ISSN 2347-1522

Vol. VIII ■ Issue No. 3 May-June 2020

INDIA FOUNDATION JOURNAL

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India Foundation Journal

Vol. VIII
Issue No.3

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Publisher
India Foundation
New Delhi

E-mail
journal@indiafoundation.in

Website
www.indiafoundation.in

for private circulation only

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India Foundation is an independent research centre focussed on the issues, challenges and opportunities of the Indian polity. The Foundation believes in understanding contemporary India and its global context through the civilizational lens of a society on the forward move. Based on the principles of independence, objectivity and academic rigour, the Foundation aims at increasing awareness and advocating its views on issues of both national and international importance.

With a team of dedicated professionals based at its office in New Delhi, the Foundation works with partners and associates both in India and overseas to further its stated objectives.

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The India Foundation Journal, India Foundation's flagship publication, has been in circulation since 2013. The journal is led by an Editorial Board of eminent scholars and leaders from various spheres of Indian public life. The bi-monthly journal covers a wide range of issues pertinent to the national interest, mainly focusing on international relations, national security, legal and constitutional issues and other issues of social, religious and political significance. Over the past few years, the journal has cultivated an expansive readership creating awareness on issues impacting the Indian society and has contributed towards policy formulation. The journal seeks articles from scholars with the intent of creating a significant body of knowledge with a nationalist perspective and establish a recognised forum for debates involving academicians and policymakers.

Post COVID-19: Challenges for India

Maj. Gen. Dhruv C. Katoch*, SM, VSM

Since December 2019, when the first case of Covid-19 (the illness caused by SARS CoV-2) was detected in Wuhan, the capital city of Hubei province of China, the spread of the virus, also called the China virus or the Wuhan virus by some has spread to all corners of the globe, causing death and destruction in its wake and severely disrupting the world's economy. China, which was the only country impacted when the virus first appeared in Wuhan, has now controlled its spread, but large parts of Europe, the US, Africa and Asia to which the virus spread in a later time frame are still grappling with containing the virus. India, with a population in excess of 1.3 billion people has done fairly well in restricting the spread of SARS CoV-2, but like other countries in the world, its economy has taken a severe hit and India now has to grapple with a fresh set of challenges in an increasingly volatile world.

Till the virus hit India, the nation's major concerns were getting the economy to double-digit growth, with the hope of moving on to a USD 5 trillion economy by 2024 or 2025. This appears to be a distant dream now, with the current year's projection for economic growth being pegged at a mere 1.9 %.[1] However, growth for the calendar year 2021 is expected to rebound to 7.4%.[2] How to get the economy back on track in a changing international environment will remain the primary focus of the government, while simultaneously also dealing with the earlier challenges on the security and energy front.

Cross Border Terrorism

Despite the onslaught of SARS CoV-2, the sponsors of terror have shown no let-up in their activities. Pakistan continues to support cross border terrorism and has not closed any of the camps it has set up for the training of terrorist groups like the Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM), Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), Hizbul Mujahideen (HM) and others. Pakistan continues to use terrorism as an instrument of its state policy, as seen by repeated attempts being made to infiltrate such elements into India across the Line of Control (LoC) to unleash violence. Some of these terrorists like Masood Azhar and Mohammed Saeed are on the counter-terror map of the world and remain in the list of the world's most-wanted terrorists, but continue to find safe refuge in Pakistan. The period from 1 January 2020 to 23 April 2020 saw repeated attempts by terrorist groups to create mayhem in the Valley, most of which were foiled by effective counter-terrorism operations which resulted in 50 terrorists being eliminated including several top commanders of JeM and LeT. In the operations conducted, 17 security forces personnel also laid down their lives.[3] During the same period in 2019, a total of 72 terrorists were eliminated, with 59 security forces personnel laying down their lives[4]. While this shows the positive impact of India's countering terrorism effort, it also is indicative of the fact that there is no let-up in the intent of inimical forces to unleash terror on the hapless citizens of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

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Ceasefire violations by the Pakistan military remain a constant feature across the Line of Control (LoC), though the Indian Army continues to give an appropriate response for every act of transgression. More insidious, however, is the use Pakistan is making of the social media to unleash a vicious propaganda war against India. This is being done not only within India, to create communal discord, but also in the Arab world. An example of one such attempt was the creation of a fake account of the Omani Princess HH Dr Mona Fahad Mahmoud Al Said, tweeting about Muslims getting prosecuted in India. While the Omani princess has come out openly and declared the account as fake,[5] many people fell victim to the subterfuge. Many Pakistanis are also posing as Saudi businessmen, to target the Modi government.[6] Pakistan has been actively using social media as part of its influence operations strategy since long. A marked increase in these efforts took place post 5 August 2019, when the Indian Parliament revoked the provisions of Article 370 and Article 35A and divided the erstwhile state of J&K into the Union Territory of Ladakh and the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. To create dissonance in the minds of India's Muslim population, these efforts have now significantly increased, suggesting the need for appropriate countermeasures.

There have also been reports that Pakistan is now pushing Coronavirus infected terrorists into India. As per Shri Dilbagh Singh, DGP, Jammu and Kashmir, "…It is a matter of concern that Pakistan is pushing COVID-19 infected militants from across…Till now, Pakistan had been supporting terrorists and now it is exporting coronavirus patients to infect people of Kashmir. This is something on which there is a need to take precaution".[7] While no concrete proof of such attempts being made by Pakistan is available, such acts by the Pakistan military appear unlikely. Such personnel would invariably come in contact with the normal public in Pakistan as well as their handlers on the border areas before induction. A patient suffering from Covid-19 is unlikely to bear the rigour of the journey and the probability of him infecting his own colleagues is far higher than in infecting any person from the Indian side. Perhaps this is a ploy by Pakistan to spread concern within the Indian security establishment, but its practical manifestation is extremely doubtful

The Regional Security Environment

The region continues to simmer with violence, with the Afghan peace process in tatters, and the situation in the Gulf also remaining extremely tenuous. The US-Taliban peace deal is as good as dead, with the Taliban paying scant heed to observing any sort of ceasefire with the Government forces. In fact, the Taliban has even rejected President Ashraf Ghani's appeal to the group to lay down arms for the Islamic holy month of Ramzan, which began on 24 April 2020.[8]

With the US deeply committed to addressing home concerns in combatting the Coronavirus, it perhaps is less focussed on what is happening in Afghanistan, where Taliban forces continue to attack government troops. Post the signing of the troop withdrawal agreement with the United States in February, attacks by Taliban on Afghan forces recommenced within a week of the ceasefire, though the Taliban has, for now, held back on

attacking foreign forces. The attacks come at a time when Afghanistan is reeling with the Coronavirus outbreak and has limited resources to take the necessary measures to control its spread. As per a New York Times report, at least 262 government troops and 50 civilians have lost their lives in April 2020.[9] These are very high casualty figures and do not augur well for peace in the region. We could well be looking into a scenario where Afghanistan slips into civil war. Indian concerns get magnified as a great deal of political capital as well as treasure has been invested by the government of India in building infrastructure in that country, and all that could well go up in smoke. Also of concern is the fact that instability in Afghanistan would greatly increase Pakistani influence in that region. The possibility of some elements of the Taliban jumping in the fray to fight in the Union Territory of J&K after crossing the LoC, cannot be ruled out.

The situation in the Gulf also remains worrisome, as Daesh (Islamic State) remains active in the region along with elements of Al Qaeda. Turkey is in conflict with Syrian Government forces which in turn are being supported by Russia and Iran. Relations between Iran and the US continue to remain tense, though thankfully, after the killing of Maj Gen Soleimani in January 2020, the region did not slip into war, which could well have led to the closure of the Strait of Hormuz and caused a serious shortage of energy resources across the world. On 22 April, in a move that could once again stoke conflict, the US President ordered the US Navy to "shoot down and destroy" any Iranian gunboats that harass US ships.[10] This has created yet another flashpoint in the region on the high seas, which could potentially impact the transportation of energy resources through the Strait of Hormuz.

Another factor for consideration is the hostility that exists between Iran and Israel. Israel feels threatened by Iran's nuclear and precision-guided munition (PGM) programme. In Mid-April, Iran also unveiled a range of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV), with a range in excess of 1000 kms and which could reach Israel from Iran.[11] Israel considers increased Iranian capability to target Israel as an existential threat and thus could respond unilaterally against Iran to obviate the threat at source. Israel is cognisant of the fact that it was a drone attack by Iran's proxies that destroyed the Saudi Aramco oil facilities on 14 September 2019, which led to a fifty per cent loss of production for about a month and highlighted Iranian drone technology. They, thus, cannot take lightly, any potential threat from Iran. According to Jonathan Schanzer, Senior Vice President Research of FDD (Foundation for Defence of Democracies), Iran's PGM programme could be the issue that prompts the region's next war.

All this is taking place in the Gulf in the backdrop of heightened tensions between Iran and Saudi Arabia, with both countries jostling for increased influence in the Muslim world. This is playing out in Yemen, where the Saudi forces are embroiled in a military campaign against the Houthi rebels. A unilateral ceasefire was declared by Saudi for two weeks which ended on 22 April, but which was rejected by the Houthis. As a condition for agreeing to a ceasefire, the Houthis are demanding a lifting of air and sea blockades imposed by the Saudi coalition to the regions which the Houthis

control, but that as yet is not forthcoming. In the meantime, the Saudi led coalition has extended the ceasefire for another four weeks, to support efforts to contain the spread of Covid-19. Yemen is perhaps one of the poorest countries in the world and the conflict is another potential flashpoint which could spin out of control.

The region is also witnessing a serious slump in the price of crude oil which will adversely impact all the major oil producers. The Coronavirus pandemic across the globe has led to a slash in demand for oil, which in turn has led to a global economic contraction.[12] Oil prices have tumbled by half this year and saw Brent crude prices hovering between USD 31 - USD 32 per barrel, as the spread of the coronavirus coincided with a bitter price war that saw producers flood the market.[13] Despite a deal reached by oil cartel and allies – known as OPEC+ to end the price war between Saudi Arabia and Russia, oil prices have halved from the 2019 average price of Brent crude which stood at USD 64.26 per barrel[14] and which further slipped to below USD 10 per barrel on 21 April 2020.[15] The drop in oil prices will see a rise as world demand picks up in a few months, but the prices are likely to stabilise at around USD 30 per barrel for Brent crude, well below the average price for Brent crude in 2019. While this will provide some solace to the consumers, especially to India and other countries in South Asia who are not oil producers, it will impact seriously the economies of West Asia which are dependent on export of crude oil.

Chinese Intransigence

The impact of Covid-19 across the world has not deterred China from seeking to impose its influence in the South China Sea. As the virus originated from China, that country was the first to suffer its consequences, but since then China has recovered from the impact and while its economy has taken a hit, it is still projected to grow at 1.2 per cent for the current year and rebound strongly to 9.2 per cent in 2021.[16] Of concern is the fact that Beijing has ratcheted up pressure on Taiwan, which it seeks to reunite. On 9 February 2020, Chinese fighters and bombers flew around Taiwan in an apparent show of force—what the Chinese call "island encirclement" drills. The exercise was described by China's Eastern Theatre Command as a "completely legitimate and necessary action aimed at the current situation in the Taiwan Strait and safeguarding national sovereignty".[17] Next day, in yet another provocative act, Chinese jets, including J-11 fighters, crossed an unofficial middle line in the Taiwan Strait, forcing the Taiwanese Air Force to scramble its F-16 fighters, duly armed, to counter any potential threat.[18] In early April, a Chinese naval flotilla led by the country's first aircraft carrier passed by the eastern and southern coasts of Taiwan to carry out drills.[19] These acts are coercive and designed to put pressure on Taiwan at a time when the world is battling the Coronavirus.

China is also ramping up pressure on its claim areas in the South China Sea. Chinese trawlers, guarded by China's coast guard, have been fishing in waters which form part of the EEZ of Indonesia, off the Natunas. In April, a Chinese coast guard ship rammed and sank a Vietnamese fishing boat. China has also approved setting up two districts in areas claimed by Vietnam—the islands and reefs of the Paracel and Spratly Islands, to which

Vietnam has lodged a protest. A Chinese government survey ship was also involved in tagging an exploration vessel operated by Petronas, Malaysia's state oil company, in disputed waters in the South China Sea.[20] Chinese belligerence is a deliberate show of force, cocking a snook at the world—and this at a time when the world is engaged in battling the Coronavirus.

India: Challenges and Opportunities

India's internal and external challenges have not undergone any changes, but stand further magnified with the onset of the Coronavirus and its debilitating effect on the nation's economy. Internally, attempts continue to be made to weaken the nation's syncretic fabric by inimical elements within the country, primarily as an attempt to discredit the government with an eye on the next general elections, slated for 2024. In the event of the ruling dispensation winning the same, it would mean that the main opposition party would be out of power for 15 years—a situation they find unpalatable. External agencies too, do not find the prospect of a strong national government in India to be conducive to their self-interest, so such forces also lend support to fissiparous tendencies within the country. The agitations seen on the issue of the Citizenship Amendment Act are a pointer in this direction. Rational criticism of the actions of the Tablighi Jamaat, which paid scant heed to government directives on preventing the spread of the Coronavirus became a vehicle for propaganda, with government actions being seen as targeting India's Muslim community. How a small group of the Tablihji Jamaat became conflated with the larger Muslim society of India, of which it does not form even a fraction of one per cent, is a matter of concern, but it points to insidious forces at work to weaken the national fabric. Such efforts to create a communal divide will only gather momentum as we move closer to the 2024 elections, and addressing this issue will remain a major challenge for the government.

The economy has taken a severe hit with the lockdown imposed since 25 March 2020 for a period of three weeks, which was then extended to 3 May 2020. This has led to high disruptions, especially in the unorganised sector, with millions of daily wagers and migrant workers facing the brunt. While all sections of the economy were impacted, the MSMEs (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises) were the hardest hit and would require special schemes to get back on their feet. Also, hit to the verge of collapse are the hospitality and aviation sectors, which will continue to bear the brunt, well after the lockdown is lifted. How these sectors are revived will remain the defining challenge for the government.

On the positive side, the handling of the pandemic by the government has been outstanding. The casualty figures, which many thought would be in the millions, have been effectively contained. As of 26 April, while the world has suffered close to three million cases of Covid-19, resulting in over 200,000 fatalities, India has just over 26,000 cases of Covid-19 and just over 800 fatalities.[21] The lockdown period has given India enough time to educate the public on preventive measures as also to build up its health infrastructure. As of date, India has 700 COVID hospitals and has built up a capacity of 190,000 beds, exclusively for Covid-19 patients. 12,000 ventilators are also available

across the country for Covid-19 patients, which are being augmented by another 10,000 ventilators by the end of April.[22] While 80% of the patients report mild symptoms or are asymptomatic, the remaining 20% do need oxygen support and in extreme cases the use of ventilators.[23] Less than 3 per cent of the total cases in the hospital would require ventilators[24] and as such, India is adequately placed to deal with any emergency in the months to come.

As the stock markets have taken a hit, with both the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) and the National Stock Exchange (NSE) suffering huge losses, predators are on the prowl to pick up a stake in the Indian market when the prices have bottomed out. In the March quarter, People's Bank of China (PBoC) bought 1,74,92,909 shares, or 1.01 per cent of HDFC limited,[25] at a time when the share prices had dropped significantly. The government was quick to prevent further Chinese predatory moves into India's financial system and revised India's Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) policy, which now requires approval from the Central Government for all countries bordering India.[26] Such proactive measures augur well for India's financial stability.

Externally, cross border terrorism remains a major threat for peace and stability in the region. Pakistan, while no longer a conventional military threat, is unlikely to stop using terrorists as an instrument of its foreign policy. The government has taken firm steps in the political, diplomatic, economic and military spheres to counter Pakistani designs, but such measures will need to be persisted with over some time and further enhanced to bring about a qualitative change in Pakistani behaviour. More importantly, India would need to negate the vicious propaganda war unleashed by Pakistan to subvert the minds of a section of Indians as also to show India in a negative light across the world. India's countermeasures through influence operations, encompassing both public affairs and public diplomacy, would require an organisational structure for effective execution. It may be worth considering the creation of a perception management organisation for the purpose.

With respect to China, India's major concern is China's predatory moves along its land borders and its increasing presence in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). India is committed to free and open navigation in the Indo-Pacific and is coordinating its efforts towards this end with all concerned countries to achieve this outcome. Of particular interest is the Quad, a grouping of US, Japan, Australia and India, which is likely to grow in momentum and capability in the years to come. India will also have to be mindful of its land borders with China and sustain an adequate force to dissuade China from any hostile action. It is appreciated that the government would require huge inflow of funds to get the economy back on its feet in a quick time frame and it has been suggested by some that the defence budget could be slashed. This, however, will prove to be counter-productive in the long run as India faces a multitude of security challenges from its inimical neighbours. It must also be remembered that military capability takes years to build and for short-term gains, it would not be advisable to weaken our defence capability.

In conclusion, India's handling of the pandemic has raised its stature on the world stage. A revised world order, following the pandemic, could well see the world's acceptance of India as a country deserving a seat on the High Table.

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Great Power Politics in the Time of Corona

Harsh V Pant*

Even as the rest of the world grapples with the deadly pandemic unleashed from Wuhan, China is back to the business of great power politics—building military infrastructure, conducting naval exercises and sinking fishing boats of other nations. Where the rest of the world has come to its knees, in no small part due to irresponsible Chinese behaviour, Beijing is busy reaping the dividends out of this global disorder. If at one level it is using this COVID-19 pandemic to project itself as a global leader by supplying medical kit and expertise to nations in dire need, thereby trying to distinguish itself from an inward-focused Trump Administration, at another level, it is busy waging an information war in Europe, seeking to create an internal rift within the European Union. This paper briefly outlines some of the trends in the rapidly evolving global order even as the full impact of the coronavirus pandemic is yet to be ascertained.

The American Void

As the world has continued to grapple with the coronavirus pandemic with one grim milestone passing every other day, China's response has been at the centre of most debates and discussions. Chinese Communist Party's opacity in dealing with this crisis in its initials weeks, its ham-handed manner of treating whistleblowers, its use of information as a tool of diplomatic leverage and then after its recovery, its attempts to portray itself as a saviour of the beleaguered nations has generated intense global debate. After all, the very future of the global order is at stake and here is a country that is ostensibly aiming to emerge as the global hegemon.

But this deliberation is also happening at a time when America and its political leadership has shown itself thoroughly inept in managing its domestic crisis emerging out of the viral contagion as well as its global fall out. For a country that was widely viewed as the last port of call whenever such global crises had emerged in the past has been found wanting in this most serious crisis the world is undergoing since the end of the Second World War. The US is emerging out of this crisis as a power much diminished in credibility if not in its capacity to manage the externalities of such a profound situation.

US President Donald Trump's leadership so far has been more defined by its absence. For weeks he refused to treat the pandemic with the seriousness it deserved. In fact, for a long time, he continued to maintain the early fatality numbers in the US were much less than those from the flu or even automobile accidents. "We lose thousands of people a year to the flu," Trump was arguing to convince the country that a lockdown was not needed. "We never turn the country off."[1] In fact, he was hopeful that the US could begin to reopen businesses by the Easter holiday in early April.

Trump Administration's recklessness was on

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full display early on when after the first few cases in the US, it did not show any sense of urgency but maintained that the situation was under control and would dissipate in the summer "like a miracle." Trump seemed more interested in picking petty fights on Twitter with Democratic state governors who called for more stringent measures. And then as the situation deteriorated, America's domestic capacity problems got severely exposed with a lack of adequate medical supplies and insufficient testing.

After American public health officials started projecting the number of deaths in the country to be between 100,000 and 200,000, Trump was forced to acknowledge the worst, saying "I want every American to be prepared for the hard days that lie ahead" and that "this is going to be a very, very painful two weeks."[2]

The US Congress has passed a USD 2 trillion coronavirus relief bill which is the largest stimulus package in the nation's history aimed at reviving a pandemic battered economy. This rare bipartisanship is also likely to result in another bill on infrastructure investment and additional healthcare benefits but political strains are quite visible. Nancy Pelosi, the House speaker, has announced a new House Committee would examine "all aspects" of the federal response to the pandemic, not ruling out an investigation in the style of the commission on the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks.[3] Trump has shot back by calling it a "witch hunt" and deriding it as partisan politics.[4]

That American polity's response to the crisis would be shaped by the undercurrents of partisan politics is to be expected, given that this is an election year and stakes are high for both, Trump and the Democrats. Recent opinion polls reflect this as well with 94% of Republicans approving of Trump's handling of the crisis, compared with 27% of Democrats. Trump's approval stands at 49%, quite high by his standards and in a time of highly polarised domestic political landscape.[5] As the crisis unfolds further in the days and months ahead, Trump's handling of it will have a profound bearing on the November elections.

For the world at large, however, questions about America's global leadership are becoming serious by the day. China, with all its faults, is presenting a model of global leadership which might seem very attractive to a large part of the world even as America's claim to global pre-eminence becomes seemingly more dubious by the day. Trump is busy picking fights with close allies like Germany and France by diverting medical supplies meant for these countries by outbidding the original buyers, as well as with Canada and Latin America by forcing American companies to stop exporting hospital-grade N95 masks to them. The fact that few in the world are calling upon the US to lead and manage the global response to this pandemic should be worrying for American policymakers. The expectations are so low from Washington that even America's closes allies are not coordinating their responses with it. The world knew that America was beginning to become more isolationist and during the coronavirus crisis that isolationism became visibly manifest. America's relationship with the global order is at a crossroads and the rest of the world is beginning to come to terms with it. This has profound consequences for us all but it has been Europe, however that has been most acutely affected by the US-China dynamic.

The European Dilemma

The coronavirus which has ravaged Europe unlike any other crises since the end of the World War II should have been an opportunity for the continent and the European Union (EU) to showcase regional solidarity, making an effective case for the benefits of integration. But instead, responses within the national boundaries have been the norm and the EU has been found wanting with hardly any role in framing a coherent regional response. European nations have been the primary drivers of policy even as most regional leaders have been seemingly scrambling to respond. Health vulnerabilities of some of the richest countries in the world stand exposed.

There has hardly been any coordinated response on display in Europe with national governments deciding to seal their borders and increasing controls. What was once a fringe rightwing populist sentiment is now driving policy responses of most European nations. Hungary's prime minister, Viktor Orbán, was one of the first leaders to blame "foreigners" for the pandemic. Orban's assertions might be symptomatic of a larger trend in Europe where broader questions are being raised about the future of the European enterprise itself which has been premised on openness to outsiders. The ideational moorings of the European project are coming unstuck.

On the economic side too, the European project is having to unlearn some of its fundamental assumptions. The European Commission had to trigger the so-called "general escape clause," lifting stringent spending rules and allowing countries to run big deficits in response to a crisis. This is an emergency economic measure which has been used for the first time in the history of the EU, which prides itself in maintaining fiscal orthodoxy. According to Eurogroup President Mario Centeno, the eurozone will emerge from the crisis with much higher debt levels, something which can exacerbate the fragmentation of the EU.[6] Yet, even in this time of acute crisis, divisions with the EU persist with northern European countries reluctant to issue euro zone-wide bonds that could bail out Southern European countries.

And then there is a wider geopolitics which is raising some serious questions about the future of the EU. Italian Foreign Minister Luigi Di Maio publicly praised China when a planeload of medical equipment and doctors arrived in Italy in March to help the country fight the coronavirus. Making his displeasure for the attitude of European nations, who only offered words, clear, Di Maio underlined that "many foreign ministers offered their solidarity and want to give us a hand...and this evening I wanted to show you the first aid arrived from China."[7] Meanwhile, Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic was also unabashed when he suggested that "European solidarity does not exist...it was a fairy tale on paper," and announced that he had sent a letter to his "brother and friend" Xi Jinping, the Chinese president, asking for medical aid, as "the only country that can help us is China."[8]

This attitude of some European nations stands in stark contrast to countries like France which are assessing how far the EU's dependence on China is working to EU's disadvantage. French Finance Minister, Bruno Le Maire, has talked of the need to reconfigure the supply chains to "gain in independence and sovereignty."[9] There is widespread disenchantment with the way China's initial opacity about this crisis led to the crisis to aggravate. And countries like Spain, the Czech

Republic and the Netherlands have been forced to return faulty coronavirus test kits to China. But with China being EU's second-largest trading partner after the United States, there are clear limits to how much decoupling can happen between the two economic giants. Moreover, the EU would also be cognizant of the fact that once the dust settles down and the economic recovery becomes the priority for Europe, China cannot be ignored.

Since the end of the Second World War, the EU has been an exemplar of how nation-states can overcome their parochial interests and collectively work for pan-regional aspirations. That ideal of the world's only supranational organisation stands severely eroded today as the EU member states have retreated into their own national comfort zones. The European idealism was dying even before the coronavirus pandemic had struck. The latest crisis might just make the task of reviving that idealism even more difficult, if not impossible.

While one can think of the US-China discord as a continuation of their great power rivalry predating COVID-19, the toughening up of European response is a more interesting development. Senior political leaders in Europe are robustly questioning Chinese behaviour and policies now. Challenging the conventional wisdom that China had handled the coronavirus outbreak better than others, French President Emmanuel Macron has termed the view as "naive," adding things "happened that we don't know about."[10] He made it clear that there can be no comparison between open societies like democracies and those where truth was suppressed. The UK Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab has also been very critical of China, arguing that the world will "have to ask the hard questions about how [coronavirus] came about and how it couldn't have been stopped earlier" and that there cannot be "business as usual" with China after the present crisis ends.[11]

This European assertion vis-a-vis China has come after the European Union (EU) failed to handle in the upsurge in cases in countries in Italy and Spain, leading China to make a further dent in European solidarity. Italian Prime Minister Guiseppe Conte's urgent request for medical equipment was ignored by the European governments for days. The divisions became starker when some countries like Germany, France and the Czech Republic decided to block exports of emergency equipment to the needy neighbours until they had finished counting up what stocks they had. This led to stark warnings about the very future of the EU, resulting in the EU Commission president Ursula von der Leyen's "heartfelt apology" to Italy for not helping at the start of its deadly coronavirus outbreak.[12]

China has been busy not only with using the crisis to enhance its geopolitical influence where it can but it has also announced its intent to use this crisis to start working on a "Silk Road" of health care./ China has been reaching out to countries from Europe to Africa with medical supplies and kits and has not been shy of underscoring its own leadership at a time when the West had looked divided and inward-focused. Over the last two decades, Chinese companies have made notable acquisitions and investments in European technology firms. There is a danger that this pandemic and the resulting economic crisis can open up new possibilities for Chinese inroads in Europe. But there is a new resolve in Europe to fend off the threat of a Chinese takeover. Margrethe Vestager, the European Union's (EU) competition commissioner, has suggested that

European countries should consider taking stakes in companies to fend off this threat.[13] But how far will Europe be able to go in taking on China's growing financial, political and military muscle remains to be seen.

Global Fault-lines Firming Up

It is indeed quite extraordinary to witness the full play of great power politics at a time which according to most liberal institutionalists, should have been a case study of greater global coordination. Global pandemics were widely viewed as non-traditional security threats which would lead to greater cooperation amongst major powers as supposedly "we are all in this together," not as arenas of contestation among major powers for relative gains. And international institutions were supposed to help the international community to navigate these security challenges.

But the state of the world today should disabuse us of all these fallacies. If anything, the fault lines between the US and China have been accentuated because of the coronavirus crisis. Historically, China and the US have tried to work together to manage various global crises in the past. But not this time. Trump's 'America First' approach has meant antagonising even close allies by diverting medical supplies by outbidding the original buyers or by forcing American companies to stop exporting hospital-grade N95 masks. Lack of leadership shown by Washington has made China a veritable necessity for many nations even in the West who had to import faulty medical kits from China for lack of any real alternative. While a large part of the world remains furious with China for its initial concealment of adequate information, they are forced to take Chinese help in the short term. And this has allowed China to expand its influence under the garb of helping the world during this pandemic, a crisis which would have been much less severe had China behaved responsibly in the initial stages.

As a result, the world will continue to transition to a phase where jostling between China and the US will get exacerbated and the biggest loser will be global governance, something that this crisis has brought into sharp relief. The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) could only hold its first session on this global crisis last week, some four months after the deadly viral contagion emerged as the biggest security challenge to the world after the Second World War. After taking over the presidency of the UNSC last month China's Ambassador to the UN, Zhang Jun, made it clear that Beijing does not plan to discuss the pandemic situation in the Council during its presidency as there was no need to panic over the coronavirus epidemic, even adding that the world is not far from the defeat of COVID-19 "with the coming of spring."[14] Washington and Beijing remain divided on the scope on the joint resolution with the US, insisting that the UNSC resolution should be explicit about the origin of the virus in Wuhan, China, much to Beijing's vexation.

But more serious has been the manner in which the World Health Organization (WHO) has dealt with this once in a lifetime crisis. Far from being the nodal agency to coordinate the global response to this pandemic, it seems to have made itself completely subservient to the Chinese interests, losing its credibility in the eyes of its other stakeholders. WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus was forced to declare a public health emergency of international concern

only in January end after having to call it off just a week earlier under Chinese pressure. Tedros repeatedly defended Chinese handling of the crisis with the WHO even tweeting in mid-January that "preliminary investigations conducted by the Chinese authorities have found no clear evidence of human-to-human transmission" and Tedros suggesting in January end that "WHO doesn't recommend limiting trade and movement."[15] This has generated an intense backlash in Washington which is WHO's largest single funder with the US President Donald Trump not only accusing the UN agency of being "very China-centric" and criticising it for having "missed the call" in its response to the pandemic but also following it up by halting US funding "while a review is conducted to assess the World Health Organisation's role in severely mismanaging and covering up the spread of the coronavirus."[16] Though Trump's move to cut funding has led to political bickering in the US, senior members of the US Congress have also called for a Congressional investigation into the WHO's handling of the crisis in cahoots with the Chinese Communist Party.

Conclusion

It has become commonplace to suggest that globalisation is at a crossroads. From Brexit to the election of President Donald Trump, from the western backlash against migration to the growing trade barriers across the world, this period in world politics has been termed a period of de-globalisation. The high octave optimism of the 'End of History' hypothesis has given way to the constant dribble of pessimism about the ability of the world to come together.[17] The liberal order of the global elites is being challenged like never before and the multilateral institutions are crumbling under the weight of their own contradictions.

The world was at an inflexion point even before the threat of coronavirus had entered the lexicon and our daily lives. It has been a linear progression from the global financial crisis of 2008/09 to the extant global economic disruption – all leading to questions about the credibility of the political and economic elites to provide effective governance and to manage the aspirations of the 'have nots.' Now, as a nation after nation quarantines itself, the spread of COVID-19 is challenging the way we have become used to living and arranging not only our daily lives but also the global order. The vulnerabilities of the teeming millions are out in the open and the 'experts' do not seem to have credible answers.

Great power politics has continued unabated even at a time when many were expected to show greater global solidarity. The international order was getting fragmented and major power rivalry was beginning to shape the global contours before the present crisis struck. That process has been galvanised by the COVID-19 crisis and nations like India should be prepared to navigate the externalities of this challenging environment. As the world becomes more fragmented, the challenges to revive support for globalisation will only mount. This is a problem for a country like India which has benefitted from the forces of globalisation as the free flow of information, ideas, money, jobs and people has enabled Indians to prosper like never before. But as the global landscape evolves rapidly, Indian policymakers will have to figure out how to make the most of some of the opportunities that are emerging as global supply chains get disrupted and a new trade and

investment regime is getting constructed. Realists had long argued that greater interconnectedness leads to greater vulnerabilities. But this simple lesson became a casualty of globalisation hyper optimism. As that optimism dies down, the danger is that lessons that are being learnt will end up doing more damage. Globalisation's obituaries have been written many times in the past as well. It will surely survive this latest assault. But the form in which it might endure will also challenge us to think more creatively about the world we live in and to provide adequate policy responses.

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FOCUS

Challenges before China

Shakti Sinha*

Even as the world still copes with Covid-19, many analysts have already declared that China has won World War III without firing a shot.[1] This is a gross exaggeration for various reasons, the most prominent being that while US-China relations may have indeed deteriorated over the past decade, we are unsure if even Cold War II has in fact commenced.[2] And it is too early to posit that China is in a similar position vis-à-vis the world that the USA was in August 1945 when World War II ended. It is also an equally mistaken notion that the Chinese economic miracle has ended with the plateauing of its growth, even though its economy shrank 6.8% in the first quarter of 2020. This contraction is the first economic shrinkage acknowledged in official statistics since 1976.[3] However, the Chinese economy is, to an extent, back on the rails and has already started working at 80% of its potential by mid-April.[4] This is a far quicker bounce back than what anybody could have predicted even in March. While the effects of Covid-19 on the global economy and geo-strategy would be more extensive than can be assessed at present, even without this global pandemic, China was facing some very serious challenges to its economic growth and the resultant political expansionist story that it was struggling to cope up with. These challenges have only grown since.

This essay takes a look at these challenges faced by China while keeping in mind its historically unparalleled economic developments over the last four decades.[5] Though countries like Japan, South Korea and Taiwan had also witnessed an economic growth of 10%+ per annum for decades, the problem of economic endowment faced by these countries was relatively bearable, given the smaller sizes and lesser diversities of their populations. China, whose per capita income was less than India in the mid-1990s, is today almost five times richer with its GDP now second only to the US. The Chinese GDP in 2018 was USD 13.368 trillion while that of the USA was USD 21.427 trillion, in real exchange rate basis.[6] It has also come to be known as the world's factory, for China is not just the world's largest exporter but also the largest importer, which gives it a key position in the global supply chains. It, therefore, becomes necessary to recount some of these factors that drove China's growth, to analyse how they have served China well, and conclude with the challenges that China's development and changes in the external environment have thrown up.

The Chinese Growth Story

The Chinese approach to economic growth is best captured in three statements of Deng Xiaoping. The most popularly known of these says that the colour of the cat does not matter as long as it catches the mouse. What the statement

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reflects is a pragmatic, non-ideological approach, quite antithetical to the stated creed of the Chinese Communist Party. This was later justified ideologically as 'Socialism with Chinese characteristics'.[7] The second statement, in which Deng talks about crossing a river by feeling the stones,[8] is equally consequential as it states that China never did not enjoy the luxury of time to develop a master plan but had to plan as it went along. The third statement, about seeking truth from facts instead of dogmas,[9] is again one that must not be understated. These statements were not just slogans but had powerful resonation throughout the country—a fact which becomes clearer with the following narrative.

As an ambitious country, China is obsessed with GDP numbers, which results in all levels of the party and government hierarchy being conscious about achieving their targets. However, this obsession does lead to dodgy statistics e.g. if the central leadership announces that the GDP growth target for a particular year for the country as a whole is x%, every provincial secretary comes under pressure to deliver at least x%, technically pushing up the country's GDP achievement to above x%. But the final aggregate figures more or less conform to the target laid down!

The point about statistics cannot be laboured beyond a point since even if GDP and other numbers may not be completely correct, other numbers like trade figures, foreign exchange reserves, consumption numbers etc. bear out the reality of the Chinese miracle. To come back to the importance of economic growth, this is the only metric by which party and government functionaries are judged. All speeches and public statement by the party leadership, all publications, and even conversations, are dominated by this single theme.

It was in order to push up economic growth, release the potential of the people, and reduce poverty that market forces were allowed to make an appearance in an avowedly communist state that had abolished private property. Clearly, the colour of the cat, red or black, did not matter. This did lead to a degree of political opening, a natural consequence of increased participation of party cadres at different levels in public policy processes.

This is best reflected in the various experiments carried by cadres in different parts of China, involving new, localised, economic models like the household responsibility system that effectively did away with village communes, and the township and village enterprises, whose growth and success encouraged the hiving away of the best parts of state-owned enterprises and tying up with investors in Hong Kong and Taiwan, eventually laying the ground for major FDI flows.[10] China's isolation post-Tiananmen, forced the Chinese leadership to allow the creation of Special Economic Zones, beginning with Shenzhen, that ultimately led China into becoming the factory of the world.[11] Deng's famous southern tour to kick-start the economy and push the bitterness of the Tiananmen into the background was captured in his slogan 'to get rich is glorious'.[12]

For the same reasons, China was quick to adopt policy advice from the World Bank, IMF and other international institutions. It also kept inviting foreign scholars from Milton Friedman (on the right) to Joseph Stiglitz (on the left) and exposed Chinese decision-makers and academia to them,

the idea behind such steps being that such interaction would encourage experimentation. Professor Daokui Li of Tsinghua University calls it the 'just do it' attitude to reform for he explains that the party leaders were encouraged to go ahead and experiment, rather than getting bogged down in debate. This attitude is also reflected in the Chinese saying, 'let experience teach you, not arguments'.

However, the Chinese story is only partially understood by observers who conclude that China abandoned socialism in order to grow. The reality is that China abandoned only the economic aspects of socialism, retaining the political monopoly of the Communist Party of China (CPC), a monopoly which includes controlling the most successful private enterprises. The CPC never abandoned the essential Marxist-Leninist core of politics being in control, and of a form of democratic centralism.[13] The latter allowed local party cadres and later individual entrepreneurs to experiment and adopt a capitalist approach to the economy, allowing market forces reasonable freedom, but always within the ambit of the overall CPC umbrella, whose monopoly of power could not be questioned.

China's ability to experiment would have been limited if not for the decision of the Chinese authorities to send its students to foreign countries for studies. China made clear its determination to learn from anywhere, be it the US, Europe, Japan or South Korea. It helped that many senior communist party leaders like Zhou Enlai and Deng Xiaoping studied abroad. In fact, from the early days of Chinese modernisations, leaders like Sun Yat Sen, Liang Qichao etc. had studied and worked abroad.[14] This openness to the outside world, even at the risk of losing their best students who might not return, helped China emerge as a science and technology superpower, in addition to brick and mortar infrastructure and manufacturing for which they are well known. In fact, currently, the US and other western powers accuse China of theft of intellectual property since many Chinese nationals have worked with cutting edge companies and institutions, taking their knowledge and actual designs back to China. It is estimated that at any time, over half a million Chinese students are studying outside China.[15] Spread over a quarter of a century, the number of Chinese exposed to advanced educational institutions and economies becomes enormous.

China's approach to foreign capital has also been very pragmatic. In the first few decades of its economic reforms, China was capital scarce and needed considerable foreign direct investment to initiate and sustain high rates of growth. Initially, the transfer of advanced equipment and machinery was often a proxy for actual capital inflows.[16] Subsequently, foreign direct investment (FDI) from Japan, Taiwan and Hong Kong came in a large way, mainly because these economies were moving up the value chain and shedding more capital-intensive and low-technology manufacturing to China.

There were two primary factors which made FDI acceptable to the Chinese leadership: one, the knowledge that though the owners of the capital may be foreigners, the assets were physically located in China, and two, the realisation that much as China needed FDI, the owners of the capital were often mesmerised by the prospect of selling in the Chinese markets. General Motors (GM)

continued to lose money in China for over two decades but hung on. And just when it started making money, it realised that its prize design, the Chevy Spark, had been copied by a Chinese company openly, which sold it as QiQi. Yet, GM did not take the matter to court as it wanted to stay on in China and had been in receipt of a 'secret' bailout from the Chinese government.[17] Such policies and attitude gave the Chinese leadership the confidence to dictate terms to foreign investors. Recently, in the context of theft of intellectual property, it has come to light that China forces foreign investors to share their technologies either directly or by taking on a local partner.[18]

Challenges before China

Even before the Covid-19 pandemic, China had been facing considerable economic, political, social and strategic challenges. The pandemic has only exacerbated them, both domestically and externally, and with so much of the China Story dependent on the external factors, any deterioration in the latter would have a considerable impact domestically. De-coupling is not an easy option in the best of circumstances, and when foreign trade is such an important driver of economic growth, then the room for the Chinese, or the US, government to manoeuvre, becomes quite limited.[19]

China has been conscious of the need to find other drivers of economic growth. For example, the Chinese economy is investment-driven, a luxury that it can afford because the domestic saving rate is around 45% of GDP, which was earlier in excess of 50%.[20] By contrast, the savings rate in India is less than 25% of GDP. Further, the Chinese authorities had adopted, quite early on, financial repression as a matter of policy in order to make available funds for investment at low costs. Hence, Chinese savers face negative interest rates on their deposits in order for China to ensure that investment as a percentage of GDP remains around 45%.[21] This has enabled China to build up a massive stock of infrastructure and manufacturing facilities. However, now with the plateauing of exports due to headwinds in the global economy over the medium term, with China moving up the value chain into higher-end manufacturing & services, and the glut of economically unviable infrastructure projects, the extant Chinese model is running out of steam. The effect of these factors, including the much larger size of the Chinese economy, is that exports as a share of GDP have been continuously falling from 32.6% of the GDP in 2008 to 19.5% in 2018.[22]

China, however, is attempting to break out of this, by moving aggressively into the technologies of the future, e.g. 5G, AI, nanotechnology etc, where it has emerged as a world leader. This is paying off to an extent and China is no more seen as only a provider of consumer goods, or even of standard capital goods like power generation equipment, earthmovers, cranes etc. But while China has developed its human capacity to emerge as one of the leading nations in what is called fourth industrial revolution, its progress is limited to what the world can absorb and its own ability to generate intellectual property. Clearly, these new generation industries would not be able to absorb the millions of workers who are being released as low wage manufacturing shifts to countries like Vietnam and Bangladesh.

The other policy initiative that China has

adopted in order to ensure that the external sector remains an important engine of economic growth is the Belt & Road Initiative (BRI).[23] BRI provides China a way out of its surplus capacities in manufacturing, which is plagued with industrial obsolescence, and in creating infrastructure. With BRI, it can 'export' entire factories and power plants, create massive projects for its infrastructure economies and find markets for its standard capital goods. The funding of BRI projects is interesting in that it entails little costs to China's own finances, with recourse to long and guaranteed return on Chinese equity, a win-win situation for China strategically and economically.

However, both moves, into cutting-edge technologies and into BRI, would need a benign external environment. The world economy must see robust growth and China must be trusted. Unfortunately, both these imperatives are under pressure. The world economy, particularly of most of the developed world, has not fully recovered from the crisis of 2008-09, and private sector growth, the most important driver of the economy, is unable to sustain itself without substantial public sector push even after a decade of the crisis. This phenomenon, which economists have called secular stagnation, shows no sign of ending soon.[24] Business as usual, in these circumstances, will only yield diminishing returns.

China has been trying to deal with this issue in another manner by trying to shift its focus away from exports to domestic consumption; the latter drives growth in the US, most of the developed world and even India. The latest value of consumption as a percentage of GDP for China, from 2018 is 38.68 percent. For comparison, the world average in 2018 based on 152 countries is 63.64 percent'.[25] China has been trying to make this transition too, but it is not easy since it would involve increasing wages, shedding low-wage employment, cutting back on investment and other steps, all of which would be tremendously destabilising in the short-run. There is also no guarantee that such a transition would be successful or that there is a specific time period within which it could be reasonably assumed to be completed.

Politically, there is a concerted pushback against China on account of privacy concerns and the misuse of personal data that accompanies the use of Chinese technologies and its companies. These fears have multiplied with reports of the use of facial recognition technologies, tracking of individual social media accounts, and other obtrusive methods that China has used in Xinjiang and in the roll-out of its social credit system. That China has shared such technologies with other authoritarian regimes has further raised concerns all around, and not just within the human rights community. China's use of its diaspora to influence the politics of other countries is also increasingly being challenged, with Australia having had to change its domestic laws to restrict foreign influence.[26]

The Covid-19 pandemic has only made the situation worse for the Chinese. The desperate attempt to score brownie points, which has led many to believe that China has come out looking as if it has won WW III, is fast running out of steam. China's culpability in suppressing information and in denying that human-to-human transmission had started and its cynical

manipulation of the WHO, cannot be easily washed off.[27] Reports that China cornered the global supplies of Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) and medicines in a period when news of the virus was kept under wraps, even if exaggerated, has hit its image hard. It would, therefore, be difficult for the country to emerge out of this pickle looking as the global saviour, despite the US's clumsy and ineffective handling of the crisis.

China also faces considerable domestic challenges. These include rising inequality and outbreaks of social tension. In fact, according to recent public opinion surveys, 'Chinese citizens have frequently ranked corruption, pollution, and social tension as their top concerns'.[28] These issues of corruption and party highhandedness are closely related to social unrest which often expresses itself in matters of forced appropriation of land at low compensation and in the failure to enforce environmental laws. According to one survey—part of an ongoing study over the past two decades—'land conflicts are the source of 65 percent of the more than 180,000 protests China experiences annually'.[29] The mishandling of environmental issues has frequently seen Chinese citizens file cases and take the issue to the social media, for example, the famous case of the waste-to-energy plant in Wuhan.[30].

The legitimacy of the CPC rests on its ability to generate economic growth and be seen as delivering on quality of life. The slowing of economic growth, the rising inequality and social tensions arising out of land and pollution issues are challenges that the party would have to contend with. These are unlikely to bring down the regime or even lead to a Tiananmen-like situation. But these do chip away at its credibility and, increasingly, on its legitimacy. The party has tried to counter this with its policy of co-opting economic and social elites on the one hand and taking up rigorous anti-corruption measures on the other. To detail the latter, Xi Jinping, since coming to power, targeted corruption within the party and has, in fact, made this issue his top priority. The arrest and downfall of Bo Xilai, seen as a rival, led many to believe that Xi's campaign was mostly to strengthen his position and to centralise power. While true, this explanation is inadequate. Deng's reforms which encouraged local experimentation led to wide-spread corruption in the leadership and ranks of the party. It was hard to not see the linkage between corruption in the party and rising inequality and social unrest, which were collectively undermining the party's position. Xi put his trusted lieutenant, Wang Qishan, in charge of the 'tigers and flies' campaign. Wang reported in 2015 that in less than three years, 282,000 persons had been punished for 'discipline violation', of whom 82,000 received serious punishment.[31] The scholar Minxin Pei stated that Xi essentially wanted 'to generate popular support, and fighting corruption is a sure-fire way of giving him enormous public support.' In fact, Pei clarified that in 'terms of tigers–these are officials with the rank of vice-minister or vice governor and above–as of today, the number is about 150. That averages to 50 a year, and that's a lot, for it is double the number of officials arrested in any given year before the anti-corruption campaign'.[32] Without forming any conclusion about whether such campaigns can reduce corruption adequately to bolster the party's support and help facilitate economic growth, the fact that Xi had to

make anti-corruption the centre point of his efforts speaks to the magnitude of the domestic challenge faced by the CPC.

The Chinese Communist Party was always known for its cliques, with purges of dissidents a normal way of dealing with it. However, after the dismissal of Zhao Zhiyang for failing to deal with the Tiananmen demonstrators, the CPC had managed to avoid public bickering that hurt its image. The different factions settled their differences through compromises and deals, and this saw smooth transitions for almost a quarter of a century. The Bo Xilai episode was the first episode where arrest and imprisonment were used against a top party leader, who posed a challenge to Xi's accession of power. Wang's virtual demotion as Vice President, after being seen as a strong instrument of Xi's efforts to control and cleanse the party, was an indication that Xi was feeling insecure despite the removal of term limits, which were so painstakingly put in place by Deng to avoid the emergence of a single leader and ensure rule by consensus. Lately, Xi's position has been challenged by Ren Zhiqiang, a princeling, realty tycoon, and part of the party's leadership. Ren has been a public critic of Xi since 2016, and in the aftermath of Xi's handling of the Wuhan crisis, called the latter 'the clown who insists on wearing the emperor's new clothes', likening him to the character in Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tale.[33] In the absence of open information, and the fact that Ren and Wang were classmates, rumours and speculations, lead people to insinuate that the former is speaking up for the latter; for the time being Ren is in prison with no chances of his release any time soon.

But Ren is not the only Xi critic in jail. Xu Zhangrun, a law professor at the prestigious Tsinghua University is also under detention for publishing an essay severely critical of the handling of the Wuhan crisis. Both Ren's letter and Xu's essay have been taken off the net, and their social media accounts closed.[34] Xu, in fact, was investigated earlier when he published his essay criticising Xi's removal of term limits. Since 2016, there has been a spate of anti-Xi letters and articles, including by another Tsinghua University professor, Lu Xia, which had angered the party and led to disciplinary action.[35]

China's ability to control its runaway population growth hailed for a generation as a major achievement and something that other countries were encouraged to emulate, has come back to haunt it in a big way. According to Yi Fuxian, an expert of Chinese demography, 2018 was a crucial tipping point as China's population started to shrink. According to the Global Times, the media outlet of the People's Liberation Army, there were fewer than 15 million births in 2018 or two million lesser than in 2017. When the one-child policy was given up in 2016, and couples were encouraged to have more children, there was a surge in births, but that trend soon reversed itself very sharply.[36] According to Yi, China's 'total fertility rate, or births per woman, dropped from 4.54 in 1973 to 2.29 in 1989, then to 1.22 in 2000 and 1.05 (then the lowest in the world) in 2015'.[37] Total fertility rate of 2.1 is considered to be replacement level, so if this trend continues, China's population in 2100 would be 480 million, or less than the projected population of China. This would have major implications for the Chinese economy as its workforce would shrink

and the number of old age pensioners would go up. There is a real fear of China ageing before it becomes rich, as reflected in the fact that its demographic profile of 2018 was similar to Japans in 1992.[38] Specifically, China's working-age population (people aged 15 to 64) is 'estimated to fall by 9% from 2015 to 2035, and by 20% in 2050. That's a loss of 200 million people. Japan has experienced a similar decline over the past two decades: Its working population fell 13.4% from 1997 to 2017'.[39]

The last challenge, post-COVID-19, that China faces is hubris or premature declaration of victory. Prof Zhang Weiwei explained that when TV anchor Fareed Zakaria asked him why China did not adopt democracy as other Asian countries had done, he replied that the Chinese had shown that democracy, or western political system, was unnecessary since it had performed better than all the other Asian countries combined over the past four decades. China had started at the level of Malawi and at present has a middle class larger than the population of the US, with more homeowners.[40] Similarly, HR McMaster, who as the National Security Advisor had accompanied President Trump to Beijing, described that at their meeting with Chinese Prime Minister Li Keqiang, the latter stated that 'China, having already developed its industrial and technological base, no longer needed the United States. He dismissed U.S. concerns over unfair trade and economic practices, indicating that the U.S. role in the future global economy would merely be to provide China with raw materials, agricultural products, and energy to fuel its production of the world's cutting-edge industrial and consumer products'.[41] This, notwithstanding the fact that China's per capita income in 2018 was USD 9,580 whilst that of the USA was USD 65,456.[42]

Conclusion

The post-COVID-19 world would see many of these chasms widening since the pandemic has exposed a number of vulnerabilities within and across countries. China's reputation, despite Evo Morales and others, has taken a big hit since its acts of omission have had a very deleterious effect on public health all over the world, in particular, the US and Western Europe, and consequently on their economic well-being. This has resulted in a proliferation of conspiracy theories about China using the coronavirus as a tool of biological war, though there is little evidence to support this. Much worse, the Chinese lockdown disrupted global supply chains and raised questions about the implications of relying on one economy to be the factory of the world. Countries have responded to this in different ways. Japan's latest budget has a provision of USD 2.2 billion, as assistance to Japanese companies to move their production facilities out of China, primarily to Japan and also to other destinations.[43] This is unlikely to be an isolated example.[44] In fact, the on-going US-China trade dispute had already prompted companies to re-think their investments in China.[45] There are also concerns about China's investment in strategic industries in other countries that has led to calls for imposing checks on such acquisition. India's recent move to check FDI from neighbouring countries is primarily directed at China, a move that has not gone unnoticed in Beijing.[46] This would only gather steam.

The challenge of post-Corona recovery is yet to be fully assessed. Projections across the board point to a contraction of the global economy, which would be particularly concentrated on the USA and Western Europe, with India and China barely escaping a recession.[47] The resultant fall in global demand, especially in countries which are a huge market for Chinese exports, means that exports are unlikely to help China regain its growth momentum. It is probably for this reason that China, unlike the US, Western Europe and India, 'has so far avoided unfurling a huge spending package. Its economy has become too big and complex to easily restart like it did in 2008, when it unveiled a plan to spend more than half a trillion dollars. Years of easy lending have also left local governments and state-run companies mired in debt'.[48] Incidentally, China's stock of debt is not so much an issue as it is mostly denominated in the local currency and as a proportion of the GDP is less than debt in Japan, but the pace at which it has grown in the past few years seems unsustainable.

Can domestic demand then compensate for the expected loss of export markets? China faces a peculiar problem in that while consumption as a share of GDP is still on the lower side for an economy of its size and complexity, its best and largest companies—State Grid Corporation of China, China Petrochemical Corporation, China National Petroleum Corporation, Alibaba and Tencent—are largely dependent on the domestic market, with Huawei and Lenovo being exceptions. This makes them very vulnerable to 'a major slowdown in the domestic market'.[49] Official Chinese statistics for the first quarter of 2020 indicated that while manufacture shrunk by only (-) 1.1% in the quarter, retail sales fell by (-) 15.8% and investment by (-)16.1%.[50]

It's not all gloom and doom for China though. The fact that even as its population is shrinking, and migration from villages to cities has slowed to a crawl, the economy has kept up its momentum. While economic growth will slow down to a lower 'normal', China's transition out of low-wage employment to a more high technology economy is underway. Its manufacturing employs less than half the numbers it did in 1992, but the total quantity produced has grown in magnitude. Can it break out of the productivity trap that Japan has found itself in since the late 1990s? The past record suggests that it would be unwise to underestimate the ability of the Chinese State to make major leaps of faith, as it has in the past. While this may be possible without political democracy, experience elsewhere suggests that in order to facilitate experimentations, as it had achieved previously, China must create much greater space for a diversity of opinions and decentralised decision-making, for what it has chosen to try and achieve in decades, others have taken centuries. Despite efforts at decoupling to make the global economy less dependent on China, and a shift in manufacturing out of China would happen, the country is so closely enmeshed in the global supply chains that such efforts would have limited impact in the short-term. Perhaps, convincing others that it would play as per the laid down rules, and not be a revisionist power, would help China make the transition to an upper-income country in the next few decades.

The final word belongs to McMaster:

The party's leaders believe they have a narrow window of strategic opportunity to strengthen their rule and revise the international order in their favour—before China's economy sours before the population grows old before other countries realize that the party is pursuing national rejuvenation at their expense and before unanticipated events such as the coronavirus pandemic expose the vulnerabilities the party created in the race to surpass the United States and realize the China dream.[51]

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FOCUS

Future Trajectory of India-China Relations

Srikanth Kondapalli*

While it is difficult to predict the trajectory of bilateral relations between India and China, let alone global events, as these are dependent on the subjective responses of the respective strategic leaderships and to the ever-changing ground realities in the international relations, yet a few observations can be made based on the past interactions and bilateral relations projected to the future. In recent times both India and China have embarked on several comprehensive policies and programmes to reshape their domestic and external situation. Both countries are "simultaneously rising" as the joint statements between the two countries note. The "informal summit" meetings between the two leaders were institutionalised and made regular. Border stability is emphasised even as certain transgressions have created tensions. Bilateral relations are getting diversified into the multilateral fields even as new contentious issues are cropping up such as on China's intervention in the Kashmir issue. Trade is increasing by leaps and bounds diversifying into new fields, although concerns on growing trade deficits are also rising. Yet, both exhibit newfound confidence and maturity in addressing the outstanding issues and have a forward-looking "developmental partnership". This is expected to nudge the bilateral relations between India and China into a new format in the coming years.

Background

India and China are celebrating the 70th anniversary of establishing relations in 2020 with a series of 70 activities to be celebrated, despite the raging COVID-19 contagion that has brought down any movement of people from either side. While this disruption is hoped to be a temporary setback, several developments influence the growth of the relations between India and China. These can be broadly analysed at the global, regional and bilateral levels at which China's progression in the last three decades had created conditions partly for increase in disruptions at the economic, technological and security fields with consequences for India's policy choices. The article traces the continuing disruptions due to China's rise in the global and regional orders at the economic, technological and security fields, reflects on the bilateral relations and identifies their impact on India in the coming years with policy choices.

Global levels

India and China have joined the globalisation process, with the latter entering the World Trade Organisation only about two decades ago. However, China has utilised effectively the spaces and opportunities offered by the globalisation by internal and external balancing. As a result, it emerged as the second-largest economy in the world, with India rising to the 5th position in the global economic matrix. China's rise in the economic field came with an export model of consumer durables that led to unprecedented trade surpluses with its major trading partners such as

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the United States, European Union, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Australia and the Southeast Asian Nations grouping. Trade surpluses in favour of Beijing running into trillions of dollars with these advanced countries expanded the further modernisation of all sectors in China. However, a reciprocal demand of these countries on opening up of the market, currency and stock exchanges was met with resistance by China which led to the trade conflict with the United States. China's desire to overcome the opposition from the US by launching Made in China 2025 with discriminatory import substitution policies in 2015 further triggered tensions with the US and to the current global disruption in global trade. Even though China attempted in its current 13th Five Year Plan to wean away the country from export orientation towards domestic consumption, from the demand side to supply-side economics and from manufacturing to a service-oriented economy, this restructuring is for the medium to longer term. While the US and China reached a preliminary trade deal in January 2020 after 17 months of intense tariff wars, the effects of such disruptions resonated across the globe with drastic consequences for the economic growth rates. With the spread of the COVID-19 across the world and the general disruption in the economies globally, China is attempting a policy of taking over companies in distress. It was reported that following the outbreak of the virus in Wuhan, and given the disruptions in supply chains and fall in their market shares, China had bought shares in several European and other companies, resulting in the German law recently to prohibit any such hostile takeovers. In India as well, the People's Bank of China, a state-owned bank, took over 1 per cent shares in Housing Development Finance Corporation, provoking the Government of India's Commerce and Industry ministry issuing a circular on April 17, 2020, curbing any "opportunistic takeovers" of Indian companies. These disruptions in the economic and commercial field are expected to further intensify in the coming years. As China's communist party congress in October 2017 decided to make its state-owned enterprises global brands and that "China model" is to be internationalised, disruptions in the existing global and regional markets are expected in the short to medium term.

Secondly, as China undertook science and technology modernisation since the famous 1978 reform and opening-up policies with Four Modernisations (in agriculture, industry, S&T and defence), it embarked on an ambitious policy of catch up with the advanced technological countries. Favourable policies for research and development, material incentives for returned students from these countries, increase in patents, the launch of some iconic projects like "863 Program" (of focus on key technologies such as nano, bio, space, automation, energy, laser, telecom, and others), the 1996 plan focus on marine technology and others have all created a dual-use base in China. Substantial inputs from the US and other countries helped China as well to master these technologies in a shorter period, although certain unfair means of theft and IPR violations have haunted such progress. These also led not only to China's achievements in space, 5G and others but to intense competition with the advanced technological countries leading to the later day disruptions in technologies, specifically in the "global commons" such as maritime, space and cyber domains with

consequences for the rest of the world. China has been pushing Huawei's 5G telecommunications networks to be adopted by most countries. India had earlier complained about its cyber nodes coming under attack from the URLs traced to China. However, New Delhi allowed Huawei 5G to participate in trials. China's pressure likewise on the United Kingdom, France and Germany are well known, while the US has penalised China's companies like Huawei and ZTE for their links to North Korea or cyber warfare. The US also arrested Huawei's senior employee Meng Wanzhou, also the daughter of Huawei's chief. Such technological disruptions are expected to increase in the coming years as acute competition pervades this area.

Thirdly, four decades of economic modernisation created conditions for the transfer of a portion of that prosperity into military modernisation in what has been termed as "coordinated development" of both sectors. A concrete reflection of this is the real increase of nearly 10 per cent in the defence budget of China since the early 1990s, in direct proportion to the growth in the civilian economy. As a result, the People's Liberation Army (PLA)'s allocations have become the 2nd largest in the world and exceed the defence allocation of all major Asian countries put together. As a consequence, and in conjunction with the expanded territorial claims of China, the PLA has exhibited assertiveness on Taiwan, South China Sea, Senkaku Islands, and across the India-China border areas. It had also initiated a "two ocean strategy" of entering the Pacific and Indian Oceans. The PLA Navy sent 36 contingents since 2008 to the Gulf of Aden, ostensibly to fight piracy, but these contingents also indulged in amphibious, air defence and submarine activity in addition to acquiring medium air and sealift capabilities. China had set up a naval base at Djibouti in November 2015 and intends to expand such facilities possibly in Yemen, Oman and Somalia. At the strategic level, China refuses to be part of the new US initiative for a fresh strategic arms reduction talks with Russia and China considering the latter's advances in the nuclear stockpile, varied ballistic missile inventory including the multiple re-entry vehicles and maneuverable re-entry vehicles in addition to supersonic glide vehicles. China also has one of the worst proliferation records in the world. These have been disputing the security arrangements in recent times. Security disruptions emanating from China that could have an adverse impact on India in the coming years include both in the traditional and non-traditional domains such as scaling up of the Tibetan military arena, Indian Ocean region, transfer of weapons of mass destruction to Pakistan, conventional arms transfers to also the rest of South Asian countries in order to off-balance India, river water diversion, migration, the spread of pandemics such as bird flu, SARS and the recent COVID-19 and the like. Given the prevailing anarchy in the regional and global orders, China has been asserting on Taiwan, South China Sea, Senkaku Islands and in the India-China border areas resulting in security disruptions in the short to medium term at the regional level.

Regional levels

At the Asian regional level, China began a process of occupying the "centre of gravity"- an aspect invoked much earlier by Mao Zedong in

1949 who lacked the economic heft at that time. As China became the largest trading partner for most Asian countries and its outreach and military modernisation efforts surpassed all other Asian countries, it also began to lay down the red lines for others. For instance, when the US-South Korea naval exercises were being conducted in the Yellow Sea in 2010 as a counter to the blasting of the Cheonan corvette, the PLA imposed its version of "Monroe Doctrine" to stall such exercises in China's vicinity. A similar move was made in the South China Sea since the 2009 USNS Impeccable incident. Again, at the Conference on Interactions in Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) summit meeting held in May 2014 at Shanghai, President Xi Jinping called for Asian countries to fend for themselves without any "outside" security cover – leaving these countries at the mercy of China. Also, the launch of the Belt and Road Initiative by China in 2013 with continental and maritime dimensions has been polarising Europe, Africa and Asia. It has also been criticised for violating the sovereignty of other countries, striving for "debt diplomacy", lack of transparency in contracts and for the environmental degradation as the Indian foreign ministry spokesman mentioned. Others such as Maldivian leader Nasheed accused ~~of~~ China for indulging in "island grab" in his country. Other countries such as Sri Lanka witnessed the parting of Hambantota port to China on a 99-year lease due to debt payment default. As the Trump administration has been following "isolationist" policies and "America First", the resulting withdrawal of the US from regional orders is providing an opportunity for China to fill the spaces. These are likely to reduce the space available for other Asian powers like Japan, Indonesia, India, Kazakhstan and others.

Bilateral Levels

Barring the brief border clashes between the two countries in 1962, both have maintained overall cordial relations in the past seven decades. Himalayan barriers in a way contributed to the relative isolation and contact. However, globalisation and China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) since 2013 are changing this format with increasing pressures on the bilateral relations that could reshape the future trajectory.

China's BRI has "five connectivities", viz., policy coordination, infrastructure connectivity, trade promotion, currency internationalisation and expanding people-to-people contacts. It includes six roads, with those of relevance to India being the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor (BCIM). India has taken umbrage at the CPEC projects as these violate India's sovereignty on Kashmir, while on the BCIM, India's position has become passive given China's arms transfers to northeast rebels. However, China is bent on carrying forward these projects with consequences for India-China relations in the future. India's policy has been dissuasive in nature, yet firm in stating its position on the sovereignty over Kashmir territory.

Secondly, since the late 2000s, China had escalated its position, first by issuing stapled visas to Jammu & Kashmir residents, involving in construction of hydro-electric projects in Pakistan occupied Kashmir across Neelam-Jhelum river, or other infrastructure projects in Gilgit and Baltistan.

These further increased with the formal announcement of the CPEC projects since 2014, with a massive outlay of USD 62 billion. As the protection of these dual-use infrastructure facilities became an issue, in addition to over a division of Pakistan Army's troops, China also began deploying over 36,000 "security guards" – thus becoming a physical Chinese element for the first time in the ongoing India-Pakistan conflict.

These laid the ground for China's intervention at the United Nations Security Council deliberations on Kashmir once the Indian Parliament had passed the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019, which reconstituted the erstwhile state of J&K into two Union Territories, The Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, and the Union Territory of Ladakh, on 31 October 2019– thus touching the nadir in the core aspects of the bilateral relations. While India had agreed to "one China" policy in 1950 and 1954 announcements, China has so far not been able to reciprocate to the Indian gesture. Since 2010, after the stapled visas were issued by China to the Jammu & Kashmir residents, the joint statements between the two countries have not mentioned the "one China" policy explicitly, although there has not been any perceptive change in India's position in this regard. The then External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj did raise the issue of reciprocity on the "one China" with "one India" policies in her meeting with her counterpart Wang Yi in May 2014 soon after the new government was formed, yet there has not been any progress in this regard. On the other hand, China's UNSC debates on the issue have further led to the deterioration in the relations. This aspect is a poignant reminder to the future trajectory of the bilateral relations in the coming years.

Thirdly, coinciding with the change in China's position on the Kashmir issue, the territorial dispute between the two countries have also taken a more complicated turn. In the last decade, the number of transgressions on the unresolved territorial dispute has increased substantially. In the aftermath of the Indian nuclear tests in 1998, China's border transgressions increased for the first time after the 1962 clashes, but in the 2000s these have increased substantially. Reflected in major incidents like the Depsang Plains in 2013 (in the backdrop of the visit of Premier Li Keqiang to Delhi), Chumar incident in 2014 (in the backdrop of President Xi Jinping's visit to Delhi) and Doklam incident (in the backdrop of the visit of Prime Minister Modi to Xiamen to attend the BRICS meeting) have all vitiated the bilateral relations. While the two informal summit meetings at Wuhan and Chennai addressed this issue by suggesting guidelines to their respective armed forces, and in fact, such incidents decreased, there is no guarantee that transgressions—specifically the intentional ones—will not occur in the future. It is recognised the world over that arriving at territorial dispute resolution—rather than postponing the issue for the "next generation" to resolve as some Chinese leaders preferred—could only aggravate the border situation with negative spillover effects on the bilateral relations. The Special Representative mechanism which met 22 times till December 2019 is tasked to look into this matter. However, it is to decide about arriving at a definition to the Line of Actual Control, suggesting that the other related processes such as delimitation and demarcation of the actual boundary would take

time to implement. Thus, the future trajectory of the bilateral relations in this sphere of border stability is important, if insecure, a dimension that needs closer attention of the leaderships. Territorial disputes tend to strike at the emotions of the people and thus rise in nationalism as an issue need to be addressed as a by-product of this border dispute. Besides, in 1979, repeated transgressions on the borders between China and Vietnam have led to a disastrous war. Currently, the number of transgressions by China's forces on the Senkaku Islands administered by Japan are on the rise indicating the trouble ahead. India and China could avoid such clashes in the future by following several policies such as a new set of confidence-building measures, in addition to active resolve to conclude the border dispute.

Fourthly, as both nations have identified terrorism as one of the most significant challenges to their respective national security, there is a scope for convergence of interests in this regard in the past, present and future. Indeed, in November 2006 during President Hu Jintao's visit to New Delhi, the joint statement mentioned about India and China opposing all forms of terrorism but specifically mentioning "three evils" – a Chinese definition on terrorism which includes "separatism, extremism and splittism". Subsequently, both have launched counter-terrorism intelligence sharing and conducted eight "hand-in-hand" army to army joint counter-terror operations so far. However, the difference came to the fore on the "cross border terrorism" aspects, i.,e., terrorism emanating from Pakistan. While China made a deal with Pakistan to curb Uighur activists participating in the terror camps in Pakistan, there is no pressure exercised by Beijing over Islamabad's terror links in India. It appeared that Beijing was merely interested in balancing relations between its "all-weather friend" Pakistan and "developmental partner" India as reflected in its mediation efforts after the Mumbai terror attacks in 2008 or recently after the Pulwama attacks. For New Delhi, while counter-terror cooperation is of paramount importance, Beijing's attitude appears to be intended to shield Pakistan rather than exerting pressure for curbing cross border terrorism. The proof of the pudding came when over ten times China used its UN Security Council position to stall and put on hold counter-terror action against Pakistan-based terrorists at the 1267 counter-terror committee. Beijing relented finally in 2019 when it felt impending international isolation on this issue after the US threatened to initiate new resolutions on terrorism.

Fifthly, as the largest developing countries with higher economic growth rates, the economic dimensions of the bilateral relations have a huge scope for development. Since the 2000s the economic footprint of both countries began increasing with China joining the World Trade Organisation and India entering the liberalisation period a decade ago. Bilaterally, China became the largest trading partner for India, although trade imbalances were to haunt the bilateral relations. From a mere USD 200 million in the 1990s, bilateral trade has grown to over USD 92 billion. The nature of the bilateral relations shifted from "constructive cooperative strategy" of 1988 to "strategic and cooperative partnership" in 2005 to the recent "developmental partnership" in 2014, underlying the current and future trajectory of the bilateral relations. As a result, both countries coordinate

their positions at the WTO, on enhancing voting shares at the Bretton Woods institutions, G20, at the New Development Bank of the BRICS and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank or the climate change proposals. However, the *bilateral* context of these economic relations is small, the *multilateral* angle is getting enhanced. For instance, bilateral investments are low, economic integration levels between the two countries as well is not very intensive.

Sixthly, India and China have exhibited progress in the multilateral institutions, barring the recent Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership agreement. This has been the trend in the India-China relations in the 1950s and the last two decades and is reflected in their coordination in the UN, East Asian Summit, Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, or others. Many of these cater to their minimalist foreign policy goals of protecting their territorial integrity and sovereignty issues or developmental interests. Secondly, participating in such multilateral processes strengthens their multipolar instincts. However, like in the 1960s, over-emphasis on the importance of the multilateral interactions come at the cost of not settling outstanding bilateral issues such as the territorial dispute or on Kashmir.

India's policy choices

The above broad view of the development of the relations between India and China suggest that in seven decades of the establishment of diplomatic relations, India and China relations have been diversified and became complex in nature. Today they have become significant players in the global and regional orders creating a niche of their own. India had graduated from Look East Policy of the 1990s to that of Act East Policy in 2015. India has joined the Indo-Pacific and the renewed Quadrilateral Security Dialogue with the US, Japan and Australia. It aspires to play a "leading role" even as it merges with the mainstream ideas of strategic stability, transparency and prosperity as reflected in the Asia-Africa Growth Corridor, Indian Ocean Diplomacy and others. China had unveiled a programme of "rejuvenation" and "occupying the centre stage" in regional and international orders. It had propped up China-led institutions and initiatives and possibly is willing to plough a lonely furrow due to the domination of the communist party's aspirations. Even though India and China appeared to balance their aspirations and projections as rising countries, the future trajectory appears to be of a mixed nature with the bottom line that any conflict on the territorial dispute is avoided. The Doklam standoff in 2017 appeared to have ushered in that equilibrium in the bilateral relations. While both have been strengthening their respective conventional and strategic deterrence levels, the leaders are acutely aware of the developmental imperatives of their respective countries.

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The Contemporary Graph of Japan-India Relations: Institutionalised, Balanced, Robust

Dr Monika Chansoria*

Japan's Foreign Affairs Minister Toshimitsu Motegi and Minister of Defence Taro Kono visited India to attend the inaugural meeting of India-Japan Foreign and Defence Ministerial Dialogue (2+2) on November 30, 2019. Upon their calling on the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the latter expressed his satisfaction at the two sides being able to accomplish this goal set by him and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe during the 13th India-Japan Annual Summit held in Japan in October 2018. The India-Japan Foreign and Defence Ministerial Dialogue (2+2) is expected to further deepen bilateral strategic, security and defence cooperation between India and Japan. The importance of all-round development in India-Japan relations requires regular high-level exchanges between the two countries. Prime Minister Modi also mentioned that Prime Minister Abe and he attach great importance to strengthen the bilateral partnership between the two countries. India's relationship with Japan is a key component of New Delhi's vision for peace, stability and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region, as well as a cornerstone of India's *Act East Policy*.[1]

At the commencement of the first India-Japan 2+2 Foreign and Defence Ministerial Meeting, the Defence Minister of India, Rajnath Singh and External Affairs Minister, S. Jaishankar, along with their Japanese counterparts Toshimitsu Motegi and Taro Kono affirmed that this dialogue will further enhance the strategic depth of bilateral security and defence cooperation. Held on November 30, 2019, in New Delhi for the first time, the meeting acknowledged the emerging security challenges, and their commitment to advancing bilateral security cooperation based on the *2008 Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation, and, 2009 Action Plan to advance Security Cooperation*. India and Japan hold a shared vision of a free, open, inclusive and rules-based Indo-Pacific region in which the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity are ensured, and all countries enjoy the freedom of navigation and overflight. Further, strengthening of bilateral cooperation is in the mutual interest of both countries that shall concurrently help in furthering the cause of peace, security and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region.[2] The second India-Japan 2+2 Foreign and Defence Ministerial Meeting is slated to be held in Tokyo.

Bilateral Defence Ties

India and Japan have made considerable progress in deepening bilateral defence cooperation since 2018 by initiating bilateral exercises between

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all three components of their defence forces. These bilateral exercises between the defence forces shall be held regularly and further expanded especially the more recent *Dharma Guardian-2019* and the second *Shinyuu-Maitri-2019*. Tokyo and New Delhi shall also proceed with coordination for the first India-Japan joint fighter aircraft exercise in Japan. Additionally, there is significant progress made in the negotiations of Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA) since the announcement to commence negotiations was made in October 2018. It is desirable for both nations for an early conclusion of the negotiations since the agreement will further contribute to enhancing bilateral defence cooperation.[3]

It would not be inappropriate to state that DCAs have evolved as a novel form of defence cooperation. At their core, these agreements establish long-term institutional frameworks for routine bilateral defence relations, including coordination of defence policies, joint military exercises, working groups and committees, training and educational exchanges, defence-related research and development, and procurement. The flexibility implies that DCAs can both improve traditional defence capabilities and address protean non-traditional threats like terrorism, trafficking, piracy, and cybersecurity. Importantly, DCAs are not alliances. And unlike the forms of defence cooperation that dominated great-power politics during the Cold War, DCAs are typically highly symmetric, mutually committing signatories to a common set of guidelines.[4] In this reference specifically, maritime safety and security and safety is an area of major focus. Ensuring maritime safety in achieving a free, open, inclusive and rules-based Indo-Pacific is a long-term goal for both Japan and India. Promoting cooperation in the field of capacity-building in maritime security and Maritime Domain Awareness including through cooperation with other countries figures on the charter for future defence cooperation.

Arguing contextually in the above regard, setting up of an Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR) at the Information Management and Analysis Centre (IMAC) facility in Gurugram, by India, in December 2018 is a welcome initiative. The IMAC facility is the single point centre linking all the coastal radar chains to generate a seamless real-time picture of the nearly 7,500-km coastline. The IFC-IOR serves as the nodal centre for promoting collaborative maritime safety and security towards a peaceful, stable and prosperous Indian Ocean Region.[5] The objective is to enhance maritime domain awareness and coordinate activities through information sharing, cooperation, and expertise development along with partner nations and agencies. By means of this framework, partner nations and multi-national maritime constructs will engage to develop comprehensive maritime domain awareness and share information on vessels of interest. The intention of this collaborative endeavour shall be to secure the global commons.[6]

While the information exchange at the IFC-IOR would be undertaken initially by virtual means, using telephone calls, faxes, e-mails and video conferencing over the internet, subsequently, to enable better interaction, and quicker analysis of information to provide timely inputs, the IFC-IOR would host Liaison Officers from partner countries.

For the same, India is also looking forward to the dispatch of a liaison officer from Japan at the IFC-IOR in the near future. Additionally, towards enhancing capability-building, the IFC-IOR would undertake conduct of exercises and training capsules in maritime information collation and sharing.[7] The IFC tracks and monitors 75,000 – 1.5 lakh shipping vessels in real-time round-the-clock. Besides, the IFC is also actively interacting with the maritime community and has already built linkages with 18 countries and 15 multinational and maritime security centres.[8]

Moreover, the exchange of information based on the Implementing Arrangement for Deeper Cooperation between the Japan Maritime Self-defence Force and the Indian Navy signed in 2018 has already commenced.[9] India and Japan find agreement upon the need to further strengthen defence equipment and technology cooperation and need to work productively on discussions during the fifth Joint Working Group on Defence Equipment and Technology Cooperation (JWG-DETC). In this context, the progress on cooperative research in the area of Unmanned Ground Vehicle (UGV)/Robotics is welcome.

Institutionalising Defence Cooperation

Bilateral defence cooperation agreements (DCAs) have become the most common form of institutionalised defence cooperation. These formal agreements establish broad defence-oriented legal frameworks between signatories, facilitating cooperation in fundamental areas such as defence policy coordination, research and development, joint military exercises, education and training, arms procurement, and exchange of classified information.[10] Nearly a thousand DCAs are currently in force, with potentially wide-ranging impacts on national and international security outcomes. Shifts in the global security environment since the 1980s fuelled the demand for DCAs. Ever since, States are known to have used DCAs to modernise their militaries, respond to shared security threats, and establish security umbrellas with like-minded states. Faced with an increasingly complex security environment, states use DCAs[11] to:

- Modernise their militaries and improve their defence capacities
- Improve coordinated responses to common security threats, and
- Align themselves with communities of like-minded collaborators

The primary goal of DCAs, then, is to encourage substantive cooperation in the core areas as cited below.[12] DCAs emphasise day-to-day interactions in core defence areas, which typically include:

a) mutual consultation and defence policy coordination
b) joint exercises, training, and education
c) coordination in peacekeeping operations
d) defence-related research and development
e) defence industrial cooperation
f) weapons procurement; and
g) security of classified information

Japan, India, and the Indian Ocean Region

The Indian Ocean Region (IOR) countries share the same challenges and opportunities: strategic location, access to limitless unexploited maritime resources, vulnerability to natural

disasters, political instability, and facing economic and politico-security dominance by China. The strategic node of the Indian Ocean is so crucial that the power that shall control the Indian Ocean is likely to control entire Asia. In the said reference, Japan's growing role, presence and interest in the Indian Ocean Region is noteworthy. Acting more proactively in the IOR, Japan participated in joint exercises that were conducted between the Ground, Maritime and Air Self-Defence Forces of Japan and the Indian Army, Navy and Air Force in 2018. Prior to that, since 2017, the Japanese helicopter aircraft carriers "Izumo" and "Kaga" which will be designated as aircraft carriers, have regularly visited India and Sri Lanka annually.[13] Japan is also investing substantially in many infrastructure projects in the coastal countries along the Indian Ocean including in a joint venture with India to build the Colombo's East Container Terminal Port in Sri Lanka.

The security situation in the Indian Ocean is becoming one of ever growing concern. At any time, six to eight Chinese naval vessels are being dispatched to the northern Indian Ocean.[14] China's influence and assertiveness in the IOR has been growing steadily. Towards the west, Beijing has made considerable investments in East African countries like Kenya, Djibouti, and Tanzania. Towards the east, Chinese investments in Indonesia run into billions, and Australia becoming its "key partner" in its pursuit of a new trade bloc. In the northern Indian Ocean, the *One Belt One Road* initiative cuts across strategic ports, both economically and militarily.[15] This, of course, is a cause of concern for many littoral nations including Japan given that the sea lanes carrying energy resources from West Asia to Japan critically pass through the Indian Ocean.

Given that Japan's Maritime Self Defence Force protects the seas around Japan and the South China Sea, the number of warships that JMSDF can send to the Indian Ocean remains limited. However, the area where Japan should take the lead is in assuming the role of becoming the primary technology provider to countries in the Indian Ocean Region.[16] Taking precedents from the past, regions where Japan has provided technical assistance, such as Northeast Asia and Southeast Asia, have become successful economic development models. Japan's technological capabilities distinguish it as a world-class innovator, and thus Japan should not only export hardware, such as defence equipment and infrastructure but also provide training to IOR countries.[17] For instance, the Indian Navy is expanding its naval presence in the Indian Ocean, although its efforts get hampered by ageing equipment and inadequate anti-submarine capability, an area where Japanese technical collaboration could prove to be beneficial, in addition to bolstering Japan's defence industry with increased sales to IOR countries.

In more recent years, Japan has joined eight major port construction or renovation projects, all in the Indian Ocean Region. From Mombasa (Kenya) to Providence, these projects represent the rising graph of Japanese investments in the region. From a meagre 1.1 per cent of Japanese Foreign Direct Investment in 1999, the IOR countries commanded 21.3 per cent in 2014.[18] Japan's trade with IOR nations shot up to USD 225 billion. Similar was the fate of energy reliance. In 2012, 83 per cent of Japan's oil imports came

from West Asia (through the Indian Ocean), rising further from being 70 per cent during the decade of the 1980s.[19] Between 2011-2014, the raw materials that Japan imported from the IOR were 66.5 per cent.[20]

India, Japan, and Multilateral Cooperation

During US President Donald Trump's visit to India in February 2020, the vision for a "free and open Indo-Pacific," expansion of the Washington-New Delhi bilateral security cooperation, bolstering cooperation between the US, India, and Japan, as well as strengthening ties between the *Quad* comprising Japan, India, Australia and the US was confirmed. It has been advocated that the *Quad* nations should lead the way to make substantive progress on the initiative.[21] In this reference, the frequent reciprocal exchange between the leadership of the *Quad* countries becomes an indispensable prerequisite. In order to curb China's strong-arm maritime expansionism, and for protecting unhindered navigation, it is imperative for Japan, the United States, India, and Australia to ramp up cooperation on various fronts and keep China in check.[22] Japan and India, as well as Japan and Australia, respectively, have decided to conduct reciprocal visits by their leaders every alternate year.

In April 2017, the 3rd Japan-India Maritime Dialogue was held in Tokyo and was represented by Toshiro Iijima, Japan's Ambassador for Policy Planning and International Security and Pankaj Sharma, Joint Secretary, Disarmament and International Security Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs from India. The purpose of this dialogue was to strengthen cooperation between Japan and India in the field of maritime security. Further, within the trilateral framework between Japan, the United States, and India, summit talks took place in 2018, and again in 2019, when the leaders exchanged views about the future of the Indo-Pacific region. The four powers have also sought to jointly play a central role in encouraging member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), as well as other neighbouring countries bordering the Indian Ocean, to take part in this vision for the Indo-Pacific region.

Earlier, in the realm of multilateral cooperation, the Japan-India-US Summit Meetings in November 2018 and June 2019 have become a major benchmark of the strong and continuing foundational trilateral cooperation. More recently, the trilateral has been represented by:

- *MALABAR 2019* held from September-October 2019 off the coast of Japan
- Mine-countermeasures exercise (MINEX) held in Japan in July 2019
- *Cope India 2018* in which Japan participated as an observer in December 2018

In the field of regional and international affairs, India and Japan find agreement in their views on supporting ASEAN centrality and unity for promoting peace and prosperity of the Indo-Pacific as part of which, came the adoption of the *ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific* (AOIP) during the 34th ASEAN Summit held in Thailand in June 2019. Tokyo and New Delhi are committed to working together with ASEAN for achieving their shared objectives, and also reiterating their support for various ASEAN-led frameworks such as the East Asia Summit (EAS), the ASEAN Regional Forum

(ARF) and ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus).

At the 14th EAS, India announced an "Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative" to create a safe, secure, stable, prosperous and sustainable maritime domain – a declaration that was welcomed by Japan as both confirmed to discuss concrete cooperation based on the initiative. On similar lines, India has welcomed Japan's "Vientiane Vision 2.0" in November 2019. This vision finds overlapping and harmoniously congruent themes of ASEAN principles such as openness, transparency, inclusivity and a rules-based framework, which have been outlined in the *ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific*, with those featuring in Japan's own vision for a *Free and Open Indo-Pacific.* The 2.0 framework is an updated version of the initiative for defence cooperation between Japan and ASEAN that revisits Japan's past three years' endeavours on defence cooperation with ASEAN as per the Vientiane Vision announced in 2016.

The 2.0 version redefines the vision in line with the concept of the Indo-Pacific and presents three principles for Japanese defence cooperation with ASEAN, including enhancement of resilience as one of the ends. As part of a concerted whole of government effort, Japan's Ministry of Defence will conduct practical cooperation by combining the following measures.[23]

- *Promoting Shared Understanding of International Norms* – sharing knowledge on international norms and practices
- *Defence Cooperation Program* – assisting ASEAN's proactive efforts for enhancing its collective capabilities by sending JSDF personnel to Southeast Asia and inviting ASEAN practitioners to Japan
- *Defence Equipment and Technology Cooperation* – transferring equipment and technology, developing human resources, etc.
- *Joint Training and Exercises* – conducting bilateral and multilateral joint exercises, expanding forms of participation and inviting ASEAN observers to JSDF training
- *Human Resource Development and Academic Exchanges* – reinforcing human networks among students and trainees, etc.

In wake of the recent developments in the South China Sea and keeping in view the Chairman's Statement during the 14th EAS, India and Japan have placed prime focus on the importance of freedom of navigation and overflight, unimpeded lawful commerce and peaceful resolution of disputes with full respect for legal and diplomatic processes in accordance with the universally recognised principles of international law, including those reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). The negotiations of a Code of Conduct (COC) should be taken note of and should be effective, substantive, and consistent with international law, including the UNCLOS, ensure freedom of navigation and must not prejudice the rights and interests of the stakeholders using the South China Sea and freedoms of all states under international law.

During the 8th round of the India-Japan Bilateral Consultations on Disarmament, Non-Proliferation and Export Control held in Tokyo on December 23, 2019, both nations reiterated the importance of dialogue as an important mechanism between the two countries. While the Indian

delegation was led by Indra Mani Pandey, Additional Secretary (Disarmament and International Security Affairs), Ministry of External Affairs, the Japanese delegation was led by Hisajima Naoto, Director-General, Disarmament, Non-Proliferation and Science Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.[24] Similarly, during the 5th round of the India-Japan Maritime Affairs Dialogue held in Tokyo on December 24, 2019, the underlying theme of further strengthening maritime cooperation was reiterated.

The Constructivist Concept and Interaction in Indo-Japanese Foreign Policy

In the case of states that are unsure of the others' trustworthiness or unsure about the types of agreements others are willing to sign, the *supply* of DCAs will remain low.[25] The case of India and Japan stands divergent to this submission. Foreign policy decision-making is an outcome of how individual political leaders bestowed with power perceive and analyse events and how their motivations hold a bearing upon the conclusions they ultimately arrive upon. It is often found that culture, geography, history, ideology, and self-conceptions shape the thought process of a decision-maker, forming, what often is referred to as the psycho-socio milieu of decision-making.[26]

Based on the constructivist concept, wherein identity, norms, and interaction of personalities remain vital components, the equation between Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Japanese counterpart Shinzo Abe speaks volumes. The commonality of aiming towards economic development and growth that gets coupled with greater national strength and nationalism can be gauged from Abe's idea and policy of "Japan is back" and Modi's idea of "*Shreshtha Bharat"* (Great India).[27] The systemic conditions have presented a favourable platform for this duo to bring to light, "…dawn of a new era in India-Japan relations". Moreover, as PM Modi stated on an occasion "…[The] India-Japan partnership has been fundamentally transformed and has been strengthened as a 'special strategic and global partnership'… There are no negatives but only opportunities in this relationship which are waiting to be seized."[28]

Providing further credence to this thought, Modi underlined the significance of India and Japan being liberal democracies, which provides them with a solid foundation to converge at various levels on the Asian stage. With a shared perspective on the future geopolitical and economic order of Asia, Modi and Abe are often viewed as leaders of a new prospective dawn of an alternative regional Asian dynamic. Personality impact in foreign policy decision-making may not necessarily be exclusive. It hinges on cognitive processes including perceptive reasoning that defines the behaviour of nation-states based upon existential constraints of the international system as well as compulsions of domestic political structures. Modi's assurances to Japanese investors that a "red carpet" and not "red tape" would welcome them in India exhibited his intent and resolve to rewrite the rules of doing business in India. In fact, it is the flexibility in the political environs that tends to create variable boundaries in decision-making, more so, in the realm of foreign policy. These systemic conditions have presented a favourable platform for Modi

and Abe to envision and operationalise what has been termed as "...the dawn of a new era in India-Japan relations".[29]

Conclusion

The constructivist concept vis-à-vis interaction of personalities is a defining factor that will likely shape the current and future trajectory of India-Japan relations. Since Abe and Modi share similar perspectives on Asia's future geopolitical and economic order, they should not let go of the solid foundation and convergences at the strategic level for greater leverage and say in the future security design of Asia. The time has come to make flexible, the variable boundaries in decision-making that political environs tend to create in the realm of foreign policy and achieve strategic deliverables in the coming years, without allowing any external third factor to cast a shadow on the meteoric rise in Indo-Japanese ties. The Modi-Abe leadership combine exhibits showmanship, content, and cognitive consistency by means of converging themes of nationalism, coupled with motivated eagerness to initiate action-driven towards ushering in an era of policy-oriented change, domestically, bilaterally, and regionally.

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Information Warfare and Influence Operations

Air Marshal Anil Chopra PVSM AVSM VM VSM*

In the aftermath of the Indian Air Force (IAF) Balakot airstrikes of 26 February 2019, and the Pakistan Air Force (PAF) riposte of 27 February, began a propaganda and perception war. The social media battle had the public of both nations as active participants. The importance given to Information Warfare (IW) by Pakistan against India was visible. Former Pakistan President Gen. Musharraf averred that 'on Balakot, we have divided India into two'. It underscores the sinister objective of Pakistan Army/ISI combine of this disinformation campaign.[1] The target of the Pakistan information war is not only Indian armed forces but the entire Indian public perception. Today, a seemingly soft-attack of disinformation delivered through rhetoric and imagery could be as decisive as physical military weapons. The era of perception management is now here and an important part of the war. There is a clear grey area between war and peace and the line between preparation for cyberwar and the actual fighting now is difficult to draw. The political effect of information technology, which has near seamlessly connected the world, has reshaped both competition and conflict, and in turn the security paradigm, and has started affecting the world power structure. The IW and Influence Operations (IO) are now clubbed together as part of the overall Cyberwar which has already been used in many recent conflicts.

Cyber Era and Information Warfare Evolve

Cyber Era

Cyber Era emerged from the use of computer networks for communications, entertainment, and business. The new forms of network communications include, online communities, online multi-player gaming, wearable computing, social gaming, social media, mobile apps, augmented reality, and texting. The cyberspace covers entire societies and has made the global public an active participant. It has thrown up issues related to identity (anonymous), location and privacy. With the rise in internet penetration, cyber crimes and use of the internet for offensive actions to deny, corrupt or destroy the use of networks by opponents has snowballed. Cyber attacks could manipulate or leak private information. States exploit the internet and its global reach for coercive purposes, often using relative anonymity, and deniability.[2] While cyber-attacks can be used to produce effects similar to kinetic weapons, the intangible effects are more important. The manipulation of information and decision making adds complexity, provides a source of military advantage, and challenges conventional, kinetic-oriented strategies.[3] Cyber operations allow coercive actions below the implicit thresholds and minimal risk of escalation.

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The Internet and Governance

The internet is transforming society, business, and politics as more people use new opportunities online. Knowledge is available at a lower cost and from an array of sources. The internet has redefined the role of the state and strengthened the primacy of the individual. All countries face a political challenge from the internet. The internet also provides individuals new ways to attach their loyalties and to identify with groups. It also disconnects public discussion from a physical location. Individuals with extreme views, earlier isolated from the community, can now share beliefs with thousands. The decentralised media is open to millions of contributors displacing the editors of the past. The internet allows citizens access to information and direct involvement in decision making. Policy and law thus need to evolve to take into account citizen expectations.

Authoritarian regimes try to suppress by restricting access to information, pumping counter-narratives, and using the internet for surveillance to maintain control.[4] Chinese use it to impose conformity in discussion and opinion in their population, and even extend to other countries. Russians have tried to use it to shape the Western view. To defend own populations from information 'onslaught', countries try to create a powerful counter-narrative of own heroic nationalism.

IWIO Definition

Information Warfare and Influence Operations (IWIO) may be defined as the deliberate use of information on an adversary population to confuse, mislead and ultimately influence the actions that the targeted population makes. IWIO is a hostile activity. Yet, IWIO does not constitute warfare in the Clausewitzian sense, nor is recognised under the U.N. Charter. IWIO is part of soft power, and include propaganda, persuasion, confusion and deception. As Sun Tzu, had said, "The supreme art of war is to subdue the enemy without fighting".[5] IWIO take place without kinetic violence and operate below any threshold of armed conflict. In IWIO there are no noncombatants. Entire adversary population is a legitimate target.

IWIO Categorisation

- IW can be divided into three general categories.
- Offensive - deny, corrupt, destroy, or exploit adversary's information, or influence the adversary's perception.
- Defensive - safeguard oneself from similar actions.
- Exploitative - exploit information promptly to enhance own decision/action cycle and disrupt the adversary's cycle.

Basic Features of Strategic Information Warfare[6]

- The seven defining features of strategic information warfare.
- Low entry cost: Unlike traditional weapon technologies, development of information-based techniques does not require sizable financial resources. Information systems expertise and access to networks is the only prerequisite.
- Blurred traditional boundaries: Traditional distinctions public versus private interests, warlike versus criminal behaviour, and

geographic boundaries between nations are blurred within the information infrastructure.

- An expanded role for perception management: Information-based techniques substantially increase the power to manipulate perception.
- Strategic intelligence challenge: Poorly understood strategic IW vulnerabilities diminish the effectiveness of classical intelligence collection and analysis methods.
- Tactical warning and attack assessment problems: There is currently inadequate tactical warning system for distinguishing between strategic IW attacks and other kinds of cyberspace activities.
- The difficulty of building and sustaining coalitions: Coalitions may increase the vulnerabilities of the security postures of all the partners to strategic IW attacks.
- Irrelevance of geographical distance: Targets in the deep hinterland are just as vulnerable as in the tactical area. Given the increased reliance of the economy and society on networked information infrastructure, a new set of strategic targets have emerged.

Influence Operations (IO)

IO involves convincing, confusing, distracting, dividing, and demoralising the adversary population. Disruption, rather than destroying, comprising or stealing information by accessing networks. Perceptions determine how each actor chooses to act. Manipulated perceptions can influence the battlefield. IO includes clandestine and intrusive activities as part of armed conflict. Russia fought and won an "information war" during the run-up to the Crimean vote. IO is also part of diplomacy. American expert Martin C. Libicki has summarised that "coming to grips with information warfare is like the effort of the blind men to discover the nature of the elephant: the one who touched its leg called it a tree, another who touched its tail called it a rope, and so on".[7]

Psychological Warfare

It is a broad term related to the emotional aspect of communication, where information involving psychological components is delivered to a target audience to bring a shift in its emotions and outlook. It then brings a shift in the target audience's behaviour. It could also create conditions for surrender or encouraging defection. Psychological warfare is used both during war and peace. Crippling government utility websites, sending damaging messages to the civil population and shutting down media sites for a limited time could have a psychological effect.

Technological Issues

Fifth Generation Networks

5G cellular network technology which has started unfolding since late 2018, with substantial deployments since April 2019, provides much faster broadband access. As it replaces current 4G networks, it will accelerate cellular data transfer speeds from 100 Mbps to 10 Gbps and beyond. 5G radio hardware is already in the market. 5G is crucial for the Internet of Things (IoT). Because of espionage fears on foreign users by Chinese equipment vendors, several countries have taken

actions to restrict or eliminate the use of Chinese equipment in their respective 5G networks. 5G will become a faster tool for IW.

Artificial Intelligence and Cyber Weapons

New Cyber weapons are using Artificial Intelligence (AI) and would be more damaging and destructive. AI-based equipment and systems will bring fundamental changes to military operational planning and execution. AI will allow cyber weapons to exploit existing vulnerabilities and create new ones. China is making efforts to transform 'informative' warfare into 'intelligentised' warfare by using AI.[8]

Quantum Cyber Security

The development of large quantum computers, along with the extra computational power they will bring, could have a fundamental effect on cybersecurity. Discrete log, whose presumed hardness ensures the security of many widely used protocols, can be broken if a sufficiently powerful quantum computer is developed.[9] The actual prospect of building such a device has only recently become realistic. Quantum technologies may seem negative for cybersecurity, but can be used to own advantage.

Cybercriminals and Data

The abundance of data and technology provide both challenges and opportunities. A significant part of the world population is still offline. Once they come on board the challenges will be even more complex. Technology facilitates online disinformation, global cyberattacks and terrorist media campaigns. Cyber money laundering and thefts could increase with Cryptocurrency, and greater use of AI.[10] There is now AI technology to create deep-fakes and influence public beliefs and also make evidence difficult. Adoption of end-to-end encryption can make attribution difficult, and globalised real-time communication make jurisdiction difficult. Surveillance-camera records, extracts of social media activities, GPS coordinates of the occurrence are critical evidence but can be manipulated.

Naming and Shaming - Doxing

Doxing is the Internet-based practise of researching and broadcasting personal information.[11] It could also be obtained through cyber-attack and used for publically shame or embarrass targets. This type of action is on the rise. Countering Doxing is often counterproductive because public memory is short and issue dies down as populations become more aware. It, however, remains a nuisance and fuels insecurity.

Manipulating Media

Manipulating Public Opinion

In the 1960s, American diplomat and politician Daniel Moynihan had said that everyone was entitled to their own opinions but not to their facts.[12] The internet allows people to have their facts. Social media amplifies this trend. Many countries use internet trolls to shape social media narrative in ways favourable to their regimes and damaging opponents. Pakistan's Director-General of Inter-Services Public Relations (DGISPR) has a large team of personnel to set the tone of narrative on

social media to manipulate public opinion in Pakistan and India. Nowadays, strategic communication firms take contracts from governments for social media campaigns.

Government Influenced Media

Information technology and the internet can provide a tool for leaders. Authoritarian regimes like in China, fear that it can be used by their opponents, as happened recently in Hong Kong. Qatar government started Al Jazeera's English language service, in 2006 to challenge established narrative and give the global audience an alternative voice.[13] Sputnik, Russia Today (RT), and China's Global Times were created to provide an English language version and promote a more positive view. China purchased media outlet, the South China Morning Post in 2016, through the Alibaba group, for reshaping opinions. The success of all this is mixed, as the public can see the hidden agenda. In 1926 a leading Chinese dissident and author, Lu Xun, wrote, "Lies written in ink can never disguise facts written in blood".[14] Governments use internet trolls and favourable television channels to shape public opinion.

Social Media Soldiers and Fact Check

Cyber troops are a pervasive global phenomenon.[15] 'Social media soldiers' actively advance national goals on social platforms. Social media has provided opportunities for 'citizen journalism', and they have no less weight than the major content producers and established media personalities. Unfortunately, any information may be manipulated or given a tilt. Some countries like Pakistan are successfully using automated trolling through the use of 'chatbots'. Many websites and cyber handles have now come up for 'fact-checking', to help the public know the truth, but they are not being able to keep pace.

Influence of Operations Campaign

IWIO Identification

For an IWIO campaign to be successful, it should be invisible, as the primary goal is to make adversary population an unwitting accomplice. Conversely, the identification of a foreign hand is central for detecting an IWIO campaign. Unlike kinetic weapons, a cyber campaign may not be detectable. The sudden emergence of large numbers of automated social chatbots promulgating similar political messages could signal the start of a concerted campaign.[16] Combination of volume (messages per day), type of content, and platform could help identify automated IWIO weapons carrying divisive or inflammatory messaging.[17] The investigation could point to national affiliations. Coordination among intelligence-gathering agencies will improve capabilities for detecting IWIO campaigns.

Effective Campaign

An effective IW campaign must feature social media, intelligence and cyber units at the tactical and strategic level for military and political influence. The campaign must disrupt the enemy's ability to accurately grasp reality and establish an effective response. Breeding negative feelings, doubt, fear and uncertainty in the public perception will have its impact. Pumping information through a 'personalised' model, to individuals or groups

based on geography, interest, or passion will always work. IO should be conducted along with offensive cyber operations to disrupt the opponent's communications. Development of dedicated cyber warfare tools for social media is important. The initiator wrests advantage in the overall campaign.

Defence Against IWIO

Responses to IWIO

Mobilisation of intelligence resources, psychological warfare, public diplomacy, social media platforms, political and legal channels and dissemination of counter-narrative more aggressively, to own advantage, is important. It has to be a collaborative yet decentralised effort of state and military. Liberal democracies, committed to adhering to laws, need to find national security-related means to overcome bureaucratic and political complexities. Identifying the national affiliations of individuals operating such bots is important. Coordination among intelligence-gathering agencies, tactics and technologies used, may provide early warnings of an impending IWIO campaign.

Preparing Individuals For IWIO

Although the volume and velocity of information have increased phenomenally, the architecture of the human mind has not changed appreciably over the last few thousand years. Public needs to be supported for defensive measures to resist the IWIO weapons targeted at them. As humans, we are subject to a variety of systematic cognitive and emotional biases which often distort our ability to think rationally and clearly. It will be worth-while inoculating own population against fake news, by exposing the original message and flagging the false claim. Meanwhile, the organisation must take measures to degrade, disrupt or expose the adversary's IWIO campaign.

International Fact-Checking Network (IFCN)

IFCN has been set up to promote excellence in fact-checking and accountability in journalism.[18] Responsible media must make commitments to nonpartisanship and fairness; transparency of sources, and funding. Facebook is already committed to providing fact-checking services to Facebook users. Facebook has also introduced an option making it much easier for users to signal if they regard a given story as fake news. For political advertising on Facebook are required to include information about who paid for them. With advanced Photoshop and audio and video editing software widely available, the authenticity of images and recordings should not be automatically trusted.

Military Approach to Information Warfare

Military Cyber Capabilities & Strategies

USA, China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea, have well-developed military cyber capabilities. Cyber operations are combined with electronic warfare, anti-satellite attacks, informational campaigns and other unconventional tactics and weapons. The intent is to degrade enemy 'informational warfare advantage' by attacking communications and ISR assets and capabilities;

slow and damage decision making and operations; and to create political uncertainty, turmoil, and dissent. Actions are laced with espionage techniques through new military doctrines. Pre-conflict opinion-shaping could create political turmoil and discord.

Cyberspace Upsetting Status Quo

A Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) report of September 2018[19] has brought out how information technology is reshaping international security and helping new resurgent powers to upset the status quo in the existing world order. Cold War was bipolar, but a new conflict is multi-polar. Wars between heavily-armed states are expensive and risky, so cyberspace has become the preferred battleground, taking advantage of the 'grey area' that is neither peace nor war.

Well-Known IWIO Operations

'Operation Cupcake'[20] was launched by MI6 in 2011, to replace al-Qaeda bomb-making instructions with cupcake recipes. When followers went to download 67 pages of instructions for how to "Make a Bomb in the Kitchen of Your Mom" from 'Inspire Magazine', al-Qaeda's first English-language magazine, the terrorists were instead greeted with a page of cake recipes. In May 2014, the group known as Cyber-Berkut compromised the computers of the Central Election Committee in Ukraine.[21] This hack did not hinder the election process, as voters had to cast an actual physical ballot. It did, however, damage the credibility of the Ukrainian government in overseeing a fair election process. In April 2015 the French television network TV5 Monde was the victim of a cyber-attack from hackers claiming to have ties with Islamic State's (IS) 'Cyber Caliphate'.[22] Later in June 2015 investigators revealed that Russian hackers used the pseudonym of IS 'Cyber Caliphate' for this attack.

Cyber Warfare Military Structures

Several countries have set up military cyber command structures and have formulated national cyber strategies to deal with the emerging threats in cyberspace.

United States Cyber Command (USCYBERCOM)

USCYBERCOM was created in mid-2009 at the Nation Security Agency (NSA).[23] Initially created with a defensive aim, it has been viewed as an offensive force. In May 2018 USCYBERCOM was elevated to the status of a full and independent unified combatant command. IWIO is an important part of the operations. The Joint Information Operations Warfare Center is subordinate to the Joint Chiefs of Staff and is manned by experts from military, government and private sector.

It serves as an IW authority for all U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) agencies. The teams advise combat forces on the ground on how to carry out IO strategies. The U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) is one of the main entities tasked with organizing influence operations. CENTCOM has teamed with people fluent in languages such as Arabic, Urdu, Persian and Russian.

EU and United Kingdom

The British 77th Brigade[24] was created in 2015 to execute psychological warfare worldwide. In November 2015, the European External Action Service (EEAS) established a special task force charged with countering Russian disinformation campaigns and enhancing participants' capacity and interoperability.

Russia's Gerasimov doctrine

Russia seems to have integrated cyber operations into national strategic capability because it acknowledges that it cannot match the military power of NATO. Gerasimov doctrine[25] acknowledges that non-military means of achieving political and strategic goals have exceeded the power of weapons in their effectiveness. These include intelligence, counterintelligence, deceit, disinformation, electronic warfare, debilitation of communications, degradation of navigation support, psychological pressure, degradation of information systems, and propaganda. They use distributed denial of service attacks, and advanced exploitation techniques. Russia's successful use if IO during the Ukraine crisis is well known.

Israeli IWIO Approach

Israel has three military entities. The Center for Consciousness Operations was established in 2005,[26] and coordinates with the operations branch and military intelligence directorate. During operation 'Cast Lead', the centre-mounted psychological warfare in the Gaza Strip against Hamas, and messages were delivered through newscasts and broadcasts. Israeli C4I Corps is primarily tasked with launching IW against the enemy. The PR branch of the IDF manages PR missions for a variety of overseas conferences and helps pen studies overseas written about the IDF.

China's Aggressive Approach

The Cyberspace Administration of China (CAC)[27] is the central Internet regulator, censor, oversight and control agency, and comes under Central Cyberspace Affairs Commission headed by President Xi Jinping. China has a national-level data protection strategy. China's first "cybersecurity innovation centre" was established in December 2017. Operated by 360 Enterprise Security Group, the centre's remit is to "help the military win future cyber wars." The People's Liberation Army (PLA) has escalated its partnerships with the civilian telecoms sector, especially ZTE and Huawei, and universities. The Strategic Support Force (SSF) was established in December 2015 by merging and centralising all the PLA's space, cyber, and ISR (intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance) capabilities. The SSF has assumed control over several PLA research institutes where it will pursue R&D.

China has employed hundreds of thousands in Cyber warfare. All are specially trained and most are English proficient. PLA Unit 61398 has been very active in cyber espionage and cyber-attacks. The unit is located in the Pudong area of Shanghai. Pudong also happens to be the location of the main undersea cable between China and the United States. They have reportedly stolen hundreds of terabytes of data through an extensive network of computers spread across the world. The attack on Google in 2009 was essentially to steal intellectual property rights and assess and use the

near 500 million Google user passwords. Major targets are strategic industries, defence establishments, weapon and military technology companies. China's IWIO efforts are focused primarily on its population and Chinese emigrants. Chinese propaganda has persuaded the world of its inevitable economic ascendancy. To gain access to U.S. weapons systems, to understand their operational limits, copy them, and to prepare to interfere with their operations in combat China has undertaken cyber operations. China works on cyber operations combined with electronic warfare, anti-satellite attacks, informational campaigns and other unconventional tactics and weapons.

Major Military Cyber Campaigns

US Online Offensive Against ISIS

The U.S. government launched IWIO operations against Islamic State (ISIS) and al-Qaeda because of these organisations increasing capacity to use social media networks. ISIS had successfully utilised social media to target and enlist potential recruits appealing to young people across the globe. U.S. campaign against ISIS was run in Arabic, Urdu, Persian and Russian languages. They used Twitter, Face book and Instagram to communicate with the populations of 20 countries in the Middle East and Central Asia. A post shared by an ISIS fighter included photos of ISIS command headquarters. The U.S. Air Force was able to identify its location and demolished it within 24 hours. U.S. military operations also destroyed ISIS's communications infrastructure. Moderate Muslims, talented university teams helped create media campaigns. In 'Operation Glowing Symphony' in 2016, U.S. cyber units obtained the passwords and access codes of ISIS operatives.[28] They used them to block access to internet assets and delete content used for propaganda and recruitment.

Pakistani and Jihadi Approach

Since Pakistan is at a deep disadvantage in terms of conventional military power, it leverages asymmetric options like terrorism and IWIO. They create "deep fakes" videos which appear authentic. Use India's internal social cleavages. Pakistan has run a proxy war over the last three decades in Afghanistan and Kashmir. A group of Pakistani hackers has been hired by the Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) to create spyware versions to target key government officials in India. ISI supports jihadi terror organisations to use cyberspace for the collection of sensitive information and spreading misinformation. Pakistan military is also using radio and TV channels for spreading anti-India propaganda. Jihadi groups are using websites to incite the youth to take to arms. The maximum number of communal incidents in India was preceded by a focused circulation of fake videos inciting people to resort to violence.

IWIO and Cyber Threats India

Cyber Target - India

According to a report, in period January-May 2018, of the cyber-attacks in India, almost 40% originated from China, 25% from the US, 13% from Pakistan and 9% from Russia. The attacks from Pakistan are on the increase. The targets

were financial networks, government websites, power plants, oil refineries, and telecom and defence networks. During the first six months of 2018, almost one billion records were compromised in Aadhaar breach incident, including name, address and other personally identified information, according to a report by digital security firm Gemalto. This, however, was denied by UIDAI. The Cambridge Analytica firm was suspected to have harnessed data from almost 87 million Facebook users, out which over half a million were Indians, and leveraging them for political campaigns. Similarly, Microsoft has reportedly has shared the financial details of Indian bank customers with intelligence agencies in the United States. The Chinese website of official newspapers like Global Times and People's Daily contains anti-India articles.[29]

India is one of the fastest-growing markets of social media users but unfortunately due to lack of awareness, laws and mechanism to check the spread of rumours, fake news and manipulated videos, it is easy to manipulate Indian population. Pak ISI cum jihadi combine is increasingly using cyberspace for collection of sensitive information and spreading misinformation. Haribhai Parathibhai Chaudhary, as MoS Home, informed the Parliament in 2016 that ISI was using smart-phone malware embedded gaming, music apps to spy upon military personnel[39]. Even Indian political parties are exploiting them for electoral advantages or to create communal disharmony.

Chinese Electronic Hardware Threat

India's heavy reliance on imported equipment and mobile apps pose a serious security challenge. Indian intelligence agencies have warned that China was collecting data from India through popular Chinese mobile apps. The Chinese Xiaomi smartphones and notebooks are suspected to be transmitting personal data to the servers located in China. China is exporting devices equipped with backdoor surveillance tools. Huawei and ZTE are notorious in this sphere. China also purchases companies dealing with computer network with this intention. The Chinese company Lenovo, which bought IBM' PC business in 2004, was reportedly shipping laptops with 'superfish' malware which undermines basic security protocols. The threat from imported equipment would significantly increase if we continue to rely on imported equipment for the 5G network as well as that may have back door surveillance system based on Artificial Intelligence.

India's IWIO Strategy

Beware, Veterans,

Immediately after retirement, many Veterans get hooked onto social media. They have years of experience and in the know of a lot of sensitive military information. Most have close friends and juniors in active service with whom they converse routinely. Many of them write detailed articles on strategy and tactical appreciation. There are others on panel discussions in seminars or television. Adversaries use social media platforms to extract information and to mould opinions. There is also a tendency among some to forward messages on group messaging Apps without checking authenticity or implications. There is thus a need for Veterans to think twice. Beware that India's enemies want to use Veterans to extract service-

related information and to spread discontent among serving personnel.

Way Ahead India

India is gradually realising the significance of IWIO but a lot needs to be done in this field. India established the National Information Board (NIB) in 2002 and is chaired by National Security Adviser. The NIB is the highest policy-making body for cybersecurity and IW and periodically reports to the Cabinet Committee on Security headed by the Prime Minister. The Indian armed forces are also represented in it. However, the NIB's capabilities for countering IWIO needs to be enhanced significantly. An independent national fact-checking organisation must be established for transparently checking facts and also to formulate a code of principles for fact-checking. There is an urgent need for making citizens aware of the misuse of social media platform to exploit our fault lines and cultural differences. India must find indigenous telecom solutions and equipment to ensure its safety. An effective system of providing incentives to Indian telecom entrepreneurs should be established. India needs to devise time-sensitive rapid government response to adversary IWIO campaigns. The NIB must engage best professionals in the field to counter IWIO. The government needs to work closely with all social platforms and electronic and print media to counter IWIO. There is a need to make citizens and security personnel aware of the misuse of social media platforms and also include this subject in the educational institutes. The industry and academia should be involved in research, with appropriate incentives.

The newly formed tri-service Defence Cyber Agency (DCA) will work in conjunction with the National Cyber Security Advisor. Its focus will be towards offensive and defensive military cyber-issues. It would include as many as 1000 personnel from the Army, Navy and the Air Force. The National Cyber Security Policy was adopted by the Government of India in 2013 to ensure secure and resilient cyberspace for citizens, businesses and the government. DCA is meant to combat the current threat from China and Pakistan. The Agency will have smaller teams, spread around the country. It will position dedicated officers in major headquarters of the forces to deal with emerging cybersecurity issues. DCA must find indigenous solutions and equipment.

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A Tale of Three Indologies

Côme Carpentier de Gourdon*

Introduction

Since antiquity travellers, chroniclers and historians left more or less accurate and informed accounts about India in the other regions of Eurasia, both in the western and eastern worlds. The names of Megasthenes, Ctesias, Strabo, Pliny the Elder, the anonymous author of the Periplum, Cosmas Indikopleustes, Al Beruni and Ibn Battuta are a few among those that stand out as collectors and disseminators of information on 'Indike', later 'Al-Hind'. Hence they deserve to be seen as proto-Indologists.

From the 16th century of the common era onwards the growing European appetite and ability to explore unknown countries, trade with them and spread the Christian gospel inspired more systematic endeavours to gain knowledge and provide information about India. Indology as a country-specific discipline is often said to have begun with William Jones's project and the foundation of the Asiatic Society in 1784 but from its initial vocation as a theoretically objective and often admiring 'discovery' of Indian civilisation, it evolved into a colonial discipline harnessed by the occupying powers in the service of their political and economic interests. The desire to learn from India in the belief that it was a treasure house of deep and often mysterious knowledge, still prevalent at the end of the 18th century (the Age of Enlightenment) was replaced by the design to define the Indian heritage and reality according to 'scientific' criteria in the 19th century (the age of rationalism, nationalism, progressivism and industrialisation).

Given that the 'Harappan' archaeological legacy had not yet been discovered, classical Indology was built on the assumption that civilisation had come to India relatively late from western and central Asia and had received a decisive input from Alexander's invading armies and from later arrivals.

We have entered a new era of Indology in the last forty years or so thanks to the contributions of several distinguished researchers from India and outside, working on new archaeological, geophysical, oceanographic, climatological, genetic, astronomical and literary data. We may choose to call this much wider and multidisciplinary science Indology 3.0 or simply define it as a rediscovery of India freed from ethnocentric 'progressivist' and neo-Darwinian premises and interpretations. This emerging vision of India's formative processes is more complex and wide-ranging than most earlier ones but it reconnects present and future scholarship with often neglected records and testimonies from the ancient literature of the country as well as from pre-19th century European and other foreign annals and beliefs.

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Indology in the Context of an Emerging Global Civilisation

It is important to note that the study of India, or at least the collection of information about the land and its civilisation has been tightly intertwined with the emergence and evolution of the major currents that have combined to form the modern globally dominant civilisation in the western world: the Baroque and the Counter-Reformation, the Age of Reason and Mercantilism, Enlightenment (both French and Caledonian), British Utilitarianism and Liberalism, German Romanticism, Socialism, 'Indo-European' cultural and ethnic nationalism, the anti-colonial ideology and finally the anti-technocratic revolt of the sixties and the new post-Einsteinian, quantic scientific awareness that has taken over much of the academic world in the last forty years. In all those ideological, successive and often contemporary or overlapping movements, of which we somewhat arbitrarily isolated nine (three in each of the three indological eras we posit), ideas borrowed from India have played a role while the outside (mostly western) perspective on India has changed more or less in tune with the transformation of the predominant *zeitgeist*.

Without getting into a detailed, fully documented demonstration of this thesis, I will give a rapid overview of the circumstances which support it:

The Baroque and the Counter-Reformation

Though the origin of the word is uncertain, a possible etymology is from Arabic *Baraq* (shining like lightning). The name of the Prophet's charger which gave Portuguese and Italian *barroco*. The oriental influence is perceptible in the quest for the wonderful and the prodigious in art and wisdom.

Following on the heels of the High Renaissance, the culmination of a two hundred year-long transformation of medieval Europe under 'oriental' (graeco-byzantine and arabo-persian) influences, the Baroque age rose in a fractured Christendom as a reassertion of Roman Catholic Latin power against the northern 'reformed' (i.e. protestant) polities. The spearhead of the Baroque culture sponsored by the papacy and the leading states of Italy, Spain, Germany and France was the Society of Jesus which extended its sway to all continents and became an intellectual architect of the overseas empires of the Catholic states. The intense activity of the Jesuits in the Portuguese and (later) French East Indies produced a wealth of knowledge about all aspects of Indian and Chinese civilisations which were commonly studied side by side (the Goa-Macau-Canton link). The attitude was a combination of missionary zeal and reverence for the antiquity and depth of Indian intellectual and scientific knowledge and it remained so until the close of the 18th century; (Kircher, Calmette, Pons, Tachard, Di Nobilis, Coeurdoux, La Loubère et al).[1]

A prevailing tendency was to acknowledge India's seniority concerning the preservation of the original language, wisdom and secret sciences of mankind, even with regard to the Hebrew tradition (see Coeurdoux and Anquetil du Perron)[2].

The Age of Reason and Mercantilism

The Age of Reason may be seen as a partly Jansenistic intellectual French reaction to the dramatic emotionalism and mystical tropism of the

Baroque to which it ran parallel in its first stage. Seeds of this rational analytical—though not atheistic—bend may be detected in Descartes's method, in Gassendi's sensualism, in Bossuet's discourses on world history and even on a different track in Hobbes's philosophy. An exponent of sensualism and a philosopher and physician in his own right, Francois Bernier (1630-1688) was a traveler and long-time resident of India whose writings did much to familiarise the learned elites of Europe with India's contemporary state and thought system[3].

Despite his limited knowledge of it, Voltaire celebrated India's ageless wisdom and proclaimed it vastly superior to the Judaeo-Christian theology inherited by the West [4]. In that time (the second half of the 18th century) the early French and German scholars of Sanskrit and ancient Indian literature were teaching and training their successors. Helvétius and other 'philosophes des lumières' had a generally receptive attitude to the metaphysical theories of the Indians despite strong rationalist prejudices and general ignorance of the subject. James Burnett, Lord Monboddo, from his reading of Halhed, saw Egyptian as the oldest language and Greek as the most perfect but acknowledged Sanskrit's place as the connecting link between Eurasian tongues.

In the economic arena, the prevailing theory was colonial mercantilism which sought to accumulate capital at home by selling more to other states than was bought from them and controlling captive (mainly agricultural) resources and markets for manufactured goods in overseas territories. This system reflected and promoted the establishment of 'factories' or warehouses (*comptoirs*) in the East Indies and elsewhere to build trade monopolies, although there were as yet no coherent projects to take over and govern the Asian and African lands brought into maritime trade networks. The various overseas commercial companies did not yet seek to take direct political power in the areas in which they did business. Their goal was to make money for shareholders, not to rule foreign kingdoms.

This period saw the rise of the orientalists and first 'true' Indologists, such as Anquetil du Perron, William Jones, Alexander Hamilton (a cousin of the homonymous Founding Father of the American Constitution) and Sylvestre de Sacy who bridge the gap between the Jesuits and other mainly ecclesiastical students of India and the modern Encyclopaedists driven by a universalistic and scientific desire to acquire and organise knowledge 'about man and nature', for the progress of humanity and the benefit of their own motherlands and states.

The acquisition of colonial power required accurate and comprehensive knowledge of the lands that had fallen under the sway of the western European kingdoms and Republics. Calcutta's Asiatic Society was a part of the encyclopaedic project in the spirit shared by the French 'philosophes des lumières' and the Caledonian liberals.

The Enlightenment, Utilitarianism and Liberalism

The Age of Reason as we have seen seamlessly flowed into the alleged Enlightenment, illustrated and defined by the writings of Locke, the French Encyclopaedists, Bentham and James

Mills. The liberal 'open borders' trading policy of the British Whigs was matched by the French Physiocrats. The study of India and other ancient, mainly Asian civilisations was turned into a utilitarian discipline intended to facilitate the control of those societies by the colonisers. The downfall of Napoleon in 1814-15 heralded the consolidation of economic and intellectual British dominance both in Europe and overseas, tightly related to the United Kingdom's paramountcy over India.

The publication of James Mills's *History of India* in 1818 was a watershed. In that monument of self-serving interpretations by an agnostic materialist working for the East India Company, Mills's contempt for, but also ignorance of India's cultural past and social circumstances are on full display. He inherited the innate Judeo-Christian distrust of paganism and idolatry but not the Jesuitic respectful curiosity for the secret gnosis of the 'gentoos'. His highly prejudiced conclusions set a pattern for most of the official interactions between the British rulers and their Indian subjects. In the same vein, Macaulay's disdain for India's thought, literature and arts also emanate from the imperial resolve to affirm the innate racial and socio-cultural superiority of Europeans over the barbaric or decadent Asians, whether Hindu or Muslim. We find echoes of that supercilious attitude in the writings of several orientalists of the 19th and 20th centuries such as Salomon Reinach who decry the 'obscurity, monstrous nature, confusion and incoherence' of much of Hindu mythology, epic literature and even philosophy[5].

Significantly, many of the acknowledged 'authorities' on India such as Mills did not spend time or even travel there, unlike their orientalist predecessors, and were content to use select documentary sources they had access to. The culture of the dominated peoples did not require to be studied *in situ* in their estimation. It was enough for traders, managers, soldiers and civil servants to govern those benighted and unhealthy lands according to the advice provided by 'enlightened' administrators and financiers back home. An enduring current of Euro-American Indology (whether under Liberal, Marxist or Christian inspiration) has been influenced by this colonial narrative, heavy on 'polytheism, caste, ignorance, injustice and backwardness' which we still can detect in some of the academic literature being produced nowadays. It had a diverse but real impact in the writings of reformers and scholars as ideologically diverse as Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Swami Dayananda Saraswati, Keshub Chandra Sen, Helena Blavatsky, Veer Savarkar, Jawaharlal Nehru and Dr B R Ambedkar. They all, more or less, upheld western enlightenment or at least a modern *aggiornamento* as a necessary corrective to the 'decadent' and 'irrational' elements in the Hindu religious heritage. Many contemporary and famous Indologists propound this view as well, regarding Sanskrit in particular and 'orthodox' Hinduism in general as a tool of 'brahminical' and patriarchal oppression and conservatism according to currently prevalent concepts and terminologies.

This is not a judgment on the merit of the assessments made in this line of thought but rather a recognition that they are rooted in the utilitarian, technocratic critique pioneered by early 19th C, Anglo-Saxon liberals who were in principle hostile to traditional 'theistic' social systems and organic polities.

Romanticism

Anglo-Saxon liberalism was reaching its mature stage while France dealt with the confusing consequences of its Revolution and Napoleonic Jacobinism when a deep-rooted reaction was taking place on the continent. Mostly northern German university towns and princely courts such as Iena, Weimar, Bonn, Mannheim and Göttingen hosted brilliant scholars and litterateurs exposed to Indian, Persian, Turkic and Arabic scholarship and poetry and also fluent in the thought of classical graeco-roman antiquity. The exploration and translation of Indian epics, treatises and romances were combined with the cultivation of the western heritage. The leaders of this movement, usually cognisant of Kant's pioneering ideas were Goethe, Schiller, Schopenhauer, Fichte, the Humboldt, Grimm and Schlegel brothers, Schelling and Novalis—The 'Nature philosophers'.

In the year 1808, ten years before the publication of Mills's History of India, K.W.F von Schlegel brought out his very influential *Uber die Sprache und Weisheit den Indien* ('On the Language and Wisdom of the Indians') which had a seminal influence in Schopenhauer's *The World as Will and Representation* whose fist edition is dated of 1818.

In France too, the Romantics soon took over the cultural stage and it was no accident that the earliest professors of Sanskrit and Indian letters were scholars like Antoine Leonard de Chézy who married Schlegel's former wife and who taught Burnouf, Max Mueller's future master. The anti-utilitarian, anti-liberal reaction heralded a new wave of reverential interest in and fascination with Indic thought, in its Hindu, Buddhist and Sufi forms. Classical Indology was born in Germany, France, Russia and Britain although in the latter country it was constrained by the Christian evangelising intent and by political considerations that were less decisive on the continent where Indology was not so directly related to foreign, colonial and commercial policies.

Orientalising Romanticism was however not absent from the British intellectual scene, far from it and Edwin Arnold is one of its eminent representatives, as were many of the more or less contemporary Theosophists.

Socialism

It is well known that Karl Marx was critically interested in the sociological and economic implications of British rule in India which he interpreted as an inevitable and indeed beneficial irruption of modern capitalism into an ancient arrested civilisation that according to him functioned within primitive village units impervious to change and progress[6]. Taking off from Hegel's rather summary dismissal of Asian philosophical thought, Marx adopted the highly unidimensional and negative assessment of Indian society made by James Mills and he aspired to take the world economy to the post-liberal collectivist stage for which, however, in his estimation, the passage through 'Ricardian' capitalism was necessary since feudal agrarian polities could not directly transform into socialist ones absent an intermediate conversion to the industrial phase of development.

Thus the British colonial experience in India and the utilitarian interpretation of India's history and culture were basic factors behind the formation of the Marxist theory and praxis.

Rise of the Indo-European Mythology

Rooted in the earlier mentioned Romantic 'discovery of India', the mystique of an 'Aryan' common cultural and even ethnic origin for Europeans and Indians spread in much of the West among orientalists, occultists and Masons of various denominations, especially from the 1860s onwards on the background of Germany's political ascent and of the racial theories of Gobineau, Bulwer Lytton and others. This ideological stream is vast and widespread as it extends to both North and South Americas as to the whole of Europe. Varying interpretations of India's role in the creation and dissemination of the original 'Aryan' civilisation were proposed by Blavatsky, Saint Yves d'Alveydre, Jacolliot, Guénon, Roerich and Evola among others and some of them influenced Nietzsche and other eminent thinkers. The discredit and ill repute suffered by those supposedly 'far-right' esoteric theories in the wake of the second world war raised a shroud of suspicion around the scholars who saw an India a cradle of Eurasian or even universal civilisation and not a mere 'salad bowl' of converging influences from West and Central Asia, which is still a more widely accepted description in the halls of academic Indology.

Anti-Colonialism and the Sixties Revolution

In the interest of concision, we cluster in this chapter the slow-motion revolution that took place between the end of the second world war and the seventies when India and most other colonised nations got their independence and when, with the global ascendency of Gandhism and related 'Third World' emancipation movements, the anti-industrial, post-capitalist ideologies generated grassroots revolts against both the western-US dominated and Soviet systems. The 'Dharma bums', the Hippies and psychotropic experimenters of that era all had some philosophical connection to India through thought leaders such as Aldous Huxley, Christopher Isherwood, Jack Kerouac, Alan Watts, Allen Ginzberg, Willis Harman, Ramdas, John Lilly and Timothy Leary and eccentric scientists like JBF Haldane. The dream of a global non-violent, non-acquisitive culture of 'peace and love' was a utopical reaction to the increasing hegemony of militaristic consumerism on one side and dogmatic socialism on the other and many of the lotus-eaters found their pastures in India, a new non-academic psychedelic Indology was born or rather was reborn, as a throwback to the metaphysical perceptions of many orientalists and explorers of prior centuries and it flourished in the syncretistic 'New Age' culture cultivated in the experimental centres such as Esalen, Findhorn, the Monroe Institute and the Institute of Noetic Sciences.

The Final Stage: Quantum Consciousness and Systems Science

This is the stage of epistemic awareness that we have gradually entered by drawing philosophical implications from relativistic and quantic interpretations of nature or reality. This has at once been impacted by the study of Indian, Chinese and Japanese philosophical systems and has simultaneously influenced our approach to and understanding of them. There is a long line of scientific thinkers and philosophers of science stretching from Tesla, Schrodinger, Heisenberg

and Bohm to Sudarshan, Capra, Prigogine, Josephson, Sheldrake, Luisi, Tolle and Wilber who have acknowledged their debt to Indic epistemic and psychological concepts and systems. The list is only growing longer and the contributions to scientific advances and to the interpretation of reality are multiplying by the year. Complementary contributions have come from pioneering experts in many fields, such as Ferdinand de Saussure in linguistics and semantics, Abraham Seidenberg in the history of mathematics, Ananda K Coomaraswamy in the realm of art history and symbology, Mircea Eliade in religious psychology, Schumacher and Ignacy Sachs in economics, Karl Pribram in the neurosciences and various epigenetic biologists. From very different perspectives they have highlighted the validity of many Indian ancient insights and knowledge systems.

In the field of Indology *stricto sensu* the contemporary scientific and psychological, rather than solely religious and historical perspective converges with the rediscovery and reinterpretation of the Indian past supported by new, more accurate and more extensive archaeological, chronological and literary data. For instance, the correlation between the Vedic and post-Vedic civilizational periods and the proto-Harappan, mature Harappan and post-Harappan archaeological stages provides a coherent historical framework while inviting us to revisit 'classical academic' chronological estimates still based on Max Muller's hypothesis about the age of the Vedas.

The stage has been set for a mature, comprehensive Indology to emerge, integrating elements from the previous nine methodological and ideological epochs, in other words, a holistic Indology that takes into account the traditional records and epistemic strategies of the ancient subcontinental cultures while utilizing the techniques and of the natural and social sciences.[7]

This article is based on a presentation prepared for an international conference on the new indology, planned for march 2020 at the Indian Institute of Advanced Studies, Shimla, co-sponsored by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations.

Notes:

1 Athanasius Kircher *Oedipus Aegyptiacus* (in Joscelyn Godwin, "Athanasius Kircher, A Renaissance Man in search of lost knowledge' (Thames & Hudson, 1979)

On Calmette: Julien Bach "Le Pere Calmette et les missionnaires indianistes" (Albanel, 1868)

About Jean-Francois Pons: Rosane Rocher, "Discovery of Sanskrit by Europeans" in *Concise history of the language sciences from the Sumerians to the cognitivists*, E. F. K. Koerner & R. E. Asher (eds.), 1995, p. 188.

Tachard, Guy. Voyage de Siam des pères Jesuites, envoyés par le roy,
aux Indes & à la Chine :avec leurs observations astronomiques, & leurs
remarques de physique, de géographie, d'hydrographie, & d'histoire.
A Amsterdam : Chez P. Mortier, 1687.
On La Loubère: Narayanan, Anil, *History of Indian Astronomy: The Siamese Manuscript*, Lulu

Publishing, 2019.(about Simon de la Loubere) report and 'Siamese manuscripts" on mathematics. About Di Nobili: Roberto di Nobili, a Case Study in Accomodation https://home.snu.edu/~hculbert/nobili.htm

On Coeurdoux: Richard De Smet, Review of Sylvie Murr, Vol. 1: *Mœurs et coutumes des Indiens (1777): Un inédit du père G.-L. Cœurdoux, S.J. dans la version de N.-J. Desvaulx*. Vol. II: *L'indologie du père Cœurdoux* (Paris: Ecole française d'extrême-orient, 1987), *Indian Theological Studies* 27 (1990) 371-373.

2 Anquetil Duperron (1808) "Supplément au Mémoire qui prècéde" (Supplement to the preceding memoir), *Mémoires de littérature, tirés des registres de l'Académie royale des inscriptions et belles-lettres* (Memoirs on literature, drawn from the records of the Royal Academy of Inscriptions and Belle-lettres), 49 : 647-697.

3 Francois Bernier, "Voyage dans les Etats du Grand Mogol", introduction de France Bhattacharya (Arthème Fayard ed. Paris, 1981).

4 MURR, Sylvie. *L'Inde philosophique entre Bossuet et Voltaire - I. Moeurs et coutumes des Indiens (1777). Un inedit du père G.-L. Cœurdoux, S.J. dans la version de N.-J. Desvaulx*. Vol. 1. Ed. Sylvie Murr. Paris: Ecole française d'extrême-orient, 1987. 247 pp.

MURR, Sylvie. *L'Inde philosophique entre Bossuet et Voltaire - II. L'indologie du père Cœurdoux. Stratégie, apologétique et scientificité*. Vol. 2. Ed. Sylvie Murr. Paris: Ecole française d'extrême-orient, 1987. 250 pp. ISBN 2-85539-746-4

5 On Salomon Reinach http://psychanalyse-paris.com/-Cultes-Mythes-et-Religions-.html

6 On Karl Marx and India https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1853/06/25.htm

7 Many original and renowned scholars and scientists have made and are continuing to make important contributions to the revival, interpretation and understanding of ancient Indian knowledge in all areas. A wide overview is provided in the collective volume 'Sindhu-Saraswati Civilization – New Perspectives' edited by Nalini Rao (in memory of Dr S R Rao, Nalanda Foundation, USA). It contains articles by R S Bisht, B R Mani, Nicholas Kazanas, Jim J Shaffer, M J Kenoyer, Shrikant Talageri, Edwin Bryant, Michel Danino, Subhash Kak, Robin Bradley Kar, David Frawley, Sundara Adiga, Ashok Aklujkar, G Benedetti and Koenraad Elst among others. Among the many others who deserve mention we should cite V Shinde, S Ramasubramaniam, N S Rajaram, CK Raju, G Joseph, K S Valdiya, Lokesh Chandra, Kapila Vatsyayan, Raj Vedam, Saroj Bala and Neera Misra.

Acknowledging the work and dedication of such scholars coming from many areas, some of which are not part of 'classical' academic indology does not imply that we share all their ideas, theories and conclusions. Debate and further research are the brain and sinews of scholarship and much is still to be discovered and revised but the diversity of horizons and backgrounds of those and other scholars vastly enriches and expands the still largely unexplored turf of indology.

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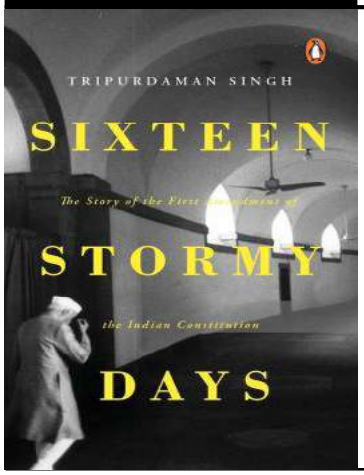
BOOK REVIEW



SIXTEEN STORMY DAYS

Author: **Tripurdaman Singh**

Publisher: **Penguin**

Hardback, 288 Pages, Price Rs 599/-

Book Review by: **Maj. Gen. Dhruv C. Katoch***

On 9 December 1946, just over eight months before India achieved her independence on 15 August 1947, the new Constituent Assembly was convened with Dr Rajendra Prasad elected as the permanent chairman. Dr Prasad declared his intention of placing before the world 'a model of a constitution that will satisfy all our people, all groups, all communities, all religions inhabiting this vast land, and which will ensure to every one freedom of action, freedom of thought, freedom of belief and freedom of worship'. The sentiment was indeed noble and reflected the subconscious desire of a people long suppressed, who desired nothing more than ridding themselves of the foreign yoke which had enslaved them for close to millennia.

The chairman of the Drafting Committee, Dr Bhim Rao Ambedkar was conscious of the vast responsibility that had been placed on his shoulders. A young and aspirational India was finally waking to a new dawn of hope, where they would be the masters of their own fate and Dr Ambedkar rightly described individual rights and the constitutional remedies to enforce and safeguard them as the 'very soul of the Constitution and the very heart of it'.

The Constituent Assembly debates which took place over the next three years after the convening of the Constituent Assembly, and which finally led to the enactment of the Constitution of India on 26 November 1949, make for very interesting reading. Some of the most heated debates took place on the issue of fundamental rights. India had shed its foreign yoke and the people were free. The Constitution had to reflect that spirit of freedom. One of the aspects debated was the need for India's judicial system to act as the guarantor of the fundamental rights. Very heated debates took place on the powers of the Executive and the Legislature to make laws. There was a body of opinion that wanted certain laws made by the Executive to be outside the purview of judicial review. That, of course, would have given to the Executive the power to bypass the Constitution when it was found expedient to do so, even if it trampled on the fundamental rights. Thankfully, there were enough dissenting voices to ensure this did not happen.

Ambedkar warned of the need to observe

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certain morals and conventions of the Constitution, both by the government and by the people, if parliamentary democracy was to succeed. "Indeed, if I may say so," he had emphatically asserted in the Constituent Assembly, "if things go wrong under the new Constitution, the reason will not be that we had a bad Constitution. What we will have to say was that man was vile".

On 26 January 1950, when India became a Sovereign Democratic Republic, no less a person than India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru proclaimed the Indian Constitution as "…the most elaborate declaration of human rights yet framed by any state". The euphoria that existed on the day that India became a Republic was second perhaps only to the heady feeling of becoming an independent nation at the midnight hour of 15 August 1947. In the words of the 19th-century poet, William Ernest Henley, India finally was *the master of its fate and the captain of its soul*.

It did not take long however, for the government to come to the conclusion that building an edifice based on strong guarantees of upholding individual freedoms was one thing; living up to those ideals was another. Within a year, there was a visible change in the stance of the government. The Constitution, which had been proclaimed as a charter of freedom for India's people and the fulfilment of their dreams, was suddenly perceived as impeding in the way of the will of the same people.

This story has been eloquently captured by Tripurdaman Singh in his outstanding book, 'Sixteen Stormy Days'. The events which led to the enactment of the First Amendment, have been chronicled in a manner that make for both easy reading and comprehensive understanding. In essence, this was the first battle of Indian liberalism, but it was lost on the grounds of political expediency. The very people who had drafted the Constitution, now sought its amendment, leaving just a few stalwarts like SP Mookerji, Mr Jayakar, Jai Prakash Narain, Acharya Kripalani, HV Kamath, MC Chagla and a handful of others to stand up for Indian liberalism. But it was a losing fight and the amendment was enacted. This book traces the history of those fateful sixteen days when the issue was debated before it was finally enacted. The sixteen months between the promulgation of the Constitution and its amendment in June 1951 held great significance for India's polity and the structure of the state. The social fabric had been altered and this was to become the precedence for many other amendments in the coming years.

In the debates carried out in the Constituent Assembly, the issue of personal freedom, civil liberties and individual rights and how these would manifest in the Constitution, had been a constant theme. Thus, in the fundamental rights, the provision was put in Article 13, that any law which was in force in India, and which was inconsistent with or in derogation of the fundamental rights would be void. It was for this reason that Ambedkar had proudly declared that individual rights and constitutional remedies to enforce and safeguard them were 'the heart and soul of the Constitution'. This is not to say that reservations were not expressed. The outgoing Governor-General, C Rajagopalachari opined a need for restoring the 'unqualified reverence for the state' and a revival of 'feudal manners and chivalry, but in terms of modern democracy'. There were thus

contradictory voices which laid bare the ambivalence that existed within the ruling Congress party concerning the Constitution.

The issues which were finally to lead to the amendment of the Constitution started coming out soon after its promulgation. Heavy-handed actions of the state came under scrutiny and the courts threw out the provisions which gave the state the power to indefinite and open-ended detention. The Courts increasingly became active on such issues, and this was but the tip of the iceberg. Soon, the government faced challenges to its land reforms agenda, which was a part of its social engineering exercise. It also came up with issues about freedom of speech, desiring to impose curbs on such freedom, in what it perceived to be in the interest of the state. Nehru, for some reason, was particularly irked by the constant criticism of Pakistan, which he felt was hampering his foreign policy. With the government getting constrained by the Constitutional limits on Executive power, it sought a way out of the impasse. As the Times of India observed in its editorial, it was tragic that 'our popular governments should at every stage, feel the need of repressive laws, against which leaders of our freedom struggle, cried themselves hoarse for generations'. In such an environment, the government introduced the Constitution (First Amendment) Bill.

In Parliament, Nehru came up with the ingenuous argument that the changes were required in the Constitution, because, if the changes were not made then the whole purpose of the Constitution 'may be defeated or delayed'. This was a strange argument, which in effect meant that the enforcement of the fundamental rights was defeating the Constitution. Nehru also came up with the proposition that the Directive Principles in the Constitution took precedence over fundamental rights!

As elections were around the corner, and which were eventually held in 68 phases from October 1951 to February 1952, the Congress was keen to go into the elections with having fulfilled its poll promises. Nehru proclaimed the amendments in the context of preserving the interests of the country. However, it was more in the nature of preserving the interests of his party. And this has become a failing in India's polity, where self-interest and party interests are camouflaged in terms of the national interest and the national good. Nehru bulldozed his way to pass the amendments and Ambedkar, despite his doubts, concurred. So did the President, who perhaps had little option but to go with the tide, bound as he was with the advice of the cabinet. Patel had passed away on 15 December 1950, so the last stalwart who could have opposed Nehru was not on the scene. The amendments were passed by 228 votes in favour and 20 against, with about 50 members abstaining. Articles 15, 19 and 31 of the Constitution were amended, with which the first battle for Indian liberalism had been lost. This set the tone for a series of amendments that were to come in subsequent years.

It should thus come as no surprise to anyone that Article 35A was surreptitiously incorporated into the Indian Constitution, purportedly as a result of the Jawaharlal Nehru-Sheikh Abdullah Agreement of 1953. But the same was never published in the text of the Constitution which was printed thereafter, indicating that a fraud had been

committed on the Constitution. During the emergency, Indira Gandhi amended the Constitution, the 42nd Amendment, throwing to the winds parliamentary propriety, and pushing through the amendment when most opposition leaders were in jail, bringing out the most widespread changes to the Constitution. It was not national interests which prompted the change, but self-preservation. Then her son, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, reversed a Supreme Court Judgement, in which a Muslim woman had won the right to alimony from her husband: the case of Shah Bano. Under pressure from the Muslim clergy, the Rajiv Gandhi government passed the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act, 1986 which diluted the judgment of the Supreme Court and restricted the right of Muslim divorcées to alimony from their former husbands for only 90 days after the divorce. No national interest was involved and the Act was regressive in that it discriminated against all Muslim women. What was in play was vote bank politics and a desire to secure the votes of a section of the Indian public.

The Right to Education of all Children came into being by the 86th Amendment, when Article 21A was added to the Constitution. By the Constitution (Ninety-third Amendment) Act, Article 15 was amended, in 2005, which gave the state the power to make special provisions, by law, for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for the Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes, insofar as such special provisions relate to their admission to educational institutions, including private educational institutions, whether aided or unaided by the State, other than the minority educational institutions. The leaving out of minority educational institutions is discriminatory, but yet it has become a part of our Constitution. The chipping away of the fundamental rights, which started with the First Amendment, has still not ended and points to faultiness in India's polity which seeks specific vote banks to retain power, at the expense of the national interest. That remains India's tragedy, a process which started with the First Amendment.

The book, Sixteen Stormy days, by Tripurdaman Singh, hence should form essential reading not just for those pursuing a degree in law, but by the lay public and by all students who have an interest in statecraft, as also those who serve in government. The Constitution is a sacred document. Let it so remain. Trampling on the Constitution on extraneous grounds can do no good to the Republic.

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