be a transition that will swing the entire GDP of the world. The question now remains that when this prosperity comes will India have the receiving systems or the architecture to allow the prosperity to be distributed? The Soviet Union is a classic example of a country that could not absorb the benefits of opening up. In conclusion, to fully understand the economic reforms over the last four years we must think of two terms — "shared prosperity" and "changing India's economic architecture".



India-China Economic Relations and The Persistent Trade Deficit

Sriparna Pathak*

A tenacious boundary dispute, large volumes of trade, boundary incursions, similar stances on advancing developing countries' interests with respect to climate change, a persistent trade deficit, mutual suspicion, a boundary skirmish in 1962 and growth rates high enough to herald what is known as the Asian century! A strange mix of these facts and more is what India-China relations have been. An emphasis on cooperation is the overarching framework of the bilateral relations between India and China, and an emphasis on mutual benefits is a constant in official statements from the two sides. Even post the standoff at Doklam last year, Chinese foreign minister Wang Yi told a news briefing that it was normal for the two neighbours to have differences. He added that there is a huge potential for cooperation between the two countries. In fact, despite 2017 having been marred by the Doklam standoff, a milestone in cooperation was achieved in June, at the Astana summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, when India became a full member of the organization.

However, despite the seeming bonhomie between the two, bilateral relations between the two in reality remain a strange mix of cooperation and conflict. Beyond the boundary dispute, a persisting negative balance of trade for India is an irritant in the relations. In a span of ten years, the growth in trade deficit between India and China has been 319.74 percent! While the uncovered trade gap was USD 602 millions in 1998, it increased to USD 48 billion in 2015. Trade deficit with China narrowed only marginally to USD 51.08 billion in 2017 from USD 52.69 billion in 2016.

India's export basket to China is dominated by commodities like cotton, copper, cement and mineral fuels; while China's top exports to India include electrical items, organic chemicals, plastics and ships among others. In the unfolding scenario of the 'new normal' in China, the process of the commodities that forms India's export basket to China is likely to remain subdued. In a situation of the new normal, where China has to spur its own domestic consumption, import reduction is not unimaginable, and India is likely to see its trade deficit with China rising in the near future.

The simplest solution to address the trade deficit would be to increase the availability of Indian goods in the Chinese market. However, India lacks a comparative advantage in producing goods, whereas China is the manufacturing platform of the world. Even in the goods that India does have a comparative advantage, pharmaceuticals for example, there exists tariff as well as non tariff barriers in China. While licenses and regulations for Chinese Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) are granted by Indian Drug Regulatory Authorities in four months, it takes roughly five to six years for even established Indian Pharma firms to register their products in China. Indian IT services are unable to make a massive breakthrough in China's opaque state controlled and state owned enterprises.

The reason for Indian products being at the receiving end of non tariff barriers is clearly political. An example of this lies in the case of Basmati rice. China is one of the largest buyers of non-Basmati rice from Pakistan, but it does not allow such supplies from India. Certain oilseed

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exports require as many as 11 certificates stating the items are pest free. Ironically, 10 of the 11 pests mentioned are already present in China.

Additional issues include those of banking and foreign exchange remittance procedures, lack of intellectual property standards and a lack of transparency. Implementation of rules is different at national and sub national levels in China, the details of which are not easily available in English. Additionally, there have been instances, wherein factories are inspected at the exporter's expense. Such forms of restrictions on imports by stealth, through the usage of non tariff barriers, often remain invisible.

Another plausible way to address the trade deficit is through increasing levels of Chinese foreign direct investment (FDI) in India. However, Chinese FDI is negligent in India as compared to FDI received from other countries. India received USD 60 billion worth of FDI in 2016-17, of which only USD 278 million came from China.

A third way to tackle the issue is through addressing the problem of dumping. The government of India has already started taking steps in this regard. In October 2017, to protect local steel manufacturers from cheap imports, India imposed anti dumping duties on stainless steel products from certain countries including China. Last year, India launched 12 anti dumping investigations against China, followed by the U.S. with 11 investigations. China suffered 37 trade remedy investigations in all last year. The issue of dumping is a source of concern not just for India but for other countries as well. In December last year, the G 20 body called the Global Forum on Steel Excess Capacity reached a deal which promises that countries will phase out subsidies and cut over capacities- a move aimed particularly at China. The deal was struck despite the US, which is the

world's largest importer of steel and China, the world's largest exporter of steel being at loggerheads. China resisted US pressures to take on more responsibilities for market distorting trade.

Keeping the slowing Chinese economy in mind, the already shrinking demand in China for raw materials will only shrink further, resulting in huge overcapacities. This in turn will force producers to increasingly push sales to the rest of the world, often at much below realistic prices. This will be a big source of concern for countries like India which already are at the receiving end in the bilateral trade relationship.

As seen from the trade patterns and the history of lingering trade deficit, as well as the existence of tariff and non tariff barriers, China has not opened many doors to Indian products. The state of economic relations between the two clearly is not a win-win one. For India, there is an urgent need to change the trade basket and to introduce elements wherein India has proven competence. Additionally the tools provided by multilateral institutions such as the Global Forum on Steel Excess capacity is an innovative tool to address trade distorting practices, and India needs to utilize more of such tools. In addition, India needs to repeat emphasis on market access and removal of tariff and non tariff barriers during talks. India could also encourage its traders to showcase their products at trade fairs in China, in order to create greater demand for the goods. Given the fact that India is among the biggest markets for smart phones and other electronic goods, the demand for Chinese goods is going to remain constant. However, India could look at sourcing of electronic goods from China to Taiwan. A trade deficit as huge as USD 51.08 billion is clearly not sustainable and will only weaken the fundamentals of the Indian economy.



Kushok Bakula Rinpoche – India’s Monk Ambassador to Mongolia

Rami Desai*

“It was due to our Buddhist heritage and Kushok Bakula Rinpoche’s presence in the country that the transition to democracy in Mongolia, unlike in other socialist countries, was so peaceful. Rinpoche was an integral part of this great transformation”

- N. Ekhbayar, the President of Mongolian Peoples Revolutionary party and Minister of Culture

If one thinks of India’s linkages with Mongolia, one name that readily comes to mind is Kushok Bakula Rinpoche. He was an Arcadian lama, reluctant politician, “the Architect of Modern Ladakh” to Indians and “*Elchin Bagsh*” to Mongolians, meaning Ambassador Teacher. He was a champion revivalist and the 19th incarnation of Arhat Bakula, considered as one of the 16 direct disciples of Lord Buddha who took a vow to reincarnate in order to preserve Buddhism till the coming of Maitreya. The birth centenary of the 19th Kushok Bakula Rinpoche was celebrated in 2017. He was not just an Ambassador of India to Mongolia but a teacher who played a great role in reviving and restructuring Buddhism in Mongolia.

Kushok Bakula Rinpoche was born into Matho cadet branch of the Ladakhi royal family in 1917. He studied at the Great Drepung Monastery in Lhasa. By the age of 23, he was awarded the highest degree, and achieved one of the highest levels in Buddhist metaphysics and philosophy.

Following his education, he held many official positions during his lifetime including being a minister in Jammu and Kashmir Government, two-term Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha), a Member of the National Commission on Minorities and India’s Ambassador to Mongolia for a decade.

Rinpoche played a definitive role in all the responsibilities he took up. It was at the insistence of the Ladakhis that he decided to represent them in the Indian political landscape. He himself was a reluctant politician. The Forties were a time of great change for the country and Ladakhis were in a fortunate position to have a visionary leader like Rinpoche. In 1948, when tribal raiders from Pakistan attacked Jammu and Kashmir, he successfully coordinated Indian efforts to protect Ladakh. The enemy was only 13 kms away. He made a detailed case for Ladakh to remain a part of India. Though he was a Monk, he called for Ladakhis to join the Indian Army even though it was against his essence of a monk. Rinpoche even allowed the Indian troops to convert a section of his Pethub Monastery into a makeshift military hospital. When a section of people in Kashmir demanded plebiscite, Rinpoche categorically stated that Ladakh would never go to Pakistan and would remain with India. He believed that Buddhism could not have flourished in Pakistan the way it could in India.

He also planted the seeds for the demand of Union Territory (UT) status for Ladakh following frustrating stints in the Jammu and Kashmir administration where he felt that the region’s concerns were being ignored and the focus of the

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administration was only on the Kashmir valley. The establishment of the current Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council is a direct legacy of the initial demands he made for UT status in the 1960s.

Rinpoche also worked hard to preserve the Ladakhi identity and religion. Even though the Moravian Church was set up in Leh in 1885 by Moravian missionaries from Saxony, they managed to have barely any impact on the local population. When Rinpoche finished his education he realised the tactics of the missionaries to convert was through imparting education, therefore he strengthened the local schools in the region. He also set up a school in North India and enabled Ladakhi students to integrate with mainstream India. He was a true patriot, Indian nationalist and visionary who believed that the future of all the states in India was centred in complete integration.

He was awarded the Padma Bhushan in 1988. The late Kushok Bakula Rinpoche remains the most prominent Buddhist leader of Independent India. However, it was his contribution to the revival of Buddhism in Mongolia that genuinely stands out.

Rinpoche's first contact with Mongolians was with his fellow monks at the great Drepung Monastery in the 1930s. He was aware of the situation of Monks in Mongolia and by the late 1960s when the trend amongst Tibetan Lamas living in India was to travel to the US and Europe, where Buddhism had gained popularity, he decided to journey to northern and northeastern parts of Asia where Buddhism had once flourished but was later destroyed by the Communists. He wanted to fulfill the spiritual needs of people who

had been forcefully deprived of this intrinsic fulfillment.

In 1968, he started travelling to the Soviet Union, Mongolia, China and Vietnam. He was the first Buddhist Monk of his stature to do so. This lifted the spirits of Buddhists in the region. He also visited the Buryatia as well as Kalmykia. These regions had considerable Mongol and Buddhist populations. He travelled often to give sermons in private and to make contact with the Soviet Authorities. On one of his visits he began dialogues with the Soviet authorities to return the Buddhist Temple, *Gunzechoinei Datsan*, in St. Petersburg which had been vandalized by the Red Army. Soon after this contact the first service in 50 years was held there by Kushok Bakula Rinpoche himself. In 1989, he also consecrated a place for the building of a temple on the outskirts of Elista. He saw the new movements of Perestroika (restructuring) and Glasnost (openness) as an opportunity to mobilize the Buddhist community in Russia and he did so along with other brave Buddhist leaders. By 1989, the Buddhist community in Russia was officially recognised.

In January 1990, he assumed his office as Ambassador of India to Mongolia. It is interesting that 1917 the year in which he was born was an year of horse and also the year in which Russian revolution had taken place. 1990, the year Rinpoche assumed office as Ambassador was also the year of the horse. There is an ancient legend in Mongolia which says it is predicted that in the 20th century Buddhism in Mongolia would come under attack, but Kushok Bakula Rinpoche would restore the lost glory of Buddhism in Mongolia. And as it turns out within months after Rinpoche

assumed his assignment as Ambassador in January 1990, the political situation peaked in Mongolia and by March 1990 Mongolia had become a free and democratic country.

To prepare for this paper the author read what she could on culture and history of Mongolia, read journals, saw documentaries, and spoke to key people to gain an insight on Rinpoche's motivation and impact in Mongolia. In the process, she spoke to Shri Sonam Wangchuk Shakso who was aide to Rinpoche for over two decades. He told an interesting story. A few young men had come from the democratic forces that were agitating, to meet Rinpoche. Sonamji was worried as Rinpoche held an official position, it should not look like they were interfering in Mongolia's internal affairs. So he told the boys to not talk about the political situation. But enthusiasm got the better of them and when they met Rinpoche they immediately asked for guidance. Rinpoche only said three things – i) never resort to violence, it was pointless; ii) remember the example of the Indian struggle for independence, iii) remember what happened in Tiananmen Square in China.

He gave them *jangyas*, and one boy asked him for some more which later that evening Sonamji on TV saw was on the hands of all the young agitators on hunger strike. Sonamji was aware that by now everyone knew where these *jangyas* had come from. He thought they might have to leave Mongolia, and asked Rinpoche for guidance. Rinpoche was his calm and serene self and told him not to worry but to contact the Foreign office and relay the facts to them in order to avoid any confusion. The next morning, they woke up to very surprising news. The democratic forces and the government had negotiated through the night and

had agreed on paving the way for a new Democratic Mongolia. It is also important to note here that Mongolia was the only country in transition where during its agitation not a single bullet was fired. This was owed to the people of Mongolia and to Rinpoche's presence. After this incident, Rinpoche's popularity soared. Every day there would be large lines of people outside the Indian Embassy waiting to meet Rinpoche and to take his blessings. Police forces had to manage the crowds and when they would walk by the embassy they would bow in reverence to Rinpoche knowing that it was his residence.

Rinpoche, without wasting a day started rebuilding Buddhism in Mongolia. He had noticed that Christian missionaries had already begun pouring into Mongolia, armed with ample funds, to convert Mongolians who had lost contact with Buddhism. He certainly was not against freedom of expression but did not accept the underhanded tactics used by Christian missionaries.

On 15 November, 1990, on the initiative of Kushok Bakula Rinpoche, an Assembly of Monks was held at the Gandan Monastery with nearly 200 senior monks from across Mongolia and government representatives in attendance. It was for the first time in 70 years that the Buddhist clergy were allowed to assemble in such a number. The Department of Religious Affairs which under the communist regime had been responsible for curbing religious activities in Mongolia now had a new role of working for its restoration and development. It was for the first time that monks could assemble in a free environment and discuss issues without fear of persecution. He also soon began travelling the length and breadth of the country. He took Buddhism to people in need of

spiritual fulfilment who were in rural areas. He was already at an advanced age but that did not stop him from travelling in extreme climatic conditions and rugged terrains. He brought Buddhism to people and ordained monks in makeshift Ger temples. He gave sermons and blessings and observed the condition of the religion.

One of the most crucial things that Kushok Bakula Rinpoche noticed during his travels was the condition of the Buddhist Monasteries. After years of suppression there was no place that Monks could go to get proper training. Many Mongolian Monks at the time did not adhere to monastic regulations for a variety of reasons including the lack of monastic institutions that could house monks and provide them with daily necessities and adequate education. Kushok Bakula Rinpoche on the other hand often publicly pointed out the importance of upholding one's monastic vows, which he saw as indispensable for the flourishing of Buddhism in Mongolia. So he set out to establish the Pethub Monastery in Ulaanbaatar, named after his own Monastery in India. He brought qualified lamas from Sikkim and Tibet to teach at his monastery and obtained scholarships and visas for his best students to go to India. He also recognised the spiritual needs of women. He opened the Lay Women Buddhist Organization and gave monastic ordination to women, the first ever in modern Mongolia.

In 2001, He was conferred with the 'Polar Star' one of the highest civilian orders in Mongolia for his role in reviving Buddhism.

However, he was not interested in culturally

influencing the Mongolian monks. Rather, he was interested to equip them with the necessary tools to be able to revive and reform their own culture. He wanted them to have pride in their own identity. His initiative was not at all aimed at Indianising or Tibetanising the monks in Mongolia. He demonstrated his non-sectarian approach when he invited leaders from the Sakya Order of Buddhism to Mongolia. He was aware of the 13th century Kublai Khan connect to the Sakya Order and hoped for them to re-establish this relationship. Rinpoche was of the Gelug order. In 2009 at the invitation of Pethub Monastery the leadership of the Sakya Order was invited to lay the foundation of a new Sakya Monastery in Ulaanbaatar.

Despite his advanced age Rinpoche continued his travels and gave teachings. He retired as Ambassador in 2000 but he continued to travel to countries where he felt his teachings were required and people's religious needs were suppressed. He used to sit in hotel rooms and give teachings while one man kept a watch outside for suspicious activity and he would knock if he saw authorities. People would ask him if he was scared and he would say, as long as people wanted spiritual fulfilment he would travel where ever and whenever they needed it. He said he had nothing to fear.

When Kushok Bakula Rinpoche passed away in 2003, he was in India but thousands of people collected at the Pethub Monastery in Ulaanbaatar. A year after his passing, a young boy was born in Ladakh and was identified by the 14th Dalai Lama as the reincarnation of Arhat Kushok Bakula Rinpoche in 2008.



NHIDCL - Accelerating the Pace of Infrastructure Creation and Deepening India's Strategic Needs

Sanjay Jaju*

India's independence had an unfortunate fallout. Our partition left a huge impact on the country's Northeast. The NE region got practically cut off and dismembered from the rest of the country. The only link it had was through the Siliguri Corridor popularly known as the chicken neck area in North West Bengal. While this was so, the road links to our neighbors on the East also remained tenuous and therefore became a huge impediment for trade with them.

Any forward movement on our 'Look & Act East' resolve, therefore, required establishing strong and robust transportation networks in that region. Such networks would have helped us in forging strong trade and people to people linkages with our neighbours on the East.

Development of these networks however could not keep pace with the average improvements happening in rest of the country. While lack of resources, focus and not so strong local techno-managerial capacities were arguably the main contributing factors, mountainous and difficult terrain accompanied by high rainfall conditions also played their part as the major limiting factors. Because of these, application of conventional mainstream methods of road construction to the NE produced meager results, qualitatively and also quantitatively as the working window available for construction in the NE was very limited.

NE is endowed with rich natural resources and lack of connectivity prevented such resources to be harnessed and meaningfully deployed. Because of this, the local population was also suffering for want of economic opportunities and in many cases; this also resulted in anti-establishment feeling and militancy. Strategically, poor infrastructure and connectivity also posed major challenges to the security interests of our country.

Realizing the sluggish pace of implementation of infrastructure projects, the Government of India decided to fast pace the construction of the National Highways and other infrastructure in the North Eastern Region and Strategic Areas of the country through the SARDP-NE programme.

However, the real acceleration began with the advent of National Highways & Infrastructure Development Corporation (NHIDCL), which was mandated to act as the specialized agency to implement the projects in the hilly areas of our country especially in the North-East. The NHIDCL was incorporated on 18th July, 2014 as a Public Sector Undertaking under the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways, Government of India.

Since its inception, NHIDCL has a fully functional Corporate Office and has set up by now, thirteen Branch Offices in Andaman and Nicobar, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir,

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NHIDCL has been able to fast pace the activities for the construction of Highways and development of other Infrastructure, not just limited to the North-Eastern Region but this now extends to other strategic and border areas of our country.

As of 31st August 2017, the company is handling 225 National Highway and other Infrastructure Development projects covering an approx length of 11000 km. to be executed at a cost of approximately Rs.1.50 lakh Cr.

State wise progress made by NHIDCL can be seen as below:

1. Arunachal Pradesh

NHIDCL has taken up 35 road projects spanning a total length of 1034 kms in Arunachal Pradesh. Out of these, 30 projects are under execution at an estimated cost of Rs. 9400 Cr. and remaining 5 projects are at DPR stage. Some of the projects under execution include the Trans-Arunachal highway, Border connectivity projects from Hayuliang-Hawai, Joram-Koloriang and Hunli-Anini roads.

2. Assam

NHIDCL has taken the responsibility for up-gradation and development of a total of 27 road projects covering 993 km at an estimated project cost of Rs. 20,609 Cr. which includes NH configuration roads (NH-37, 37A, 52, 52A, 53, 44, 208A and 127B). Out of these, 19 projects

are presently under civil execution which covers approximately 478 kms at an estimated cost of Rs. 8,600 Cr. The projects include 4-lane connectivity from Numaligarh to Dibrugarh on NH37, Nagaon to Holongi on NH52 including a bridge on river Brahmaputra near Kaliabhomora.

3. Tripura

NHIDCL has been entrusted with 7 projects covering a total length of 573 kms in the state of Tripura at the cost of Rs.5384 Cr. This includes connectivity from Agartala to Sabroom on NH 44 and a bridge on river Feni for international connectivity to Bangladesh.

4. Mizoram

The approval from Union Cabinet has been obtained for up gradation of Aizawl to Tuipang section of NH 54 covering a length of 380 kms to be built at an estimated cost of Rs.5,400 Cr has been finalised. The process of land acquisition for the project is nearing completion and civil works are likely to start soon.

5. Nagaland

The work for 4-laning of NH 39 Dimapur-Kohima stretch of 42.86 km at a cost of Rs 1599 Cr. are in full swing. The execution of civil work for the much awaited Dimapur-Bypass (Nagaland Portion) of 20.86 Km for Rs. 657 Cr. is going to commence shortly and works for Assam portion are likely to commence by year end.

6. Manipur

15 roads of Manipur covering total length of

1750 Km costing Rs.20000 Cr. has been planned for improvement into 2/4 lane National Highway. The approval from Union Cabinet has been obtained for upgradation of existing Imphal - Moreh section of NH 39. Development of alternative Imphal-Moreh Highway is also been envisaged. The work for construction of two Bridges over Rivers Barak and Makru at an estimated cost of Rs. 111 Cr. has been awarded. Besides the Rehabilitation of following roads has already started

- Ukhrul-Toloi-Tadubi (115 Kms)
- Churachandpur –Tuvai-Singhat (162 Kms)
- Tamenglong – Khongsang (40 Kms)
- Imphal–Jiribam (220 Kms)

7. Meghalaya

NHIDCL is undertaking the up-gradation and construction of 823 kms of road network at a cost of 10,824 Cr. in the state of Meghalaya including 193 km of National Highways on NH-40, NH-51 and NH-62. It held a series of meetings for fast pacing land acquisition and obtaining forest clearances for implementing five projects covering a length of 317 km at an approximate cost of Rs.1,900 Cr. Approval of Union Cabinet has been obtained for constructing Tura – Dalu section of NH 51 including Tura by-pass covering a length of 51.5 km. The same would be completed with loan assistance from JICA. DPR for two projects on NH-62 and NH-40 are under progress and the same are also proposed to be developed with JICA loan assistance.

8. Sikkim

NHIDCL has taken up 14 projects covering a length of 909 kms at a cost of Rs.5,130 Cr. out of which 4 projects of length 102 km have been awarded including the work of two laning of Singtam-Rabongla 32 Km stretch at an approximate cost of Rs.372 Cr. and upgradation of Rhenock-Pakyong over a length of 27 km at an estimated cost Rs 447 Cr. DPR for the construction of alternative Highway from to Bagrakot – via Rishi Menla is at final stages.

9. Uttarakhand

NHIDCL has been given 9 projects of road length 760 km to be built at a cost of Rs 8,720 Cr. out of which the slope protection work on Nalupani landslide and mitigation has been awarded at cost of Rs 38 Cr. The DPR for 380 km (Bajjnath to Jauljibi and Almora to Karnaprayag) are at final stages. Development of Rudraprayag to Joshimath NH 7 as part of Chardham Development Pariyojna is likely to be awarded during this year.

10. Jammu & Kashmir

In Jammu & Kashmir, NHIDCL has invited bids for Consultancy services for preparation of DPRs for up gradation of Jammu-Akhnoor (4-lane) and Chenani-Khanabal (double lane) roads. The Preliminary studies for both the Stretches are in progress and alternative alignment options are being explored.

NHIDCL has initiated works to provide all weather connectivity to Leh-Ladakh from Srinagar. The work of construction, operation and

maintenance of Z-Morh tunnel is under progress at a cost of Rs. 2,680 Cr. The work on the Zozilla tunnel with an estimated cost of Rs 6800 Cr. is likely to be awarded soon.

11. Andaman & Nicobar

The Company has already awarded 3 projects on the Andaman Trunk covering a length of approx 83 km to be built at an estimated cost of Rs. 671 Cr. The Company is re-inviting bids for preparation of DPRs for constructing either a Bridge or an under the Sea Tunnel between Bamboo Flat to Chatham Island.

12. Himachal Pradesh

NHIDCL has been entrusted with 3 projects covering a total length of 231 km in the state of Himachal Pradesh. All these 3 projects are at DPR stage.

13. West Bengal

In West Bengal, the Company has completed DPR for preparation Connecting Sagar Island with Kakdwip. On the India-Nepal border NHIDCL would be constructing a bridge on the River Mechi with loan assistance from ADB. The Company has already finalized detailed project report for this project and has invited bids and the work would be put for award this year.

NHIDCL's other initiatives

- i. NHIDCL has taken up the work of Project Management Consultant for the MEA, GOI projects in Nepal. These projects are being

executed with an estimated cost of Rs 500 Cr.

- ii. **“INAM-PRO +”** has been developed by NHIDCL as a Platform for Infrastructure and Materials Providers and is a web-based application (www.inampro.nic.in) for Infrastructure , and Materials Providers. It acts as a common platform for Infrastructure material providers viz. Cement Companies, Infrastructure providers, Ministry of Road Transport and Highways and other stakeholders.
- iii. Ministry of Road Transport & Highways, Government of India embarks on the development and upgradation of Highways & other Infrastructure Projects. In order to make the evaluation process during procurement more objective, user friendly and transparent, **“INFRACON”** has been developed by NHIDCL as a comprehensive National Portal for Infrastructure Consultancy firms & Key Personnel. The Portal has the facility to host Firms & Personnel CVs and Credentials online and has linkage to Aadhaar & Digi-locker for data validation & purity.
- iv. MoRTH has Large number of capital works being done by multiple agencies with no single platform for accumulating and integrating data. Every report entailed fresh acquisition of data thereby tiring the giver and the recipient. There was also a need for a single Central Repository for projects related documentation – papers, photos,

videos. Coupled with this was our inability to track projects throughout their life cycle leading to inaccurate measurement of Physical & Financial Progress. Because of this, no project related information was in public domain.

In order to address this, there was a need to have an Integrated Information System that addressed this problem and ensure effective and real time tracking of the Projects. **ePACE** (Projects Appraisal & Continuing Enhancements) has been designed as an online PORTAL by NHIDCL to meet such challenges.

- v. NHIDCL has developed capabilities and now takes necessary steps to ensure that all safety parameters (proper curves, gradients and no black spots) are followed while finalizing the designs for roads, bridges and tunnels.

- vi. NHIDCL specialises in methods and designs for protection of ecology and environment in the work areas by bringing new technologies for slope protection, soil stabilization etc.

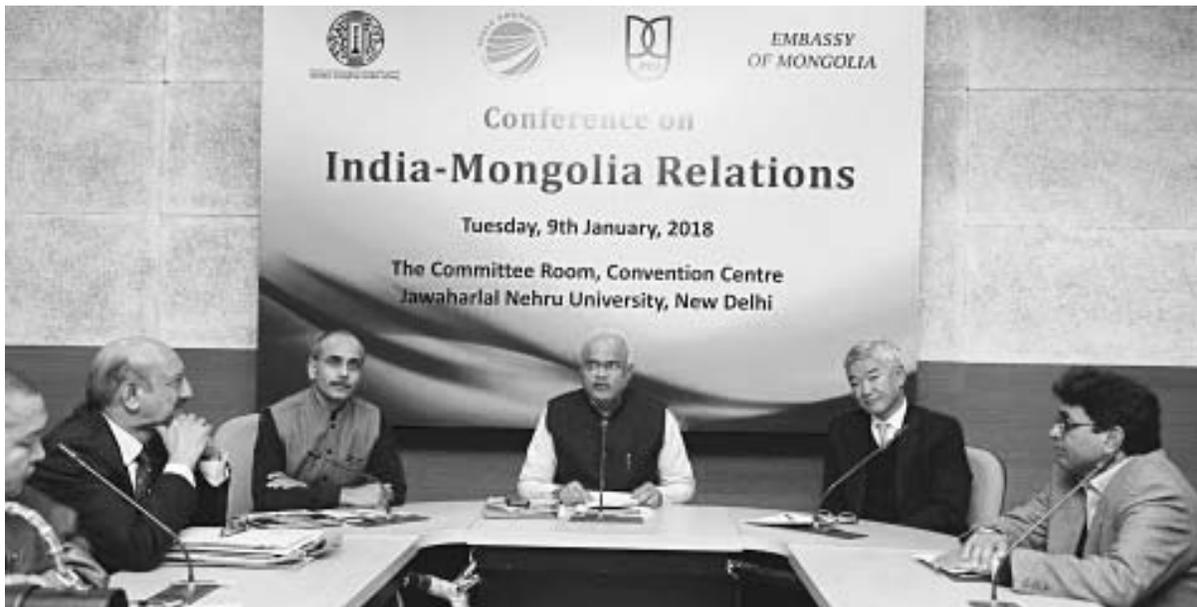
- vii. With a vision to develop local capacities, NHIDCL conducts regular stakeholder consultation including skills development programs to build the capacities of the local contractors and also to introduce to them new and appropriate technologies.

To sum up, NHIDCL has been established as, ‘A Company with the Difference’ carrying hallmark of efficiency, transparency and quality. A large number of infrastructure projects have now been started in almost every North-Eastern State. Many such roads are also part of the economic corridors and the Asian trilateral highways, which would allow trade and culture to flourish with the Southeast Asian nations.



Conference on India-Mongolia Relations

Priyadarshi Rathod



A conference on India-Mongolia Relations was organised by India Foundation and Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) in collaboration with the Embassy of Mongolia and the Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR) at the Convention Center, JNU, New Delhi. Both India and Mongolia are regions of ancient wisdom and youthful dynamism. The relation between the two can be described on the basis of the eight-fold path of Lord Buddha, which prescribe not just the path to happiness of individuals, but also a guide to the wellbeing of societies and nations. It is a message of kindness, love and compassion for all. Prime Minister Narendra Modi while speaking in the Mongolian Parliament said, “The convergence of Buddhism and democracy provides us a path to build an Asia of peace and cooperation, harmony and equality.” This

conference thus aimed to further deepen the relationship as described by the Indian Premier.

Inaugural Address

Prof. R.P. Singh, Rector, JNU, said that the relation between the two countries could be seen from the prism of culture and economy. He stated that in the 21st century, soft power would be a defining factor in the relationship between states and that culture would have an important role to play. Indian culture has travelled to Mongolia through literature, films, serials, and yoga. India needs to take its relation with Mongolia to a different level by engaging more and more in different fields.

Special Address

Mr. Gonching Ganbold, Ambassador of

Mongolia in India, said that India and Mongolia ties have grown in last 60 years and have seen a further spurt in the last 25 years of democracy in Mongolia. The visit of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Mongolia was a landmark event in the history of the two countries. Geographically, Mongolia is a landlocked country with abundance of natural resources. India can cooperate and assist Mongolia in its development, alleviation of poverty and unemployment. He said, “India is becoming closer to heart and mind, and now it’s the time to complement each other and move ahead shoulder to shoulder.”

Keynote Address

Mr. Vinay Sahasrabuddhe, President, ICCR, laid emphasis on the multidimensional aspect of the India-Mongolia relationship — cultural, spiritual, commercial, and business. He also highlighted the fact that both countries being democracies, added to the strength of the relationship. He also spoke of the aspirational nature of Indian society, quoting a couplet from Allama Iqbal’s ‘Tarana-e-Hind’ written in 1904 in this respect:

*“Yunan-o-Misr-o-Roma sab mit gaye
jahan se ab tak magar
Hai baki naam-o-nishan hamara,
Kuch baat hai ki hasti mit-ti nahi hamari;
Sadiyon raha hai dushman daur-e-zamana hamara”.*

Broadly, the English translation of the above verse is: “Greek, Egyptians and Romans have all vanished, but we are still here. There must be something special that we still exist despite the whole world being against us”.

In the above context, Shri Sahasrabuddhe said that the World is looking towards eastern

civilisation, and is drawing inspiration from spirituality and culture of the East. India Mongolia relations could offer the world a gross cultural product that would be unique. He said that the time has also come to take cultural diplomacy to developmental diplomacy, where culture would provide roots to evolve development.

Session-I

Mr. S. Chuluun spoke on the heritage of Khutukhtu Monastery. He said that since the thirteenth century onwards, Buddhist literature has been translated from Tibetan and Sanskrit to the Mongolian language. Even today, there are lots of Sanskrit origin words in Mongolian language. He said that from seventeenth century to nineteenth century lots of Buddhist commentaries and books on Buddha were deciphered from Sanskrit and Tibetan by Mongolian Buddhists.

Prof. Sharad Soni spoke on the historical linkages of India and Mongolia. Quoting from former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee he said that both India and Mongolia were ancient lands with ancient cultures. He said India is not only the homeland of Buddha but also land of knowledge. He described India and Mongolia as ‘Spiritual Neighbours.’ Buddhism reached Mongolia from India through Central Asia in 3rd century BCE. Buddhism is adopted as state religion in Mongolia. The *Swayambhu* is Sanskrit origin word, whose first letter is represented in Mongolian national flag. He pointed out how important Indian culture is in Mongolian day-to-day life. India was the first non-socialist country to be recognised by Mongolia. During 1962 India-China war, Mongolia was the first county to support India.

Ms. D Purejav talked about issues of studies of Dandin's Kavyadarsa in Mongolian literature. Unfortunately, in last few decades the Mongolian literature is losing its oriental and native character and increasingly getting based only on western literary tendencies. Therefore, a study and comment of Dandin's theory of poetics which bears oriental civilisation, cultural and thinking traditions, takes an important place in the development of modern Mongolian literature. In oriental literature and languages 'Kavyadarsa' has been played an important role like Aristotle's 'Poetics' in Western literatures and languages. This Indian theory of poetics was translated into many languages such as Pali, Tibetan and Mongolian.

Mr. Ravi Bhoothalingam identified how culture and business are closely interconnected. According to him, to do business it is essential to know the shared values between the countries along with the historical understanding. He spoke about the role of Genghis Khan during the ancient time which was having globalised empire where

administration was run by multinational people. He stated that learning from culture was always a two way process and this would develop a mutual trust which would act as foundation for the business.

Session- 2

B. Purevsuren said that India and Mongolia were ancient cultures, which were created by the ancient people of Asia. The link between two nations is fascinating and unique by transmission of heritage and ideas. Now the two counties are moving from spiritual neighbours to strategic partners.

Ms. Rami Niranjan Desai narrated journey of Kushok Bakula Rinpoche from a Buddhist monk in India to Ambassador of India to Mongolia. He was recognised as the thirteen Dalai Lama of Bakula Arhat, one of the Sixteenth disciples of Gautama Buddha. In 1990 he took the office of India's ambassador to Mongolia, when Mongolia was still a communist county. There was political turmoil going on in Mongolia. People who were



revolting against the government wanted to meet Bakula, but being ambassador he was not supposed to meet the people who were revolting against the government. But he decided to meet them without directly talking about the politics. When he met them, he told them to never resort to violence and to remember the Indian struggle for freedom. He gave sacred threads to the people who wore them and sat on the streets, non-violently agitating against the government. After that, the talks took place and government agreed to pave the wave for democracy.

He traveled to communist Russia and there also he not only preached Buddhism but also created a Buddhist monastery. In Mongolia, he created the residential monasteries for the monks. Teachers from Sikkim and Tibet were brought for the guidance of the monks. He didn't want to mould the monasteries on the Indian or Tibetan pattern, but he wanted to make them inclusive and orderly. He put efforts to ensure that the spiritual role of women was not ignored and they were given the same importance as men. He retired in 2000, but even after retirement, he used to visit Mongolia often as he was very attached to Mongolia. He passed away in 2003. A boy in Leh was recognised as 20th Bakula and 14th Dalai Lama.

Ms. Ayush Oyuntungalag spoke about the younger generation's language and culture in Mongolia. She stressed on how Mongolians have been conscious about their language and culture, despite having lived among different civilisations

and different cultures and how people have been able to preserve their culture.

Dr. Vaishali Krishna spoke on how the India-Mongolia relations are evolving from civilisational ties to strategic partnership. She quoted Prime Minister Narendra Modi's statement that democracy and Buddhism bind India with Mongolia, India's spiritual friend. The two countries share a multi dimensional relation extending from political, economical, to cultural ties. Mongolia followed the path of non-alignment. It can play a prominent role in India's act east policy. India and Mongolia need to strengthen their economic and defence ties by involving with each other on a larger scale. Mongolia is having large number of resources that could be utilised by growing cooperation. The role of China cannot be ignored and Mongolia is following the third neighbour policy with regard to India.

Mr. Phunchok Stobdan, a former diplomat, who chaired the session, spoke about the political difficulties in the 1990s and how Kushok Bakula Rinpoche, a monk was sent as ambassador to Mongolia and the successful role he played there. He emphasised on the need to focus upon ancient Buddhist literature and monasteries like Vikramshila. The cultural and spiritual ties between India and Mongolia can become even stronger. Mongolia has got abundant natural resources but scarcity of manpower. India and Mongolia can work together to help each other in various fields.



4th International Dharma – Dhamma Conference: State and Social Order in Dharma-Dhamma Traditions

Soumya Chaturvedi



Dharma – Dhamma Conference, an annual platform in its fourth edition is an effort by India Foundation to revive the narrative on dharma-dhamma traditions and make them relevant in finding solutions and forming policies for the state in the 21st century. The event was organized by India Foundation in collaboration with Nalanda University, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India and the Vietnam Buddhist University on 11 to 13 January 2018 at Rajgir, Bihar. The event was organized as part of the commemorative events to celebrate the silver jubilee of ASEAN – Indian Dialogue Partnership.

The theme for 4th Dharma – Dhamma Conference - *State and Social Order in Dharma-*

Dhamma Traditions, aimed at emanating meaningful discourse on applying the values embedded in dharma-dhamma traditions to the practice of statecraft and social order. The Conference also witnessed a paper presentation by eminent and bright scholars on the sub-themes of: State, Governance and Social Order in Dharma Traditions; State and Social Order in Dhamma Traditions; Ecology & Environmental Consciousness in Dharma Dhamma Traditions; Peace & Conflict in Dharma Dhamma Traditions; Dharma Dhamma Traditions in Gandhi, Ambedkar, Lohia and Deen Dayal Upadhyay; Idea of Rashtra (Nation) in Dharma Dhamma Traditions; Buddhism and other Belief Systems; and Traditions and Practices.

Day 1 : January 11, 2018

Inaugural Session

The fourth edition of the Dharma-Dhamma tradition was inaugurated by the President of India Shri Ram Nath Kovind. Present on the occasion were Shri Satya Pal Malik, Governor of Bihar, Shri Tilak Marapanna, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sri Lanka, Shri Nitish Kumar, Chief Minister of Bihar, Shri Sushil Modi, Deputy Chief Minister of Bihar, Ms. Preeti Singh, Secretary (East), Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India and Prof. Sunaina Singh, Vice-Chancellor, Nalanda University.

Shri Ram Nath Kovind

In his inaugural address the President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind said that organising an event of such stature in the historic city of Rajgir, Bihar had brought the twin tradition of Dharma and Dhamma to their home. The historical significance of Dharna and Dhamma is the backbone of celebrating India – ASEAN relationship. While both these traditions may be diverse, they guide to the same desired goal of ethical conduct and purposeful statecraft. He also said that Nalanda was the embodiment of knowledge and wisdom with international character and so this conference should act not just as a diplomatic platform, but influence the values and statecraft.

Shri Nitish Kumar

The Chief Minister of Bihar, Shri Nitish Kumar proposed the idea of reviving Nalanda as the centre of conflict resolution and Rajgir to be declared as a world heritage site. He said that Rajgir has always been the centre of different



traditions and remembered as the land of knowledge, therefore the conference must seek to revive the values of truth, non-violence, love, compassion, peace which have been the foundation of every religion and tradition.

Shri Tilak Marapanna

Shri Tilak Marapanna, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sri Lanka, highlighted the importance of dharma principles in shaping the society and thus, the conference should be interpreted to seek peace and prosperity based on the twin traditions in the contemporary world. He remarked that Buddhist preachings are important to understand the virtues of government, ensure welfare of people and unite the global audience through spirituality. These fundamental values should be reflected in the current and future policies.

Ms. Preeti Saran

Ms. Preeti Saran, Secretary (East), Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India spoke of the historical linkage between the ASEAN and the revival of Nalanda University to improve regional understanding of culture and history. She said that Nalanda has been the hallmark of internationalism and cultural interconnection. This identity should be utilised by this conference to contribute in knowledge creation which can be used in reduction of conflict and ensuring peace, harmony and cooperation.

Plenary Session - 1

The first plenary session was chaired by Prof. Arvind Sharma, Professor of Comparative Religion, McGill University. The plenary speakers



were Prof. Makarand Paranjpe from Jawaharlal Nehru University and Dr. David Frawley, Vedacharya and Padmashree awardee. Dr. David Frawley based the foundation of world on the inner unitary consciousness of dharma and dhamma. He regarded dharma and dhamma to be same in spirit of being universal principles, differing only outwardly as limbs of the society. He highlighted the difference between dharmic civilisation and western civilisation, where the ultimate objective of the former is the direct experience of truth beyond any complex understanding of concepts.

Prof. Paranjpe spoke on 'Bharat Shakti and Swaraj: Towards 2nd Renaissance', where he reflected upon the relationship between dharma and statecraft. According to him, dharma is the foundation of social and cultural structure of India and so, India must be reborn for the future of the world. He remarked "When India rises, it is the *Sanatan Dharma* that rises." Prof. Arvind Sharma brought about the difference between the terms religion and dharma, emphasising on how much is lost in the translation. He remarked that the ancient Indian word Dharma did not mean the exclusive idea of religion as seen by the western civilisation and therefore, the eastern concepts of Hinduism, Buddhism, etc should be referred as Dharma and not religion.

Day 2: January 12, 2018

Plenary Session - 2

The second plenary session was chaired by Prof. S.R. Bhatt, Chairman, Indian Council for Philosophical Research. The plenary speakers were Prof. Braj Sinha from University of Saskatchewan; Ven. Tsetsee Luvsandorj from Gandantegchling Monastery, Mongolia; Dr. Frank

Ji-Ruey Guo, CEO, Bliss and Wisdom Foundation of Culture and Education, Taiwan and Dr. Madhu Khanna, Professor of Religious Studies and Director of Centre for the Study of Comparative Religion and Civilization, Jamia Millia Islamia University. Prof. Bhatt regraded the concept of dhamma to be the overriding feature of Indian cultural ethos. Describing Asia as Dharma-centric, he advocated the simultaneous need of material possibilities and spiritual enhancement for the holistic progress of the society. He remarked that the pitfall of democracy can be cured by 'Dharm-o-cracy'.

Dr. Frank Guo spoke on the practice of Buddha Dharma in the society. He regarded health of body, purity of mind and bliss of spirit to be the principles embedded in dharma dhamma traditions which are of prime importance for the peaceful progress and development of any society. Dr. Madhu Khanna spoke on the importance of 'Eco-Dharma' mentioned as a concept of *Bhumi Sukta* in *Atharvaveda* as being simultaneously ancient and modern. She expressed her concern about the disappearing spirituality of the earth and the need of a paradigm shift from environmental concern to environmental consciousness. Prof. Braj Sinha expressed the importance of Dharma as a tool for looking at a state for the purpose of seeking wisdom. He emphasised on the materialization of *Rajdharm* as mentioned in the *Shanti Parva* of Mahabharat and not just the *Dandaneeti* category of Arthashastra tradition. Ven. Tsetsee Luvsandorj spoke about the 'Engaged Dharma activity in the modern Mongolian society'. He highlighted the role of NGOs, social work and assistance to targeted group beneficiaries in materializing the dharmic principles.

Plenary Session - 3

The third plenary session was chaired by Mr. Shakti Sinha, Director, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. The plenary speakers were Ms Sattva Zhang, Secretary General, World Peace & Communication Association; Mr. Say Ammann, Deputy Director General of Religious Affairs, Ministry of Cults and Religion, Kingdom of Cambodia and Mr. Myo Win, Assistant Director, Department of Religious Affairs, Myanmar. Mr. Sinha spoke of the need of rulers to rule in tune with dharmic values and traditions. Ms. Sattva regarded the only way of rescuing the world from crisis is by awakening the mind and following the law of the universe and true human nature. She also highlighted the need to reignite harmony, one of the basic principles in moral doctrine.

Mr. Myo Win expressed the support of the Government of Myanmar to the conference for the noble purpose it seeks to achieve. He said that the dharmic principles of compassion, equanimity, sustainable development, human rights and human development are the values that need to be embraced in the life of individual and the society. Mr. Ammann said that 'real dharma' is when social order is upheld at all times, else the weak suffers. He spoke on the Cambodian Buddhism and the significant role it played in the independence movement and community development project. He also highlighted the use of Buddhist meditation technique by psychiatrists which reflects the positive role dharma-dhamma traditions can play on reforming the society.

Plenary Session - 4

The fourth plenary session was chaired by Swami Advayananda, Acharya-in-charge,



Chinmaya International Foundation. The plenary speakers were Prof. Venkat Rao from EFLU; Prof. H.P. Gangnegi from Delhi University; Phramaha Boonna Pratumchat from Mahamakut Buddhist University, Thailand and Venerable Heui Kai, Deputy Abbot of Fo Guang Shan Monastery, Taiwan. Swami Advayananda regarded the philosophy of ‘also’ and not the philosophy of ‘only’ as the biggest contribution of the dharma-dhamma tradition. He dissected the word ‘dharma’ to mean root or ‘to support’ and regarded righteous living as the dharma of an individual and law as the dharma of a society.

Prof. Gangnegi spoke of the subtle differences between the Dharma concept of Mahayan Buddhism tradition and Dhamma concept of Thervada Buddhism tradition. He highlighted the need to bridge the gap between the two. He also brought to notice the virtues of Buddhist preaching to regulate society or social order through attendance, finding amicable solutions, honouring

traditions, respecting elders, ensuring security and safety of women, etc. Phramaha Boonna Pratumchat explained the way of Dhamma to control the inner circle of mind. He also highlighted the need to meditate in order to improve consciousness, bring purity and ensure harmony in the society.

Venerable Heui Kai equated dharma as the sustainability of the world and sustainability of life. He regarded them as the two sides of the same coin, both being important for survival of the other. Prof. Venkat Rao spoke on the difference between *Sva-Dharma* and *Par-Dharma* and the relation between the two. He highlighted the disjuncture between the traditions governing the way of living and the traditions governing the way of education. He also remarked that the concept of power and knowledge have been systematically developed in European context and thus, drawing parallels in India is a futile activity. Instead, there is a need to rethink these concepts in the Indic sense of thought.

Day 3 : January 13, 2018

Plenary Session - 5

The fifth plenary session was chaired by Prof. SP Singh from University of Delhi; Julio Ozan Lavoisier, Philosopher and Writer from Argentina; Ven. Tulku Tsori Rinpoche, Founder and Spiritual Leader, Yogi Tsoru Dechen Rinpoche Foundation, Florida and Mr. Lhagvademchig J., Research Associate, Department of Anthropology and Archeology, Mongolia. Prof. Singh set the tone of the session by quoting C. Rajagopalachari words, 'India is easiest to govern if appeased to traditions'. He remarked that state must be governed through traditional and civilisational beliefs and values. He said, "Dhamma, as a concept provides organic structure to the life of a society." Venerable Tulku commented, "Devoting life for dharma is the Tibetan culture and backbone of their society." He remarked that dharma dhamma values are the antidote to the cyclic nature of *samsara*. He also drew the convergence in the teachings of Buddha and Krishna to adopt the middle path.

Mr. Lhagvademchig J. spoke about the *Chakravartin* ideology in Mongolian politics. He commented on the ancient cultural ties between India and Mongolia being reflected in the adaptation of 'Mongolised' Sanskrit words. He highlighted the contribution of Indian Buddhist cosmology in framing the Mongolian national identity. He said, "Indian ideology of universal monarch-*Chakravartin* and incarnation of Buddhist deities had been part of the Mongolian

political discourse on rulership, sovereignty, nation and identity." Mr. Julio Ozan commented on the similarity in the Dharma and Dhamma traditions and said, "Nothing better would happen if these two universal forces could turn the wheel of life together." He also appreciated the heroic task of inserting the Dharma-Dhamma values into the current reality of statecraft.

Valedictory Session

The valedictory session was graced with the presence of Shri Pema Khandu, Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh and Swami Atmapriyananda, Vice Chancellor of Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda University. Swami Atmapriyananda said that the concept of Dharm and Dhamma was based on the concept of fundamental unity; the traditions are in variety, but interwoven by unity. He said, "Dharma as a concept is untranslatable and interchanging it with 'religion' would be a wrong translation." He also regarded the term 'sustainability' as the modern word for Dharma. He commented on the irony of human mind and said, "Good people are not convinced with the power of goodness, but wicked people are convinced with the power of wickedness." Shri Pema Khandu regarded Dhamma to be the literal correspondence of Dharma, one that makes all activities meaningful. He recognized fewer evils and many good deeds as the two basic attributes of dharma. He remarked that Arunachal Pradesh is an example of a society practising Dhamma traditions with tolerance and social solidarity.



Workshop on India's Foreign Policy

Neeraj Adhithya, Atitya Ragul V & Sonalini Jena



India Foundation in association with the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India conducted a five day '*Workshop on India's Foreign Policy*' from 28 January to 01 February 2018 at the Pravasi Bhartiya Kendra, New Delhi. The workshop focused on multiple facets of the history and development of India's Foreign Policy and was attended by ambassadors, diplomats, academicians, policy experts, enthusiasts and students. Important aspects of India's foreign policy and the way forward were discussed during the course of the five day workshop through talks, panel discussions and simulation exercises.

Day 1: 28 January 2018

Shri M.J.Akbar, Minister of State for External Affairs, Government of India, gave a historical perspective to India's foreign policy. He said that

India's foreign policy, as indeed the foreign policy of any country is formulated to keep the nation secure and promote its prosperity. Indian foreign policy has never been interventionist and the defence forces of India have thus only been employed only for the defence of the country. The principle aspiration of emerging India is 'prosperity' and for ensuring prosperity, we need security.

The Workshop's Keynote session on Indian Strategic Thought was addressed by Shri Shakti Sinha, Director, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. He critiqued the western notion that India would never have been a country if not for the British and pointed out through various examples and anecdotes that nationalism has been an age old concept for India and the nation had a well crafted and clear strategic thought throughout history.

Shri Ram Madhav, Director, India Foundation spoke of 'Panchamrit,' as the recent innovation in India's Foreign Policy. He said that India's Foreign Policy under the leadership of Shri Narendra Modi was bold, proactive, innovative and ambitious and showed through examples, how these four qualities have manifested in recent policy initiatives taken by the Government of India. He explained the five pillared 'Panchamrit' approach of "samridhi" (shared prosperity), "suraksha" (regional and global security), "samman" (dignity), "samvad" (dialogue), and "sanskriti" (cultural and civilisational links) of India's new foreign policy.

In the post-lunch panel discussion session with ASEAN Ambassadors, the panellists Ms. Nagma Mallick, High Commissioner of India to Brunei; Shri Jawed Ashraf, High Commissioner of India to Singapore and Shri Pradeep Rawat, Ambassador of India to Indonesia, spoke about India-ASEAN relations and specifically about India's engagement with the countries they were serving in. The panellists noted that the 'Indo-Pacific' significance places ASEAN at the centre and observed that India-ASEAN relations are going forward in a positive direction.

Shri Amar Sinha, former Secretary at the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India and Shri Sanjaya Baru, Secretary General, FICCI India, spoke on India's Neighbourhood Policy. Shri Amar Sinha emphasised the redefining of "neighbourhood" to include the Indian Ocean Region and also spoke about India's good relations with its neighbours. He said that India's policy in its neighbourhood has been big and brotherly and not 'big brotherly'. Dr. Baru focused on the economic relations of India with its neighbours.

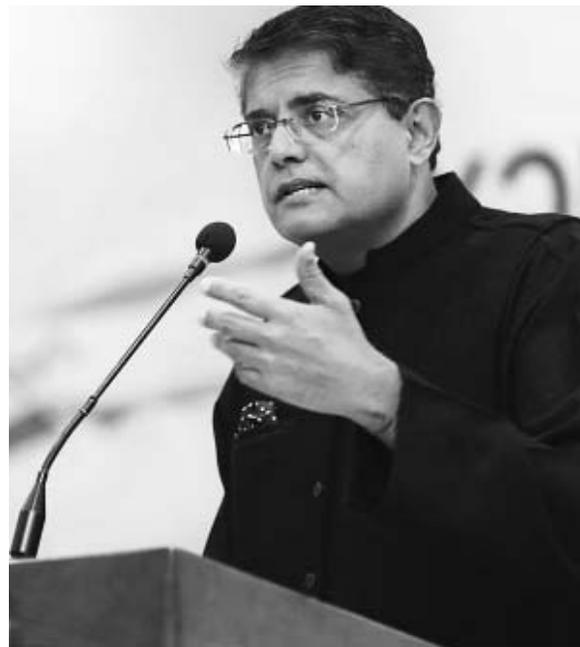
In the concluding session of the first day of

the workshop, Ms. Preeti Saran, Secretary (East), Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, gave an overview of India-ASEAN relations. She said that hosting the ASEAN leaders at India's Republic Day parade sends a strong message about the growing India-ASEAN ties.

Day 2: 29 January 2018

Shri Baijayant Jay Panda, Member of Parliament, spoke on "Foreign Policy Begins at Home: Domestic Politics in India". He touched upon various domestic issues ranging from the need for reforms in India's Foreign Services to the impact of India's jump into the top 100 of 'Ease of Doing Business' rankings to the impact of increase in FDI. He emphasised the need for India to lead a technology change to solve many of its domestic issues.

The session on "India's Contemporary Security Challenges" was addressed by Shri Alok Joshi, Chairman, National Technical Research



Organisation (NTRO), Government of India and Shri R N Ravi, Chairman, Joint Intelligence Committee, Government of India. Shri Alok Joshi threw light on geopolitical challenges that India has been facing since its independence and also spoke on the rise of radical Islam in the region. Shri R. N. Ravi said that “hope is never a policy and never can be”. He emphasised on the need to be alert on security challenges from the Chinese front.

In the session on “India’s wars and how they shaped our Foreign Policy,” Shri Alok Bansal, Director, India Foundation and Shri Shekhar Sinha, former Commander-in-Chief, Western Naval Command, spoke about history and the effect of India’s wars, including the 1961 Liberation of Goa, Sino-Indian war of 1962, India-Pakistan war of 1971, and Kargil war of 1999 in shaping of India’s foreign policy.

In post-lunch session on “India’s soft power diplomacy”, Shri Vinay Sahasrabuddhe, President, Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR)



spoke on the history of soft power. Post World War II, conventional warfare took a backseat. In this backdrop, countries had to rely on economic and cultural relations to further ties. Shri Sahasrabuddhe said that India needs a holistic strategy to fight common misconceptions about India, for which he proposed two solutions. First, India should strive to provide an “Indian experience” to people across the world. Second, India needs a multi-ministry effort to design an effective soft power strategy. For example, he suggested that the Ministry of External Affairs and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism could come up with a plan for an immersive Indian experience for foreign tourists.

The session on ‘Pillars of India’s Soft Power Diplomacy’ was addressed by Shri David Frawley, Director, American Institute of Vedic Studies; Ms. Veena Sikri, former Ambassador of India and Shri Hari Kiran Vadlamani, Founder, Indic Academy.

Next, a simulation foreign policy lab was conducted on international disputes by Shri Aniruddha Rajput from the United Nations International Law Commission. A case study filed by Marshall Islands against the United States at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) was given to the delegates who were divided into various groups comprising stakeholders in the case. It was an interesting experience for the delegates to get a flavour of how international disputes are resolved at the ICJ.

The day’s concluding session was addressed by Shri Hardeep Singh Puri, Minister of State (IC) for Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India and Shri Kanwal Sibal, former Foreign Secretary, Government of India. They spoke on the topic “From High Ground to High Table” focusing on India and multilateralism.



Day 3: 30 January 2018

The session on “India-Russia Relations” was addressed by Shri P.S. Raghavan, Convener, National Security Advisory Board, Government of India. He said that India and Russia recently celebrated 70 years of bilateral relations. It was the Soviet Union which extended its hands of friendship to India in infrastructural, military, medical and other sectors, just after India’s independence. Back then, Soviet Union also exercised its veto in the UN in India’s favour at crucial moments. He however cautioned that international relations should not be based wholly on nostalgia or gratitude. Hence, India today, needs to look through future frame of lens to evaluate its relations with Russia. India is a strong nation with great relations with U.S and Europe among other countries. Russia has somehow lost its lustre, both politically and economically. Also Russia and China have grown closer. Therefore, threat is looming on an alliance formation between Russia-

China-Pakistan and India has to closely keep a tab on it to proceed with its future alliances with Russia.

The session on “India, Central-Asia and Middle East Relations” was addressed by Shri Rajiv Sikri, former Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs. He stressed on India’s historical relations with Central Asia and the Middle East. He gave a brief historical overview of Central Asia, highlighting its takeover by the Soviet Union, the growing Chinese influence, its frozen borders in the Cold War era and the effect of the breakup of the Soviet Union. He added that, technically, India has no direct contact with Central Asia as it has been blocked by Pakistan, thereby making India a bit aloof from the Central Asian politics. However, India’s oil and gas business with Central Asian countries is very strong. Even with the Gulf nations, India had a close history of trade and culture. Two-third of India’s oil comes from the Gulf. The region also houses eight million Indians and UAE is one of India’s top trading partners. The key link in the Middle East is Saudi Arabia. He said that Prime Minister Modi’s and his UAE counterpart’s frequent visits showcase a mutual interest in each other. He also highlighted the importance of Oman as an important trade link. Its sea port is a gateway and also a point of security concern of the neighbourhood. But there has also been a long history of power clash in the region since the Arab Spring. Surrounded by various war states, it has been an inherently troublesome space. Going ahead we have to understand the mutual problems to take these relations to greater heights.

Speaking on “India and Af-Pak Relations,” Shri Vivek Katju, former Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India said that India has almost always been a proactive votary

of peace in the region. He referred to Atal Bihari Vajpayee's visit to the Minar-i-Pakistan and how Pakistan has mastered the instrument of terrorism especially through use of proxy organisations. Often, derailing of the peace process with India was attributed to Pakistan. Also, since the rebuilding of Afghanistan has begun, India has played a crucial role there. But India is perpetuated as a threat in Pakistani consciousness. Only time will tell how things pan out between India and Pakistan.

Shri Arun Singh, a former diplomat speaking on "India and West Asia Relations," dealt with the history of India's engagement with the West Asian nations of Israel, Palestine and Iran. The secularist nature of India's nationalist movement and its stance on the creation of Pakistan on the same grounds led India to vote against the motion in the UN calling for creation of the State of Israel in 1948. Attempts at establishing full diplomatic relationship with Israel started following India's recognition of the Israeli state in 1950. India and Israel share strong cultural ties by virtue of the 80,000 strong Indian-Jews living there, belonging to four distinct Indian Jewish communities. Today, Israel and India share many strategic partnerships in fields such as water technology, agriculture and skill development. When the decision to re-establish diplomatic offices in Kabul following the US invasion and the ensuing freeing of the Taliban from Kabul on 1 November 2001, it was through Iran that the Indian mission members flew into Afghanistan. Iran remains the best way for India to access the strategic region of Central Asia. The challenge today in India-Iran relations is that, as India improves relations with the US, relations with Iran might suffer and this should be navigated carefully by the Indian diplomatic establishment.

India began diplomatic ties with Palestine when it set up a representative office in Gaza in 1996. In 2003 it set up its representative office at Ramallah. India has constantly supported them throughout history. Prime Minister Narendra Modi became the first Prime Minister of India to visit Palestine in 2018. The visit was called "Grand Affair" and reaffirmed the ties.

Shri Ashok Kantha, Director Institute for China Studies, and Shri Harsh Pant, Professor of International Relations, King's College addressed the session on Indo-China. The session on "Indo-EU Relations" was addressed by Mr Rajan Mathai, former Foreign Secretary and Shri Rahul Roy Chaudhary, Senior Fellow for South Asia, IISS, UK. He spoke on Brexit and its implications on India including the way ahead.

The final session of Day 3 was a talk delivered by India's External Affairs Minister, Smt. Sushma Swaraj. She gave a brief summary of the never-been-done-before occasion of India hosting all ASEAN leaders as guests of honour during India's Republic Day celebrations. India's image in the world has started to change. The fastest growing economy has a much stronger international outreach, thanks to the leadership of Prime Minister Modi. She also talked about the changing style of India's Foreign Ministry. She said the '*chaal*' (style), '*charitra*' (character) and '*chahara*' (face) of the Ministry has completely transformed. Indians abroad now trust that with a single 'tweet' they can get the attention of India for any urgent help. This is possible only because Indians are now at the heart of India's International relation policies.

Day 4: 31 January 2018

Speaking on "India's Economy: It's Global



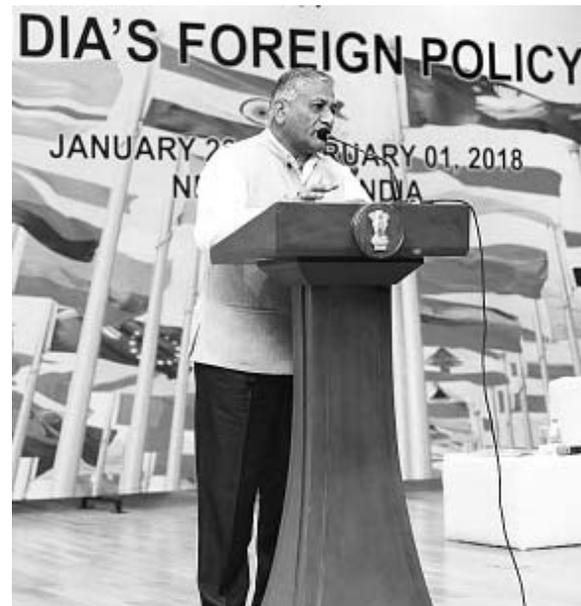
Commerce and Industry, Government of India said that foreign policy of any country is geared towards economic interests and the domestic agenda of the country. He spoke of opportunities before India if it were to align its foreign policy to attract more Foreign Institutional Investments (FII) and towards exports. With USA adopting an 'America First' policy, the growth of countries like Japan and China, and the slowing down or plateauing of the EU, India is heading into a period of economic prosperity and it must be enabled by a change in its foreign policy.

The session on "Indo-German Ties" was addressed by Dr. Swapan Dasgupta, Member of Parliament in the Rajya Sabha and Dr. Martin Ney, German Ambassador to India. Dr. Martin Ney pointed out the vast variety of fields in which India and Germany are partners including shared values of democracy and rules-based international order, trade ties and security co-operation in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). He raised his concerns that India views the EU as only a trading partner and

not as a political and security policy partner and hoped the relationship would become stronger in the coming years.

Dr. Dattesh Parulekar, Centre for Latin America and International Studies, Goa University spoke on Indo-Latin American ties. He pointed out key events that shaped the history of the economies in Latin America. He said that there is no understanding of India in South America and that the relationship has not achieved its full potential. He hoped that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Foreign Policy that 'no country is left behind' would be implemented in improving India's ties with South American nations as well and that, a ministerial level visit from India be undertaken at the earliest.

General V.K.Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs, spoke on the functioning of the Ministry of External Affairs and its attempts to shed its tag of an 'elitist institution' to becoming more responsive and accessible to all Indians. India's heroic conducting of 'Operation Raahat,'



the airlift mission from Yemen in 2017, was a huge success and was appreciated by the world. He mentioned few issues that the Ministry is working on resolving such as the menace of illegal contracting ‘agencies’ which send migrants to foreign countries through illegal means.

On the ‘Role of the Indian Diaspora,’ Shri Vijay Chauthaiwale, In-Charge, Foreign Affairs Department, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) spoke of the success of the Indian diaspora around the world while also classifying the diaspora into four categories — the diaspora in the Gulf, PIOs, NRIs and the floating diaspora. Initiatives of the MEA such as opening an e-migrate portal to ease processes related to immigration and the launching of the Indian Community Welfare Fund for emergency situations are made available to the Indian diaspora. The increased direct interaction of Indian state governments with foreign countries for promoting investment, development and mutual prosperity was stressed.

The day concluded with a Foreign Policy Lab on the role of diplomacy in conflict resolution. Dr. Rajiv Srinivasan, Professor, IIM Bengaluru engaged the participants by offering insights from the world of Mr. Michael Porter’s management strategy theories that are applied in the domain of conflict resolution in the world of diplomacy. The session had the participants engage and debate over a case study.

Day 5: 01 February, 2018

Shri Shaurya Doval, Director, India Foundation addressed the delegates on ‘Indian Economy: Past three years’. Mr. Doval covered various innovative economic reforms brought in by the Modi Government. He cited the ‘Make in

India’ initiative as a good example of an innovative approach to simultaneously increase economic output and generate employment. The next big step was the government’s push to make banking available to all of its citizens. He mentioned that around 308 million bank accounts were opened in the last three years, of which 180 million accounts were opened in rural areas.

Shri Dhruva Jaishankar, Fellow, Foreign Policy, Brookings India spoke on “India and Indo-Pacific” where he discussed the growing significance of the Indo-Pacific region in the world, the role of India and its relations with the Indo-Pacific order.

A simulation of a counter terrorism lab was conducted by Maj. Gen. Dhruv C. Katoch and Capt. Alok Bansal, both Directors of India Foundation. The simulation was based on a case of a hostage situation similar to the 26/11 attacks. The delegates were divided into different stakeholders given in the situation and were asked to come up with their plan of action for such a situation. The valedictory address was delivered by Dr. S. Jaishankar, former Foreign Secretary, Government of India on the key aspects and challenges of India’s foreign policy. He covered India’s policy with various regions of the world such as India’s immediate neighbourhood, the Gulf, Central Asia, the Pacific and the Indian Ocean Region. He said that whenever we discuss India’s foreign policy, it is important to keep historical context in mind to better understand current world happenings. Shri Ram Madhav, in his closing speech of the five day workshop stressed on the importance and the need to continue discussions on issues related to India’s foreign policy. In the end, delegates were presented with certificates of completion.





CHINA'S INDIA WAR

Author:

Bertil Lintner

Publisher:

OUP India, 2017, pp 348

Price:

Rs.675/-

Book Review by:

Siddharth Singh

Bertil Lintner's book, "China's India War", is partly a rebuttal to Neville Maxwell's book "India's China War," which was published in 1970. Maxwell's book has always been known for its pro-China reading of events surrounding the 1962 war between India and China. Lintner openly admits in his book that the more he read about the conflict, the more he came to realise that Maxwell's version of the events leading up to the 1962 war did not stand up to any serious scrutiny. Lintner has rightly debunked the whole 'Forward Policy' theory which was advanced by Maxwell as being responsible for the Chinese offensive of 1962. He argues that rather than India provoking China, it was the communist leaders of China at that time who had behaved aggressively after they seized power in 1949. In fact, by 1959, after the upheavals in Tibet and Dalai Lama coming to India, the Chinese leadership was clear that accounts need to be and would be settled with India and accordingly a cold and careful strategy was evolved to achieve this goal.

On Nehru's Forward Policy, Lintner argues

that before - and especially after - the Lhasa revolt in Tibet, the Chinese had established military outposts all over Tibet, including in areas close to the Indian territory. New roads were also built down to the Indian border opposite the NEFA in the east. It is not hard to arrive at the conclusion that China's own Forward Policy (although it was not called that) had been much more aggressive and assertive than India's. Lintner says that the timing of the decision by the Chinese leadership to 'settle accounts' with the Indians and to make use of all their preparations for war, must also be understood in the context of internal problems in China at the time. In 1958, Mao had initiated the disastrous Great Leap Forward to modernise China. By 1961, anywhere between 17 and 45 million people had died because of Mao's policies, which had caused a famine rather than, as intended, any rapid industrialisation. Mao was discredited and, very likely, on his way out. He must have felt he had to regain power - and that the best way to do that would be to unify the nation and especially the armed forces against an outside

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enemy. India was a 'soft' target because it had, in 1959, granted the Dalai Lama asylum after he had fled from Tibet to India in the wake of the failed uprising against the Chinese occupation of Tibet. India had been identified by everyone in the top leadership of the CCP in China as the main regional enemy as early as 1959 and could therefore serve as a unifying factor as well as a pretext for purging the Party of 'revisionists' and other 'undesirable elements'. When considering China's regional ambitions and domestic politics at the time, it should be clear to every serious observer and analyst that the border dispute was only an excuse for launching the 1962 war.

Lintner also talks about the still classified "Henderson Brooks – Bhagat Report" and says that one would need to have a lot of imagination to conclude from the report that India was the aggressor and China the aggrieved party in 1962. The question of who attacked whom, or determining who was responsible for the war, was not even within the scope of the enquiry, which had been set up to look into four specific aspects of the war that could explain the Indian defeat: possible shortcomings in training and equipment; the system of command; the physical fitness of the troops; and the capacity of commanders at all levels to influence their subordinates. As per Lintner, the "Henderson Brooks – Bhagat Report" only states little more than that India was ill prepared for the war and therefore unable to withstand the Chinese assault over the Himalayas. It also points out weaknesses in India's command structure, and the lack of effective co-operation between the government and the military. It

certainly does not say that India was responsible for the war, nor does it question the Forward Policy per se.

Lintner argues that it is also astonishing to note how many Western writers decided to accept China's crude propaganda and fanciful interpretations of the border conflict and related issues such as the reason for the war in 1962. The claim that Indian troop movements around the Dhola Post and some skirmishes between the Indians and the Chinese in mid-October determined the timing of the attack is part of the twisted interpretation of the causes of the 1962 war. A much more plausible explanation, according to Lintner, is that an event that was taking place far from the Indian subcontinent made the Chinese decide that 20 October 1962 would be the most appropriate day to launch an attack on India and that, of course, was the Cuban missile crisis, which lasted from 22 to 28 October 1962. From the Chinese point of view, it was a masterstroke to decide to wage war on India while the American President John F. Kennedy was preoccupied by such an immediate threat to America's national security. A direct American intervention supporting India in the 1962 war would be out of the question, but if it did happen, it would force India to compromise its commitment to non-alignment. On 26 October, as war was raging in the Himalayas, Nehru made an unprecedented appeal for international sympathy and support.

Today, the relationship between India and China in Asia has entered an uncertain phase. Lintner's book certainly places matters in perspective. Between the two countries, there is a

‘New Great Game’ “founded on historic mistrust and current competition”. China’s conflict, or war, with India is a long one: from the direct contest of 1962, it is now a proxy war: a jockeying for space along the disputed frontier, cross-border insurgencies, the sharing of water resources, a jousting for strategic influence and political weight in Nepal, Myanmar and Sri Lanka etc. as well as

in the ports and seaways of the Indian Ocean.

It is a challenging task to analyse an issue as complicated and controversial as the India-China war of 1962. But the author of this book has presented a comprehensive and nuanced picture of the conflict – why and how it began, what it became, and the meaning of it all in the realities of today’s Asia.



Upcoming Events

Counter Terrorism Conference 2018

14-16 March, 2018

India Foundation is organising the 4th edition of the annual Counter Terrorism Conference CTC 2018 on 14-16 March, 2018. The theme for this edition of the Conference is “Changing Contours of Global Terror” and it will be addressed by Heads of States, Ministers, bureaucrats, diplomats, defence personnel and scholars from across the world.

For further details, please write to mail@indiafoundation.in

India Economic Summit – 2018

27-28 April, 2018; Mumbai

India Foundation, in association with Bombay Stock Exchange, is organizing the 3rd edition of India Economic Summit in Mumbai on 27-28 April, 2018. The theme of this year’s summit is “A New Economy for a New India” which will explore how India can develop its own unique growth model. Due to the structural reforms of the last few years, the Indian economy is now poised to embark on a qualitatively different growth trajectory. At this critical juncture, the summit will explore further efforts required to ensure India becomes an engine of global growth in an age of technological and geo-political disruptions.

Topics on which this Summit will focus include:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1. New Industries for a New India | 2. Future of Work and Employability |
| 3. Further Ease-of-Doing-Business Reforms | 4. Role of States in New India |
| 5. Financing for the New Economy. | |

For further details, please write to mail@indiafoundation.in

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