

U.S.I. JOURNAL

INDIA'S OLDEST JOURNAL ON DEFENCE AFFAIRS



(Estd. 1870)

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

- | | |
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| Azerbaijan's Capture of Nagorno Karabakh Opens Up Challenges for India in the South Caucuses | - Major General Jagatbir Singh, VSM (Retd) |
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USI LATEST PUBLICATION DURING 2023-2022

Pub Code	Title of Book & Name of Author	Price(Rs)	Year
Adm-SYB/23**	"STRATEGIC YEAR BOOK 2023" Editor-in-Chief Maj Gen BK Sharma, AVSM, SM & Bar (Retd), Editors Lt Gen GS Katoch, PVSM, AVSM, VSM (Retd), Gp Capt Sharad Tewari, VM (Retd) & Dr Jyoti Yadav	2250	2023
M-1/ 2023**	"India Tibet Relations (1947-1962)" By Mr Claude Arpi	395	2023
R-115/ 2023**	"Grey Zone Warfare : Way Ahead for India" By Lt Gen Dushyant Singh, PVSM, AVSM (Retd)	1450	2023
OP-1/ 2023**	"The Ukrainian Conflict : Heavy Metal still Rocks the Charts" By Maj Gen Jagatbir Singh, VSM (Retd) & Maj Gen VK Singh, VSM (Retd)	250	2023
OP-2/ 2023**	"The Great Helmsman and the Generalissimo : A Personal Feud That Endures" by Col Sanjay Kanoth, VSM	250	2023
OP-3/ 2023**	"Changing Operational Scenario and Evolving Rules of Engagement" by Wg Cdr UC Jha (Retd) and Gp Capt Kishore Kumar Khera (Retd)	250	2023
OP-4/ 2023**	"Empowering Commanders for Tomorrow" By Brig Pawan Bhardwaj	250	2023
OP-5/ 2023**	"A Joint Concept of Operations" By Air Marshal (Dr) Diptendu Choudhury, PVSM AVSM, VM, VSM (Retd)	250	2023
OP-6/ 2023**	"Orbat & Decorations For The Azad Hind Fauj" By Shri Neelopal Mishra	350	2023
OP-7/ 2023**	"Analysing the Indus Waters Treaty 1960 : Beyond The Hype, Hoopla and The Hyperbole" By Col Anurag Jyoti and Prof (Dr) Raj Kamal Kapur	250	2023
OP-8/ 2023	First Lt Gen PS Bhagat Memorial Lecture "Legacy of Lt Gen Prem Bhagat – A Visionary and Strategic Leader" held at Manekshaw Centre on 14 June 2023. Compiled by Ms Tanya Jain	350	2023
OP-9/ 2023	Fourth General KV Krishna Rao Memorial Lecture "Theaterisation in Light of the Malayan Campaign and The Fall of Singapore in World War II" held at Manekshaw Centre on 29 Dec 2022. By General MM Naravane, PVSM,AVSM,SM, VSM (Retd)	350	2023
CS3/R-116/ 2023**	"Comprehensive Development of the Northeast – Window to India's Act East Policy" By Mr Jitesh Khosla, IAS Officer	1250	2023
Adm-UNPK/ 2023	"INDIA AND THE UN PEACE OPERATIONS- In Service of Humanity and Global Peace" By Col (Dr) Kulwant Kumar Sharma (Retd)	1880	2023
Adm- UNPO/ 2022	"Keeping the Peace –UN Peace Operations and their Effectiveness : An Assessment" by Maj Gen (Dr) AK Bardalai (Retd) M/s Pentagon Press	995	2022
Adm- UNPK/ 2022	"INDIA AND UN PEACEKEEPING : THROUGH THE PRISM OF TIME" Edited by Maj Gen PK Goswami, VSM (Retd) M/s KW Publishers Pvt Ltd	1880	2022
CS3 R-114**	"Geo-Politics of Water in South Asia : Implications For India" By Col Anurag Jyoti	1250	2022
CMHCS-6*	"GALLIPOLI REVISITED" Edited by Sqn Ldr RTS Chhina,MBE, (Retd) and Amb Asoke Mukerji, IFS (Retd)	800	2022
OP-4/22**	"Theaterisation : A Way Ahead" By Maj Gen BK Sharma, AVSM, SM & Bar (Retd) and Maj Gen RS Yadav, VSM (Retd)	250	2022
Adm- SYB/22**	"Strategic Year Book 2022" Edited by Maj Gen BK Sharma, AVSM, SM & Bar (Retd), Lt Gen GS Katoch, PVSM, AVSM, VSM (Retd) and Gp Capt Sharad Tewari, VM (Retd)	2250	2022

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in the art, science and
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of National Security
in general and of the
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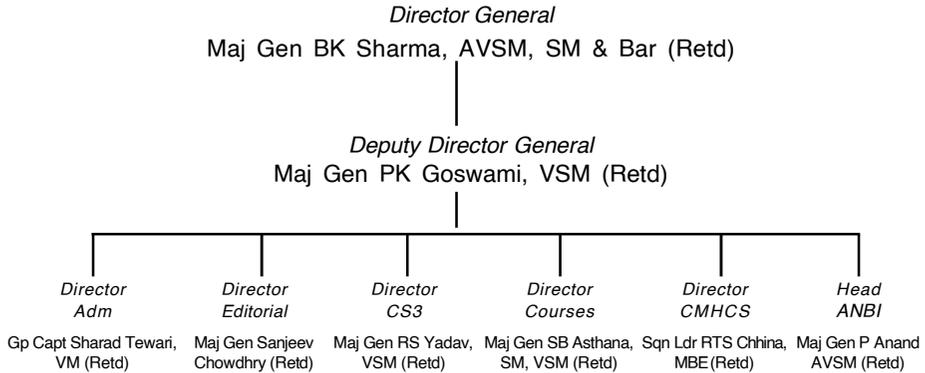
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Audi	300	40,000	25,000	4,000	4,000	5,000
SR-1	70	25,000	15,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
SR-2	20	15,000	8,000	2,500	2,500	1,500
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SR-5	30 to 35	20,000	12,000	3,000	3,000	2,500

Notes -

1. 18% GST extra.
2. Armed Forces will be given 10% discount.
3. Banquet Hall Pavilion - Rs. 3,000/- per day.

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The USI Journal has been digitised and can be accessed at www.usiofindia.org. Dispatch of hard copies to the members has been discontinued, however, Formation Headquarters, Units, Messes, Libraries and individuals can subscribe to the USI Journal at the rates as under:-

- (a) Single copy - Rs 300/- plus Rs 40/- postal/ packing charges
- (b) Yearly subscription (four issues) - Rs 1100/- plus Rs 160/- postal/ packing charges
- (c) There is no life time subscription, however, 20 years subscription can be subscribed for Rs 20,000/- including postal charges.

Editor

USI CORRESPONDENCE COURSES

1. The USI conducts correspondence courses for DSSC – Army and Navy, DSTSC (Army) Entrance Examinations and Promotion Examinations Parts B and D.
2. The Courses have been remodelled to make it more interactive and the admission procedure has been simplified to make it user friendly.
3. **Membership of the USI is mandatory to join any correspondence course.**
4. Schedule of Correspondence Courses 2023-24.

Courses	Commencement of Course	Date of Exam	Cost All Subjects	Cost Per Subject
(a) DSSC (Army)	3 rd Week of Nov 2023. Registration Open for 2024	Sep 2024	Rs 8000/-	Rs 3000/- for Tac B Rs 2000/- each for CA&MH Rs 1500/- for SMT Rs 1300/- for Tac A Rs 1200/- for Adm & ML
(b) DSSC (Navy)	1 st Week of Apr 2024	Jul 2024	–	Rs 3000/- for Paper-1
(c) DSSC (IAF)	3 rd Week of Jan 2024	Jul 2024	–	(i) Correspondence Course (aa) Rs 3000 for HH (ab) Rs 5000 for CA (ii) Online Course (aa) Rs 4000 for CA (ab) Other details are available in prospectus available on USI website
(d) Part B	2 nd Week of Dec 2023. Registration Open for 2024	Jun 2024 to Jul 2024	Rs 3000/-	Rs 1000/- each for Tac, CA & MH Rs 800/- each for Adm & ML
(e) Part D	1 st Week of Apr 2024. Registration Open for 2024	Oct 2024	Rs 4000/-	Rs 1500/- each for Tac, CA & MH Rs 1000/- each for Adm and ML

5. **Contact Programmes.** Three contact programmes for DSSC/DSTSC (Army)-2024 have been planned. Dates are : **17-22 Jun 2024, 01-06 Jul 2024 and 15-20 Jul 2024.** Separate test papers will be set for each programme. Fees – Rs 6000/- per contact programme and Rs 3000/- only for material of each CP.

6. **Online Command Pre Staff Course** of three subjects (MH, SMT & CA) for 2024 will be conducted from 19 Feb to 11 Mar 2024. Details are available on USI website.

7. Correspondence courses for Special to Corps subjects are not conducted.

8. **Mode of Payment.** Multicity cheque or bank draft payable at New Delhi in favour of *Director USI of India* or Bank Transfer. Bank details are available on website.

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See USI website : www.usiofindia.org for details and form			

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ARTICLES FOR USI JOURNAL

1. USI welcomes original researched articles pertaining to national security, defence matters and military history for publication in the USI Journal. Articles should preferably not exceed 2,500 words. Along with the article, the author should forward abstract of the article not exceeding ten per cent of the total words. These should be forwarded as a word document on e-mail to the Editor, United Service Institution of India, on dde@usiofindia.org. In the e-mail the author should state that "the article titled (Title of Article) has neither been previously published in print or online, nor has it been offered to any other agency for publication. The Editor reserves the right to make alterations".
2. It is mandatory that the author furnishes complete details of the book/journal referred to in the article as end notes. A guide to writing endnotes is given on the next page. Besides endnotes, if the author so desires, a bibliography may also be included, though it is not mandatory.
3. The article should be in Arial Font, size 12 and English (UK). Avoid use of symbols like %, & and so on unless unavoidable to explain a point. The date style should be 24 Jun 2020, except in the citations where it will be Jun 24, 2020. Abbreviations, if any, should be used in their expanded form the first time and indicated in brackets.
4. The full name and address of the author along with a brief Curriculum Vitae should be given. Serving officers are advised to follow the prevailing Services instructions for publications of their articles.
5. The author will receive a copy of the issue of the Journal in which his/her article appears along with three offprints. A suitable honorarium will also be paid after the article is published.

GUIDE TO WRITING ENDNOTES

1. Endnotes are notes added to the main body of a paper or an article, in which the author directs readers to sources referred to or to add extra comments of his or her own. Endnotes are placed at the end of the paper/article. A superscript number (1,2,3,4) at the end of the sentence signals the reader to look for the corresponding endnote at the end of the article. The endnotes should be numbered consecutively, starting from '1'. Citations should include the author's name, title of the book (in italics), publishing information (in parenthesis) and pages consulted, all separated by commas. Citations should be in the Chicago Manual of Style (CMS) format. A quick reference is available at:

https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide/citation-guide-1.html.

- Some examples are given below:-

¹ Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy : A Prime in the Social History of Pictorial Style*, (Oxford University Press, London, 1988), p. 45.

² Lina Bolzoni and Pietri Coral, *The Culture Memory*, (Bologna : Societa editrice Il Mulino, 1992), p. 45.

2. Use of Ibid., op. cit., and loc. cit.

Ibid. refers to the immediate preceding reference; op. cit.

refers to the prior reference by the same author and loc.

cit. is used instead of op. cit. when reference is made to a work previously cited and to the same page in that work. For example :-

⁴ R Polrer, *Learning Physics*, (Academic, New York, 1993), p.4.

⁵ Ibid, p. 9.

⁶ T Eliot, *Astrophysics*, (Springer, Berlin, 1989), p.141.

⁷ R Millan, *Art of Latin Grammar*, (Academic, New York, 1997), p.23.

⁸ Elliot, op cit., p148.

⁹ Elliot, loc, cit.

3. Where websites have been used to access information, the complete web address of the website should be cited, followed by the date the website was accessed by the author. e.g. Accessed Jun 24, 2020 from <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1947degana.html>.

Additions to the USI Library for the Quarter Ending December 2023

During this period a total of 54 new books have been added. Details of the new books are available on USI Website.

Research Projects

Members interested in undertaking research projects may submit research proposals to USI (CS3/CMHCS). At present, ten Chairs of Excellence have been instituted in CS3; namely, Field Marshal KM Cariappa Chair, Admiral RD Katari Chair, Air Marshal Subroto Mukherjee Chair, Prof DS Kothari Chair, Ministry of External Affairs Chair, Flying Officer Amandeep Singh Gill Chair, General Bipin Rawat Chair, Lt Gen PS Bhagat Chair, Bhawanipur Education Society College (BESC) Chair, Assam Rifles Chair and three Chairs in CMHCS namely; Maharana Pratap Chair, Chhatrapati Shivaji Chair and USI-War Wounded Foundation Chair. Copies of the Rules for Award of Fellowship Grants and Conduct of Research are available on the USI Website.

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Half Page	Rs. 1,500/-	Rs. 12,000
Four Consecutive Half Pages	Rs. 5,000/-	Rs. 44,000

New USI Members

During the period Oct–Dec 2023, 118 registered as New Life Members; One Ordinary Member renewed membership and 188 registered as new Ordinary Members.

Course Members

During Oct-Dec 2023, 231 Officers registered for Course Membership.

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NOTE

The views expressed in the Journal are the opinions of the contributors and the Editor, and are not necessarily official views or those of the USI Council.

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From The Director General's Desk

Dear Members,

It is my privilege to extend my heartfelt wishes to each one of you for a joyous and prosperous New Year.

In retrospect, the past year has been filled with challenges and triumphs, reflecting the resilience and dedication of our team. Together, we have navigated through uncertainties, embraced change, and emerged stronger.

During the year 2023, India has taken bold strides in its transition from a balancing power to a leading power. Sustained economic growth, political stability, effective management of internal security and key achievements in science and technology have significantly enhanced India's stature. India's vision of '*Viksit Bharat*' 2047 looks a plausible goal. Hugely successful conduct of G-20 Summit, under the rubric of '*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*', with the theme of 'One Earth, One Family, One Future', has positioned India as a strong vector of the Global South. On the flip side, festering violence in Manipur posed a daunting challenge since turmoil in the state does not augur well for peace in the northeast and for the very success of India's Act East Policy.

India remains beset with a collusive hybrid threat from Pakistani-China nexus. Even though a determined effort is being made to narrow the strategic capacity gap, a more sustained effort is needed to develop a credible deterrence capability across the spectrum of conflict. India's immediate neighbourhood remains in ferment. Of particular concern are the issues such as the pro-China tilt of Maldives' new regime and Bhutan-China boundary talks. Besides, the outcome of elections in Bangladesh and Pakistan will cumulatively have strategic implications for India. In the extended neighbourhood, a Talibanised Afghanistan, Ukraine War and Gaza Conflict too have strategic ramifications for India. At the global level India is deftly navigating its relations in a highly polarised world, balancing its relations in the Indo-Pacific and Eurasia. Cognisant of the role of niche and disruptive technology, a special drive is afoot to invest in research and development and enhance capacities in high-end technologies. Nonetheless, given the intricate nature of geopolitics, a more guided effort, using the 'Whole of

Nation Approach' is needed to develop India's comprehensive national power and leverage it to promote our strategic interests.

Leaving the big picture aside, let me update our members on the transformation in the USI.

During the year, the USI Management interacted with the Hon'ble Raksha Mantri, Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), Service Chiefs, and other senior policymakers at the National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS) and Ministries to apprise them about functioning of the USI and seek their guidance and support. There was regular interaction with the Heads of Missions and foreign delegations besides participation at various national and international platforms to project the image of the Institution. The USI has signed a number of Memorandums of Understanding with national and international institutions, introduced new Chairs of Excellence and Memorial Lectures apart from other initiatives.

The Centre for Military History and Conflict Studies (CMHCS) successfully conducted India's maiden Military Heritage Festival. The themes of the event included military heritage, geopolitics, strategic security, *Atmanirbhar Bharat*, media and war, aerospace and maritime affairs. The event was attended by the Hon'ble Raksha Mantri, and eminent personalities such as the CDS, the Chiefs of Army and Air Staff, the Vice Chief of Naval Staff, and the Chief of Integrated Defence Staff to the Chairman Chiefs of Staff Committee. 'Project *Udbhav*' was also flagged off during the event for illuminating India's military future with ancient strategic wisdom. The event also included an exhibition showcasing Indian military heritage from antiquity to present, service band displays, and a cultural programme with the theme 'Unity in Diversity'. CMHCS is also spearheading the Army Digital Archive Project as well as partnering with the Indian Air Force for their digitisation requirements. As part of Prime Minister's Veer Gatha project, The Gallantry Awards Portal Project was also initiated in collaboration with Ministry of Defence (MoD).

The Centre for Strategic Studies and Simulation (CS3) continued its focus on quality research in strategic and military affairs and the conduct of scenario based strategic games. The Centre hosted a number of seminars/webinars and Round Table Discussions (RTDs) focusing on geopolitical and strategic security

issues. The Centre initiated Track 1.5 dialogues with foreign partners and conducted table-top exercises. The Centre also conducted the Combined Operational Review and Evaluation Programme for HQ Integrated Defence Staff (IDS), strategic scenario gaming exercise at the Army War College, Mhow and Geneva Centre for Democratic Control of Armed Forces. USI has also completed 'Project *Jayant*', a seminal project on developing a computerised tool for conducting strategic gaming at theatre-strategic level, in collaboration with the Institute for Systems Studies and Analyses, Defence Research and Development Organisation. The CS3 also conducted bi-annual internship programmes for students from various universities. Furthermore, the Centre undertook Net Assessment projects for the MoD, HQ IDS and NSCS. CS3 also mentored foreign Visiting Fellows in conducting research at the Centre.

Professional advancement of serving officers has always been an important activity of the Institution since 1903. The Courses Section commenced the Online Pre-Staff Course for officers appearing for Defence Services Staff College for three subjects which were earlier conducted by respective Army Commands as Command Pre-Staff Courses. Besides, the USI continued with the Correspondence Courses and the Contact Programme in Hybrid mode for Competitive and Promotion examinations (Part B and Part D). More than 1,500 officers were trained during the year. About 75 per cent of the officers making it in the competitive vacancies and staff college merit list were beneficiaries of our courses.

The USI has played a crucial role in advancing India's United Nations Peacekeeping (UNPK) efforts. The establishment and nurturing of the Centre for UNPK by the USI, in collaboration with the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and the Armed Forces, have transformed it into a full-fledged unit of the Indian Army, serving as a regional hub for excellence in UNPK capacity building and diplomacy. The USI has elevated its UNPK role to the policy and doctrinal level, with the United Nations Cell spearheading efforts to showcase India's contributions in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations nationally and internationally. As a founding member of the Challenges Forum, the USI collaborates with institutions such as the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, the Effectiveness of Peace Operations Network, and the Stockholm

International Peace Research Institute on various projects. The USI has conducted international courses with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research and recently collaborated on the Protection of Women in Conflict Zones with United Nations Women. Engagements with United Nations Women, the United Nations Resident Coordinator, and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) have been re-established. Additionally, the USI, in partnership with the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) organised webinars on United Nations themes, leading to the publication of Monographs. A joint USI-ICWA book titled 'India and the UN Peace Operations: In the Service of Humanity and Global Peace' is set for release, and a special USI Journal (Jan to Mar 2023) has been published, featuring contributions from foreign and Indian Peacekeepers. This year USI conducted the USI-United Nations Annual Forum 2023 in collaboration with the ICRC, focusing on the International Humanitarian Law. This event was also supported by the MEA and included relevant deliberations on contemporary and critical issues.

The USI Centre for *Atmanirbhar Bharat* Initiative (CANBI), launched in Apr 2022, addresses critical gaps between stakeholders' perceptions and actual positions by integrating geostrategy and technologies into a new vertical of the USI. Functioning as a bridge between the defence industry and the armed forces, it serves as a platform for idea cross-fertilisation and the development of a robust ecosystem for indigenisation and self-reliance. The initiative's objectives include exploring the link between geostrategy and fast-developing technology, mentoring Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and start-ups aspiring to join the defence industry, identifying export promotion opportunities for defence products/services, and supporting government efforts to attract strategic industries to India. Over approximately 18 months, the initiative has evolved to network and collaborate with various governmental and non-governmental establishments, institutions, and think tanks in India and abroad. It focuses on deliberating strategic issues such as cyber security, hybrid warfare, disruptive technology, Artificial Intelligence (AI), automation, space-centric warfare, and unmanned aerial vehicles, conducting Track 1.5/2 dialogues on the geopolitics of technology, such as with the QUAD countries on AI/Machine Learning in Cyber Security and holding RTDs with stakeholders to improve awareness

of domestic MSMEs in the defence industry. Additionally, the initiative collaborates with the CyberPeace Foundation to establish a Cyber Centre of Excellence at the USI, covering cyber policy research and advocacy, threat intelligence and advisories, and research and development. The Centre, in collaboration with, Microsoft Corporation and India Future Foundation hosted a 'Cyber *Manthan*' on 'Securing India's Core Sectors from Emerging Digital Threats'. CANBI also conducted seminars on 'Cyber Security' in collaboration with the US Embassy and the Taiwan Economic and Cultural Centre, and 'AI Enabled Gyro Stabilised Gimbal Sights'. Further, there was a panel discussion on 'Mitigation of risks in AI Enabled military Systems'.

The Editorial Section has been continuously striving to ensure quality publications. The USI Journal, a prestigious publication with an uninterrupted history since 1871, serves as a source of pride for the Institution. It covers a broad spectrum of topics, including military heritage, national security, defence forces, and international relations. The Indian Council of Social Science Research, has provided a grant of INR 1,00,000 for the publication of the USI Journal. The USI Strategic Year Book, now in its eighth edition, was released by General Anil Chauhan, CDS. This edition covers various aspects of India's National Security across six thematic sections. Recognised as a seminal work, the Year Book provides valuable perspectives and inputs for policymakers, academia, and the strategic community. In the realm of Books, Monographs, and Occasional Papers, the Institution has published eight books during the year. Furthermore, two Monographs and six Occasional Papers have been published. Notably, two Occasional Papers contain edited versions of keynote addresses by General VP Malik and General MM Naravane, former Chiefs of Army Staff. In the realm of digital advancement, the USI significantly expanded its presence on various online platforms. Towards the end of the year a capsule on International Humanitarian and Space Laws was conducted for the officers of the Indian Air Force.

The USI organised several notable events throughout the year, encompassing seminars, panel discussions, memorial lectures, and special addresses. Among these were the Indian Military Heritage Festival, the UN Forum, the special addresses by the Chief of Naval Staff and Chief of Air Staff, a seminar

addressing 'Women, Peace, and Security in Peacekeeping Operations', the 'General PS Bhagat Memorial Lecture', the '21st Major General Samir Sinha Memorial Lecture', the 'Major Bob Khathing Memorial Lecture', the 'Marshal of the IAF Arjan Singh Memorial Lecture', and the '27th Colonel Pyara Lal Memorial Lecture'.

The USI also conducted the regular essay competitions in 2023, each focusing on critical military and strategic topics. In the 'USI Gold Medal Essay Competition', which centred on 'Ukraine Conflict: Military Lessons for India', a total of 91 entries were received. Simultaneously, the 'Lt Gen SL Menezes Memorial Essay Competition' explored 'China's Galwan Aggression: Military Lessons for India', receiving 39 entries. Additionally, the 'USI-War Wounded Foundation Joint Essay Competition', themed 'Looking at the Disabled Soldier – Past, Present, and Future – His Care, Career Prospects, and Rehabilitation', received 16 entries. The essay competitions have received quality entries, and the winning entries will be published as part of the USI Journal.

Throughout the year, the USI Library has maintained its commitment to providing a valuable collection and services. With over 70,204 books, some dating back to the 16th and 17th centuries, the library serves as a significant repository of knowledge and archival material. The addition of 153 books highlights a dedication to ongoing expansion and updates. Notably, the inclusion of historical Army Lists, such as the Bombay Army List from 1793, provides avenues for those researching their ancestors' service details. The 'Fortnightly First' initiative, showcasing curated articles from think tanks, demonstrates the library's commitment to disseminating knowledge. Accessible on the USI website, these articles, along with links to USI content and YouTube recordings of seminars/webinars, enhance the library's role in providing a comprehensive information service. By combining traditional resources with digital platforms, the USI Library ensures members have diverse access to information and educational content, embodying a dynamic and forward-thinking approach to learning and research.

The growth of the USI membership over the years is impressive and reflects the Institution's popularity and significance. Starting with 215 members, the Institution has experienced

substantial expansion, reaching 3,500 members when it moved to its present premises in 1996, and currently boasting a membership of 14,432. The initiative to grant Civilian Special Membership to deserving individuals has been successful, with 29 membership cards issued out of the annual quota of 100 members. This program not only contributes to the Institution's diversity but also recognises and includes individuals who may not have a military background but have valuable contributions to make. The enrolment of 69 life members, 16 associate members, 172 ordinary members, and 770 course members during the current year underscores the Institution's ongoing commitment to fostering a diverse and engaged community. The special drive to enrol members from the Assam Rifles units and the Central Armed Police Forces demonstrates a proactive approach to expanding membership into specific areas of interest.

The USI has increased its digital outreach through social media platforms such as X (formerly known as Twitter), LinkedIn, Instagram and Telegram. In addition, the USI has made great strides in the YouTube content with the launch of the 'USI Strategic Dialogues'. It is a podcast wherein field experts working under the banner of the USI speak on the various elements of national security and geopolitics.

Since 2011, the USI has been facing significant financial difficulties, aggravated by the lack of grants from the Services and MoD. The situation deteriorated in 2020 due to low bank interest rates and a decline in income from traditional sources during the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite financial constraints, the Institution prioritised crucial repairs and enhancements to audio-visual facilities, showcasing a commitment to maintaining its capabilities. The severity of the financial situation was underscored by the implementation of extreme austerity measures from 2021 to 2022. The USI highlights the likelihood of its financial status remaining critical unless substantial funds or grants are obtained from the Services and MoD. Collaborative endeavours with external entities aim to secure additional resources for financial sustainability. The Institution's proactive measures underscore its dedication to overcoming financial challenges and ensuring ongoing operations and growth. Despite its financial limitations, the USI has continued its upward trajectory in performance, aligning with its rich traditions. The Institution has established new clusters and benchmarks to

enhance its reputation, along with that of the Indian Armed Forces and the nation as a whole.

I express my gratitude to the USI Council for their guidance and unwavering support during this transformative period.

I also take this opportunity to thank the esteemed members and contributors who have actively participated in the various events and contributed to the USI Journal, Strategic Year Book and other publication forms. I urge everyone to continually support the USI initiatives and also participate enthusiastically in the events and contribute to the literary front.

I would also like to place on record my heartfelt gratitude to each member of the USI family for their stellar performance on both the academic and administrative fronts throughout the year. Their dedication, hard work, and commitment have not only elevated the reputation of the Institution but have also contributed significantly to our collective pursuit of knowledge and excellence. I would also like to thank the USI support staff for their commitment in ensuring the functioning of the Institution without any hitches.

As I conclude the Director's page for 2023, I would like to thank the Residency Resorts for their commitment to providing neat and clean lodging facilities at the USI premises.

Looking ahead, the coming year holds promise and potential for the USI too. We are poised for further innovation, impactful research, and meaningful contributions in the literary and strategic fields. May the New Year bring fresh perspectives, inspiring breakthroughs, and a renewed sense of purpose. Let us seize every opportunity that comes our way, and together, make 2024 a year of unprecedented accomplishments and take the USI together to dizzy heights of glory.

Wishing you and your loved ones a happy, healthy, and prosperous New Year!

With best wishes,

Jai Hind

Major General BK Sharma, AVSM, SM** (Retd)
Director General, United Service Institution of India

Editorial

Dear Readers,

I am delighted to present the USI's Journal for the final quarter of 2023. Throughout the past 153 years, the USI has consistently been committed to delivering strategic insights on matters crucial to national security and geopolitics. This edition comprises 12 meticulously researched articles covering a range of topics, from the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict to the Chinese human intelligence mechanism, to another one on the steps Beijing has taken to establish its primacy in global affairs and the ongoing issues in Manipur. Diplomatic relations between India and neighbouring countries like Bhutan, Maldives, and Taiwan are thoroughly analysed to provide insights into potential future developments. Additionally, the journal explores the evolution of warfare technologies, including ballistic missile systems and drones. An article is dedicated to the India-Middle-East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC), shedding light on its economic and geopolitical implications compared to the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative. Then there is an article on improving our preparedness in the sphere of Space Domain Awareness for the management of our national space proficiencies. Furthermore, an article on the Russo-Ukrainian War focusing on modernisation and capital procurement concerning India.

The first article, 'Azerbaijan's Capture of Nagorno-Karabakh Opens Up Challenges for India in the South Caucasus', is authored by Major General Jagatbir Singh, VSM (Retd). According to the author, the South Caucasus has gained significance for India's aspirations to establish a transportation corridor connecting it to Europe through the Iranian plateau. However, the ongoing conflict over the Armenian Nagorno-Karabakh Enclave within Azerbaijan poses a hindrance to India's plans. The article explores the key challenges arising from the geopolitics of the conflict, its regional dimensions, India's stakes, and concludes with noteworthy policy recommendations. Following this, an article by Group Captain Praveer Ashok Purohit (Retd), titled 'IMEC: Reimagining Connectivity Through Shared Aspirations' highlights the objectives of the IMEC, aiming to stimulate economic development through

enhanced connectivity and economic integration between Asia and the West. It also addresses the challenges and suggests ways through which IMEC could overcome critical issues in areas of funding, interoperability, and harmonising different systems and policies.

The third article, 'Chinese Global Human Intelligence Operations Through Cultural Diplomacy', by Colonel DCS Mayal, argues that Chinese Diasporas, including students studying abroad, have acted as agents for collecting human intelligence using a strategy colloquially named as the 'policy of thousand grains of sand'. The article further asserts how India can similarly bolster its cultural diplomacy using its own diasporas, equally large in numbers and much more diverse, to augment its intelligence-gathering capabilities. The fourth article is by first time contributor, Vinayak Sharma, titled 'China's Middle Kingdom Dream'. This article details how China has been working towards establishing Beijing's dominion over the world. Close attention is paid to the institutional measures, expansionism, soft power and the economy on the basis of which China hopes to rise to the status of superpower. The article further focuses on China's complex strategic outlook for the establishment of Pax Sinica.

Rahul B. Wankhede, in his article 'Evolution of India's Ballistic Missile Defence Program: Prospects and Challenges', writes that the deployment of the Ballistic Missile Defence has showcased technological advancements and self-reliance in the development of laser-based interception technology. The article further elaborates on the resource allocation and technological advancements necessary for seamless integration into the military infrastructure. The sixth article, written by Major HS Mankoo, titled 'Counter Drone Warfare', talks about the proliferation of consumer-grade drones and how it has ushered in an era of new security challenges. It focuses on the technical aspects of countering drones and analyses methods for detection, identification, and neutralisation of said drones. It also explores the types of drones that have been used during the Ukraine conflict and the lessons that can be learned by the Indian military.

The next article, by Brigadier Pawan Bhardwaj on 'National Security Dynamics: The Role of India-Taiwan Collaboration amidst Geopolitical Challenges' highlights the compulsive need for a nuanced cross-cultural partnership with Taiwan. He brings out that common religious and cultural beliefs can be used to bridge collaboration deficiencies and improve strategic communications. The eighth article, titled 'Manipur- The Way Ahead', by Brigadier Dinesh Mathur (Retd), focuses on the conflict that rattled the northeastern state, leading to widespread arson, damage to life and property, along with human rights violations. The main thrust of the article is on how the Assam Rifles, being the mainstay force in the northeast, can be effectively utilised to ensure such conflicts are curtailed in the future.

The next article, 'A New Discourse on Indo-Maldives Relations: Challenges and Opportunities', by Tanya Jain, focuses on the evolving Indo-Maldives relations in light of the recent election of Dr. Mohamed Muizzu. Often termed as 'Pro-China', President Muizzu's rise to power could signal a changing atmosphere in the Indo-Pacific region and, therefore, require a recalibration of the strategic calculus. In his article, 'Space Domain Awareness: The Global Common', Lieutenant Colonel Amandeep Singh has discussed the Space as an operational sphere. He has advocated for the first mover's advantage and that Space Domain Awareness (SDA) allows for monitoring the space environment, thereby identifying commercial SDA opportunities that, in turn, could help enhance the ability to conduct national security missions.

In the penultimate article of the journal, Dr. Beena, in her article titled 'The Enduring Bonds: Soft Power Diplomacy in the India-Bhutan Relationship', has advocated for the importance of soft power diplomacy in the making of enduring long-term partnerships by transcending political boundaries. The article asserts that yoga can be used as a tool for reviving cultural affinities and historical connections. In the final article of the journal, Colonel Ashish Dutta in his contribution titled, 'What Lessons Can Be Drawn from Russia-Ukraine Conflict By The Indian Army With Respect To Modernisation And Capital Procurement', states that it is too early to say whether the conflict will result in the continuance of unipolarity or lead to a multi-polar world order. He also argues

that the geopolitical implications cannot be yet determined. The conflict, involving advanced weaponry from both Western and Russian sources, offers crucial lessons for the Indian Army in terms of force modernisation and capital procurement.

The last part of the journal contains a book review article by Major General, Jagatbir Singh on the biography of Major General AV Natu, MVC, 'A Soldier's Soldier: Saviour of Poonch 1971', by Brigadier Vijay Natu. The review provides a comprehensive account of General Natu's life, covering his early years, military service, and post-retirement period. The book highlights General Natu's impact on people he encountered, emphasising unit bonding and *esprit de corps* (Union is Strength), particularly in the 9th Gorkha Rifles. The narrative includes anecdotes showcasing General Natu's leadership during the 1971 Indo-Pakistan War, where he played a crucial role in the defence of Poonch, earning him the Maha Vir Chakra. The biography also reflects on the larger historical context of the Indian Army from partition to post-1971, emphasising the importance of leadership and professionalism.

In conclusion, the USI Journal remains steadfast in its mission to provide a platform for informed discourse and strategic analysis. As we eagerly await your feedback and suggestions, we express our sincere gratitude for your continued support. Special acknowledgement is extended to the Indian Council of Social Science Research for their invaluable financial assistance in bringing this journal to fruition.

Happy Reading!

Major General Sanjeev Chowdhry (Retd)
Director Editorial

Azerbaijan's Capture of Nagorno Karabakh Opens Up Challenges for India in the South Caucasus

Major General Jagatbir Singh, VSM (Retd)[®]

Abstract

India has huge strategic and economic interests in the South Caucasus region. The South Caucasus region has also become key for India's ambitions to build a transportation corridor linking it to Europe through the Iranian plateau. The proposed International North South Transport Corridor effectively outflanks Pakistan while giving India access to overland routes to Europe and Central Asia. A Black Sea-Persian Gulf trade route would allow Indian goods to be exported to the West through Georgian ports. However, the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh, the long-disputed Armenian Enclave within Azerbaijan, the emergence of the next faultlines in Nakchivan and the nexus between Turkey, Azerbaijan, and Pakistan working together to counter India's influence in the Middle East and Central Asia is holding back India's ambition in the region.

The paper tends to look in the some of the key challenges for India emerging out of the geopolitics of the conflict, regional dimensions of it, stakes for India and finally makes some significant policy recommendations.

[®]Major General Jagatbir Singh, VSM (Retd) is a Distinguished Fellow at the USI of India. Commissioned in 1981 into the 18 Cavalry, he has held various important command and Staff appointments including command of an Armoured Division.

Introduction

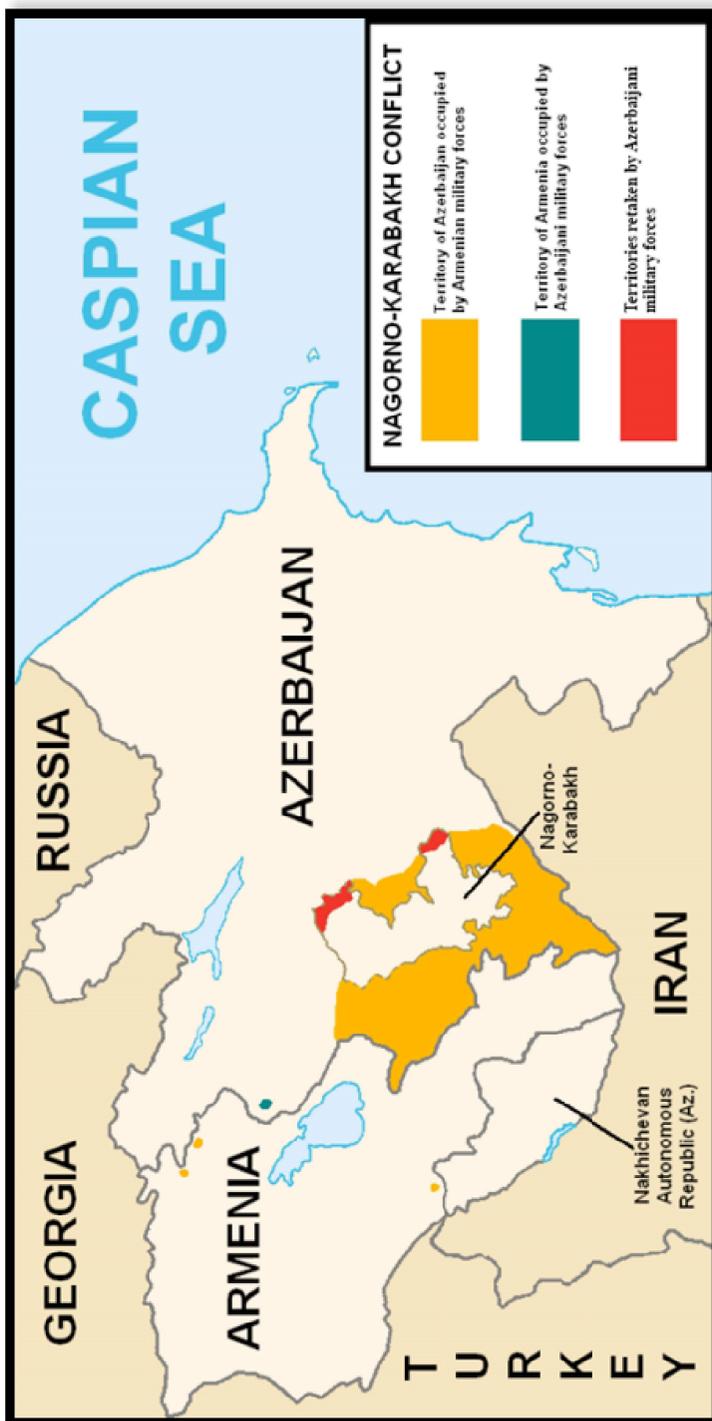
While the latest round of the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh, the long-disputed Armenian enclave within Azerbaijan, seems to have been over within hours of it having started, ending with the Armenian population leaving their homeland, the reverberations will continue to resound. They had earlier faced a humanitarian catastrophe with the blocking of the Lachin Corridor. The self-governing region established after the collapse of the Soviet Union has effectively been dismantled.

The quick end can be attributed to a large degree by the unwillingness of Russia to get involved as it seemed totally preoccupied by its commitments in Ukraine. However, the next fault line that seems to be emerging is Nakhchivan, an exclave of Azerbaijan between Iran, Armenia, and Turkey. Azerbaijan is demanding that Yerevan agree to the establishment of a corridor through Armenian territory that would connect Azerbaijan to Nakhchivan.

The South Caucasus region, which lies between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea comprising of Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan has been the crossroads of the Persian, Ottoman and Tsarist empires as well as the intersection between the Christianity and Islam.¹

This land connects Asia to Eurasia, apart from its significant natural resources. The conflict and emerging outcomes have both global and regional implications. Countries such as Russia, Iran, Turkey and Israel also have deep interests in this region but it is also significant as far as India is concerned.

But the South Caucasus is one of the world's least connected regions, both for geographic and political reasons. Mountainous and on the fringes of larger powers, numerous local and regional conflicts have also stifled trade and connectivity. Armenia's borders with Azerbaijan and Turkey have long been closed due to the dispute over Nagorno-Karabakh, giving Armenia trade connections to only Georgia, and by extension Russia, to the north and Iran to the south.²



Map 1

India's Broad Engagement in the Region

India does not have a publicly articulated policy for the South Caucasus, unlike 'Neighbourhood First', 'Act East' or 'Central Asia Connect'. However, since establishing diplomatic relations in 1992, India's ties with Armenia have steadily grown. India has a Friendship and Cooperation Treaty with Armenia which was signed in 1995. Further, the signing of a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Agreement in 2019 has resulted in increased cooperation in trade, investment, defence, and culture.³ Though, India's provision of military assistance to Armenia has strained its relationship with Azerbaijan, Armenia extends its unequivocal support to India on the Kashmir issue whereas Azerbaijan not only opposes but also promotes Pakistan's narrative.

In the case of Azerbaijan, Oil and Natural Gas Commission (ONGC)/ONGC Videsh Limited have made investments in an oilfield project in Azerbaijan and the Gas Authority of India Limited is exploring the possibilities of cooperation in liquefied natural gas. Azerbaijan also falls on the International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC) route, connecting India with Russia through Central Asia. It can also connect India with Turkey and beyond through the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars passenger and freight rail link.⁴

The conflict is essentially between two international principles viz. the 'principle of territorial integrity' advocated by Azerbaijan and the 'principle of the right to self-determination' invoked by Nagorno-Karabakh and supported by Armenia. When it comes to Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh, though India had talked of a mediated settlement between the two sides, it supported Armenia through arms sales and by condemning Azerbaijan's aggression in the region.⁵ This was not without reason as Azerbaijan's long-time association with Pakistan had turned the conflict into one of the world's more obscure proxy wars.

Lately, India has enhanced its strategic partnership with Greece which was viewed as a direct challenge to Azerbaijan as Armenia is a traditional ally of Russia and Greece and strain in relations between Turkey and Greece over Cyprus dominate their relationship, though both are part of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. The recent visit of the Prime Minister Modi to Greece was part of a broader strategy to diversify its partnerships in the region. India's strengthening ties with Armenia and Greece are

aimed at countering the alliance formed by Turkey, Azerbaijan, and Pakistan by no longer relying solely on its traditional allies like Russia and Iran, instead seeking new alliances with countries that share its interests, such as Greece and Armenia.⁶

India's strategic approach of steadily building ties with Armenia, Greece and Iran reflect India's increasing strategic interests in the Mediterranean region, which holds significant importance for its energy security due to its abundant oil and gas resources. Additionally, India aims to enhance its trade and investment relations with this region. This also serves to counter China's expanding influence in the region.⁷

India's strengthening ties with Armenia and Greece have caused concern for Turkey, Azerbaijan, and Pakistan, who have been working together to counter India's influence in the Middle East and Central Asia.

Region is Crucial for India's Trade Corridor

The South Caucasus region has also become key for India's ambitions to build a transportation corridor linking it to Europe through the Iranian plateau, through INSTC.

As regards the INSTC, India needs a rail link to go from north-western Iran across the Southern Caucasus to either Russia or the Black Sea. In this regard, India (and Iran) has two options: one via Armenia's Southern Syunik Province, and the other via the Caspian coast through Azerbaijan.

A key advantage of the INSTC is that it effectively outflanks Pakistan while accessing overland routes to Europe and Central Asia, which would otherwise be blocked. It also results in a closer relationship with Iran thereby countering Iran's relationship with China and their Belt Road Initiative in the region.

In Jan 2023, at the Voice of the South Virtual Summit, Armenia's Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan mentioned that Armenia is interested in "Advancing cooperation within the framework of north-south connectivity, as well as the Persian Gulf-Black Sea international transport corridor", adding that "Armenia considers India's potential and prospective role for these projects as quite significant".⁸

In Apr 2023, Armenia hosted the first trilateral meeting with Indian and Iranian officials, to facilitate a Black Sea-Persian Gulf trade route that would allow Indian goods to be exported to the west through Georgian ports.⁹

Yet the developments in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict threaten the viability of the Zangezur including Turkey and Pakistan as well as Ankara's expansionist pan-Turkic ambitions. Meghri corridor is an important corridor linking Azerbaijan to its exclave, Nakhchivan. Recent comments by President Ilham Aliyev, of Azerbaijan, as well as Turkish President Erdogan's speech at the United Nations General Assembly, now suggest that the territorial viability of this corridor might be in question. Iran seems to have taken the threat to Syunik seriously enough, reiterating Armenia's control over the province which is internationally recognised and strengthening its troops in its north-western border in response to the recent fighting.

Irrespective of whether the conflict actually breaks out over the corridor, the fact remains that building a railway through a region that has the potential for conflict between Iran and Turkey, two of the largest militaries in the region, does not bode well for political stability in the long term.

Defence Relationship

India's support for Armenia shifted gears in 2022 with the provision of USD 250 mn worth of arms and ammunition. The deal included significant export orders of Pinaka multi-barrel rocket launchers, anti-tank missiles, rockets and ammunition to Armenia. In 2020, India also got a USD 43 mn order to supply four Swathi weapon-locating radars to Armenia.¹⁰

It was reported that this was the first time India had decided to export the Pinaka system to another country. Azerbaijan's use of drones was a key reason why Armenia wanted the Pinaka system, since its 'shoot and scoot' capability enables it to escape counter-battery fire.

India feels it can benefit from being an arms supplier to Armenia, filling a gap left by Russia's strategic downsizing in the Caucasus due to its commitment in Ukraine.

In Oct 2022, Armenia's Minister of Defence Suren Papikyan's visited India and met the Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh during the Defence Expo 2022.

As per a report in the Eurasian Times on 07 Nov 2023; Officials who did not wish to be identified confirmed to the EurAsian Times that Armenia has contracted the Hyderabad-based Zen Technologies for INR 340 crore (USD 41.5 mn) for the anti-drone system order that includes both training solutions and an anti drone system.¹¹

In May 2023, Armenia announced it was posting a military attaché to its Embassy in New Delhi, tasked with deepening bilateral military cooperation. On 26 Jul 2023 Azerbaijan, summoned the Indian Ambassador and lodged a protest about India's defence ties with Armenia saying that "Arming Armenia at a time when Azerbaijan is negotiating a peace treaty with Armenia, the supply of deadly weapons by India opens the way to the militarisation of Armenia and aggravates the situation, hindering the establishment of sustainable peace and security in the South Caucasus region".¹² The irony is that Baku continues to arm itself with Turkish and Israeli weapons for offensive purposes, but protests when Armenia takes a similar step to defend its borders.

Iran has played a crucial role. While Armenia is unable to purchase Iranian weapons due to fears of United States and Western reactions, Tehran is facilitating the transit of weapons from India to Armenia.

On 23 Sep 2023, Armenia appointed a new ambassador to India despite the ongoing chaos in Nagorno-Karabakh. The Ambassador's credentials, as both an Iran expert and as a regional diplomat in the South Caucasus, suggest the particular direction that Armenia wants to take bilateral relations.

An analysis from the Observer Research Foundation, had said that; "India has overtly positioned itself on Armenia's side in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, and has consequently opted to resist Azerbaijan and its backers including Turkey and Pakistan as well as Ankara's expansionist pan-Turkic ambitions".

Pakistan Support for Azerbaijan

While Pakistan has been siding with Azerbaijan since the outbreak of the First Karabakh War in the early 1990s, India entered the picture as an arms provider to Armenia only after Yerevan's defeat in the Second Karabakh War in 2020 with both now supplying arms to the principal combatants.

Pakistani support for Azerbaijan is intertwined with Islamabad's close strategic relationship with Turkey, Baku's primary patron. The Pakistani government was second after Turkey in recognising Azerbaijan's independence following the Soviet collapse in 1991, and Islamabad has never acknowledged Armenia's independence.

The Pakistani and Azerbaijani militaries have reportedly been conducting joint exercises since 2016 and maintaining extensive strategic security contacts. According to some reports, Pakistani military advisers participated in the Second Karabakh War, providing tactical advice. Some observers also believe Islamabad may sell the JF-17 fighter jets to Azerbaijan. There are also reports that Pakistan may soon join Azerbaijan as a partner in a Turkish-led effort to develop a new-generation stealth fighter, dubbed Kaan.¹³

Pakistan's involvement is helping cement an Ankara-Baku-Islamabad alliance, informally dubbed the 'Three Brothers'. The three countries all supposed democracies are predominantly Islamic. The fact that all three are engaged in territorial and ethnic conflicts also acts as a binding agent, encouraging them to assist each other strategically and diplomatically.

By supporting Azerbaijan militarily and diplomatically, Pakistan has played a decisive role in stymieing India's policies in the South Caucasus. The strategy has its drawbacks as Pakistan is now linked with a country that is being condemned internationally due to its aggression.

Nakhchivan: The Next Boiling Point

A potential outcome of Azerbaijan's victory is the future of Nakhchivan, an enclave of Azerbaijan between Iran, Armenia, and Turkey. Azerbaijan is demanding that Yerevan agree to the establishment of a corridor through Armenian territory that would connect Azerbaijan to Nakhchivan.

Such a corridor would cut Iran's access to Armenia as the two countries would no longer share a border. Iran which views Armenia as a critical link with Eurasia had threatened to use military force against any changes to the internationally recognised borders of the region.¹⁴

Even though most of its provisions lie in tatters, the trilateral ceasefire brokered by Russia in Nov 2020, and co-signed by Aliyev,

Pashinyan, and President Vladimir Putin has as one of its provisions, for Border Guards from Russia's Federal Security Service to protect the transport corridor across Armenia to Nakhchivan a region being referred to as Western Azerbaijan.¹⁵

Syunik is Armenia's most remote province, making up the country's narrow Southern tip. Its slim southern edge borders Iran; across its eastern border is Azerbaijan's mainland; and to its west is Azerbaijan's exclave of Nakhchivan. The region's strategic location, combined with its prominent place in Armenian history, has now put it at the epicentre of a future conflict.¹⁶

Parallel to the Zangezur Corridor demands, President Aliyev also began promoting a discourse that identified parts of Armenia, in particular Syunik as 'Western Azerbaijan', from which ethnic Azerbaijanis had been unjustly forced out and to which they should return.¹⁷

This is where the next battleground lies. It is felt by some that the United Nations should put this under a broader international umbrella but Azerbaijan and Russia may resist this.

Conclusion

The conflict involves many external players including Iran, Turkey, Russia, the European Union, and the United States. That makes the pathway to peace a challenging and interconnected task.

While it seems difficult for India to publicly endorse Nagorno-Karabakh's right to self-determination in view of the possible repercussions it can have for India, as Pakistan may twist the support by making erroneous connections with Kashmir. India has done little to indicate support for Armenia, or even condemn Azerbaijan's actions with the exception of the meeting of Mr S Jaishankar with the Foreign Minister of Armenia, Ararat Mirzoyan in the United Nations General Assembly.

As India refigures its foreign policy to a region now changed by Armenia's defeat in Nagorno-Karabakh, it almost certainly will have to seek out other, more stable avenues for its infrastructure ties; given the potential of the INSTC project and the ongoing Israel-Gaza War. The world now needs to focus on the Zangezur Corridor and Nakhchivan the next time bomb that has the potential to get activated in an already volatile region.

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IMEC: Reimagining Connectivity through Shared Aspirations

Group Captain Praveer Ashok Purohit (Retd)[®]

Abstract

Leaders from India, United States (US), United Arab Emirates (UAE), Saudi Arabia, Italy, France, Germany, and the European Commission met at the G-20 summit in New Delhi and announced the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC). IMEC aims to stimulate economic development through enhanced connectivity and economic integration between Asia and the west. Comprising an eastern corridor that connects India to the Arabian Peninsula and a northern one that connects the Arabian Peninsula to Europe, IMEC has the potential to transform the economic landscape and geopolitics of the region. Actively supported by US and enabled by peace initiatives such as Abraham Accords, IMEC will boost multilateral engagements and multi-polarity. An indicator of broad strategic convergence amongst participants, IMEC nonetheless, must overcome some critical challenges in areas of funding, interoperability and harmonising different systems and policies. Geopolitical challenges such as the Hamas-Israel conflict and Chinese chequers will have to be addressed with adroit diplomacy. A promising initiative with sustainable development at its core, IMEC will add to India's influence in the region.

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Introduction

The need to establish geographical connectivity dates to the earliest human civilisations. When European powers discovered the sea route to India, they not only established connectivity with India but in a wider sense with Asia. Along with trade, the major European powers of the time were also able to expand their power, influence, and interests in Asia. Thus, connectivity was a tool effectively used for furthering geopolitics. Information from archives reveals that between 1857 and 1900, there were connectivity corridors proposed from Moscow to Delhi, London to Delhi and Berlin to Delhi.¹ Each of these proposals had geostrategic calculations at their core. As time passed, the means of connectivity have improved and now encompass not just the physical but also the digital domain. The benefits of globalisation and economic inter-dependence require more efficient ways of connectivity. Although sub-regional connectivity corridors did exist, China's announcement in 2013 of launching the Silk Road Economic Belt and in 2014, of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road made the world take notice. Subsequently rechristened 'Belt and Road Initiative' (BRI), these two connectivity initiatives involve projects worth over USD 1 tn.

Very soon, the strategic drivers behind BRI were evident to the world. India has steadfastly refused to join BRI, flagging its lack of transparency and sustainability. Soon, more countries, especially the United States (US) and some European ones, came to view BRI with suspicion. It was in this backdrop that the European Union (EU) came up with a 'EU-Asia Connectivity Strategy' in 2018. The objective of the strategy was to enhance connectivity in a rule-based and sustainable manner by means of infrastructure upgrades, guarantee of internationally agreed standards, sound financing and respect for sovereignty of partner countries. The signing of the EU-Japan Connectivity Partnership on 27 Sep 2019 and establishment of the EU-India Connectivity Partnership on 08 May 2021² set the Europe-Asia connectivity project going.

Setting the Stage: Geopolitical Developments

The onset and havoc caused by the COVID pandemic, led to disruption and delays in the Europe-Asia connectivity project. Chinese inroads into the Middle East necessitated getting major

regional players there, such as Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates (UAE) on board. The economic prowess of these two countries also weighed heavily in this attempt. Any connectivity project of this nature was also dependent upon a semblance of peace in the traditionally conflict-ridden Middle East. Mediated by US, the first step was the signing of the Abraham Accord between UAE, Israel, and Bahrain in 2020. This was soon followed by India, Israel, UAE, and US coming together in 2021 to form a group known as I2U2. As stated in the joint statement during the I2U2 Leaders' summit in 2022, the group aimed to, 'harness the vibrancy of our societies and entrepreneurial spirit to tackle some of the greatest challenges confronting our world, with a particular focus on joint investments and new initiatives in water, energy, transportation, space, health, and food security'.³

Meanwhile India stepped up diplomatic engagement with Saudi Arabia and resumed negotiations for the India-Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Free Trade Agreement. The US brokered effort to normalise relations between Saudi Arabia and Israel was an equally important factor to prevent derailing any connectivity project between Europe and Asia.

Birth of India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor

Leaders of India, US, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Italy, France, Germany, and the European Commission met on the side-lines of the G-20 summit at New Delhi on 09 Sep 2023 and announced their shared ambition of creating an India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC). A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed by India, US, Saudi Arabia, UAE, France, Germany, EU, and Italy.⁴ It spelt the broad contours of political commitments of the participants.

MoU on IMEC: Salient Features

The IMEC aims to stimulate economic development through enhanced connectivity and economic integration between Asia, the Arabian Gulf, and Europe. The IMEC will comprise two corridors, the east corridor connecting India to the Arabian Gulf and the northern corridor connecting the Arabian Gulf to Europe. Along the railway route, participants intend to enable the laying of cable for electricity and digital connectivity, as well as pipelines for clean hydrogen export. This corridor will secure regional supply chains, increase trade accessibility, improve trade facilitation, and

support an increased emphasis on environmental, social, and government impacts.⁵ As per the MoU, the participating countries have been given sixty days to develop and commit to an action plan with relevant timetables.

Economic and Developmental Advantages of IMEC

In connecting India with Europe via the Middle East, the trade between the east and the west is expected to witness a massive flow of goods, services, technologies, and energy through partner nations. IMEC is expected to reduce shipping and transportation costs while simultaneously achieving the sustainable development goals.

IMEC has existing linkages in place and is more of a 'plug and play' type of corridor. In the eastern corridor, goods from India would be transported by sea to UAE from where they would be transported by rail. The rail route from UAE is likely to go to Al Ghweifat on the Saudi border, a 605 km stretch where an Etihad Rail track is already operational. A 250 km section from the Saudi-UAE border to Haradh is under construction, while a 1,392 km long railway line from Haradh to Al Haditha on the Saudi-Jordan border is already in place. That only leaves a 300 km stretch from Al Haditha to Haifa in Israel via Beit She'an on the Jordan-Israel border.⁶ A good chunk of the physical rail infrastructure is, therefore, already in place. The northern leg of the corridor will commence in Haifa and use the sea route up to Piraeus in Greece. Thereafter the European rail network will be used to transport the goods to their final destinations.

A major advantage of IMEC is in reducing the dependence on the Suez Canal. Moreover, through IMEC, goods from Mumbai can reach Europe in 10 days, which is 40 per cent faster than through the Suez Canal. The spill-over benefits could include lower cost and enhanced reliability. The emphasis on digital connectivity in the MoU indicates two imperatives, cyber security, and a potential advantage to India for exporting information technology enabled services to Middle East and Europe.

The laying of cables for electricity grids mentioned in the MoU can be correlated to India's leadership of the International Solar Alliance, under which it has promoted the 'One Sun, One World, One Grid' initiative; an ambitious attempt to connect the

world's key regional grids into a common green grid that can transfer renewable energy from one region to another. It would leverage different time zones to maximise the use of solar energy and reduce the need for expensive energy storage systems.⁷ Thus, it is significant from an Indian perspective.

The intent to incorporate green hydrogen pipelines in IMEC is a visionary step. Existing investments worth billions of dollars by Indian, UAE and Saudi companies in green hydrogen projects are the first step towards developing intercontinental green transit connectivity between Asia with Europe.

International trade will get a boost with IMEC by reducing the cost of trading, promoting market access, and encouraging investment opportunities between the participating countries.⁸ Notably, the enhanced connectivity can improve cross-border cooperation, ensure clean energy supply, and logistical efficiencies. C Raja Mohan has opined that IMEC also enhances connectivity within the Middle East. It gives India's ambitions for connectivity a new life, especially since none of our previous connectivity projects such as Iran-Pakistan-India or Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India have really taken off.⁹

Geopolitical Advantages of IMEC

Post the end of the cold war and the two Iraq wars, US and Europe had withdrawn their leadership role in the Middle East leaving a sort of vacuum. Lately, China sought to fill this vacuum. However, China has not been able to provide the security guarantees that the Saudis sought. IMEC heralds the repositioning and willingness of US and EU to engage in the region once again substantially with multiple stakeholders. It may serve as a catalyst for increased diplomatic collaboration and geopolitical stability among the participating nations. Close economic ties resulting from the corridor will incentivise collaboration on various fronts, including security, counterterrorism, and regional stability.¹⁰ Spurred by a shared economic interest, avenues for cooperation, dialogue, and diplomacy will broaden thereby ensuring a favourable geopolitical equilibrium. The IMEC provides Europe with the opportunity to shape policies in specific Asian regions.¹¹

The corridor and its potential benefits are likely to favour multilateralism and multipolarity, which fits well with Indian foreign policy. For too long we were fixated around the various conflicts

such as Arab-Israel, and the cause of Palestine. The importance and linkage of the Middle East region to our growth and aspiration of being a great power emerged only about three decades ago. IMEC heralds a shift in our thinking and engagement with the Middle East while consolidating India's geoeconomic outreach to the Middle East.¹² It can provide secure connectivity and upgrade ties with Arab states where there is a large Indian diaspora. By collaborating closely with diverse countries to establish the IMEC, India has demonstrated its ability to generate innovative ideas. IMEC is an opportunity for India to secure greater economic leverage over China and Pakistan by joining a natural alternative to the BRI. In the past, Pakistan has essentially maintained a veto on overland connectivity between India and the west. IMEC will break this Pakistani veto, opening vistas to more economic integration between India and Europe via the Middle East.¹³

Seriousness of the China challenge has galvanised many of the 'China affected countries' such as India, US, Japan, and many European ones to devise mitigation strategies. China's opacity and suspected role in creating the COVID pandemic was the ultimate 'wake-up' call. Using the BRI to assert its hegemony, China was able to pursue its dream of a 'Sinocentric' world order for almost a decade. However, the pushback has begun and IMEC is an important component of it. IMEC also signals a refreshingly different approach by the US and EU in its engagement with Asia, one that heralds the possibility of peace, stability, and growth.

Challenges to IMEC

Although the promise of IMEC is great, there are several critical challenges. Among the foremost challenges for the IMEC is navigating the complex geopolitics of the region. Different operating philosophies, varying political interests, and a history of tensions may complicate cooperation. Presently, neither is all infrastructure in place nor is it interoperable. Creating an integrated trans-continental transportation system that covers vast distances over varied terrain poses significant logistical challenges. Addressing logistical issues such as customs procedures, border regulations, and transportation delays would be critical to preventing bottlenecks and ensuring smooth trade flows.¹⁴ The different legal systems, trade protocols, and regulations of participating countries would require smooth harmonising to overcome bureaucratic hurdles. Ensuring regulatory convergence is complex and could potentially

create conflicts of interest. The IMEC has too many transshipment points and different modes of transportation. All these factors require thorough planning and coordination. Domestic politics of participating countries may create pressure towards embracing protectionism.

The announcement of IMEC made Turkish President, Recep Erdogan bitter about his country's exclusion. The day after the corridor was announced, Erdogan asserted that "there is no corridor without Turkey". He added that "the most convenient line for traffic from east to west has to pass through Turkey".¹⁵ Egypt earns roughly USD 10 bn annually from traffic plying through the Suez Canal¹⁶ and may not be too happy with IMEC as it may result in reducing its revenues. The outbreak of hostilities between Hamas and Israel since 07 Oct has complicated matters for the IMEC. Saudi Arabia has reportedly suspended talks with Israel for normalisation of relations.¹⁷ Addressing these challenges will require considerable diplomatic finesse.

Large-scale infrastructure projects such as IMEC require substantial financial resources and one of the critical challenges is to secure adequate funding in a timely manner. Creative financing options are hence required. Another challenge is the large Chinese economic footprint over the Middle East and Europe. Bilateral trade between India and the EU in 2022 amounted to USD 163.23 bn¹⁸ whereas between EU and China, it stood at USD 1015.70 bn.¹⁹ While India GCC bilateral trade in 2022 was USD 154.73 bn,²⁰ the China-GCC bilateral trade in 2020 itself was USD 161.4 bn.²¹ Viability of IMEC depends on increasing the trade volume between India, the Middle East and Europe, which in turn depends upon economic growth and demand in these regions.²² It is therefore imperative that India dramatically expands its manufacturing capacity to be able to increase the volume of its exports and thereby make the corridor economically viable.

Conclusion

The countries participating in IMEC constitute 40 per cent of the world's population and roughly 50 per cent of the global economy.²³ The IMEC signatories are scheduled to meet in Nov 2023 to announce an action plan. In the absence of details, it is speculative if IMEC involves lateral corridors connecting the main one. The development of feeder routes which would generate additional

traffic to and from ports, manufacturing hubs and consumption centres is a proposition worth considering. Connecting Duqm port in Oman (three-day ship journey from Mumbai) by rail to Riyadh could further reduce transit time and logistics costs significantly.²⁴ Notwithstanding its infancy, the IMEC is a promising project that heralds an optimistic chapter in connectivity and globalisation. Conceptually, IMEC is significantly ahead of other such initiatives and if implemented properly, has the potential to economically integrate Asia, Europe, and the Middle East. A combination of technology, capital and political resolve can make IMEC into a 'Green Corridor' that ushers a new era in our quest towards a cleaner and sustainable planet.

Comparisons with BRI are inevitable, and China will not sit tight as it views IMEC as strategic competition. In repositioning geopolitical relations and partnerships through IMEC; India, US and EU have demonstrated their commitment to 'de-risk' from China. IMEC will boost multilateral engagements and multi-polarity. It fits well and broadly converges with the strategic outlook of the participating countries. Importantly, it increases the strategic space for India, adding to our stature, growth, and influence in the region.

“IMEC is much more than just a railway or a cable. It is a green and digital bridge across continents and civilisations”.

- European Commission President, Ursula von der Leyen.

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Chinese Global Human Intelligence Operations through Cultural Diplomacy

Colonel DCS Mayal®

Abstract

Intelligence acquisition has played a decisive role in the emergence of China as the second most powerful nation in the world after the United States. The rich cultural heritage coupled with the largest population and influential diasporas has phenomenally contributed towards providing launchpads for Chinese innocuous human intelligence operations through their unique 'policy of thousand grains of sand or mosaic approach or human wave or citizen spying'. A phenomenal expansion in terms of overseas centres/offices was observed for uniting Chinese diasporas and citizens/students studying abroad. Several cultural institutes were also closed in advanced countries due to their involvement in spreading propaganda, limiting academic freedom and stealing vital academic research. Like China, India too has equivalent cultural diplomacy resources in terms of cultural heritage and human resources, both within the country and abroad which can be tapped for augmenting its intelligence capabilities.

Introduction

Human Intelligence (HUMINT) is a process of gathering intelligence by specially trained personnel through interpersonal contact and engagement. Public diplomacy or people's diplomacy, in its new avatar, has incredibly augmented the number of

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stakeholders from a few government officials to individuals/groups ranging from civil society, pressure groups, political parties, media, academics, diasporas, policymaking elites, think tanks, etc. Cultural diplomacy is a type of public diplomacy that entails the 'exchange of ideas, information, art, language and other aspects of culture among nations and their peoples to foster mutual understanding'.¹

Former Chinese President Hu Jintao, while emphasising the relevance of Chinese culture said that "Cultural dominance was critical not only to maintain strong domestic cohesion but also to expand China's soft power influence abroad and win against the competition".² China has tried to project its image globally by increasing its visibility and familiarity through cultural diplomacy. Initially, these activities were directed towards its largest and most influential 60 mn global diasporas (2014 estimates) settled in more than 150 countries. Subsequently, it was expanded to include a foreign audience. Post Deng Xiaoping reforms; a paradigm shift in China's attitude towards overseas Chinese was observed wherein the prism of suspicion was replaced by the contributor of China's growth/development. The tech revolution coupled with the free global movement of people for study, research, business, and tourism has further facilitated China in establishing communication with diasporas and increasing their global human footprints.

While relating the mind-set of Indian and Chinese leaders with respective strategy games i.e., Chess and Go, Raghu Raman (founder of National Intelligence Grid) said "Strategists learn about adversaries by observing their actions and statements, interpreting their behaviour, and studying their leaders. But the more astute understand the enemy's mindset by studying their culture. Leaders and tactics may change, but strategies and doctrines are embedded in the culture and mindset of a nation and are, therefore, far better predictors of their actions".³

Chinese Global HUMINT Operations through Cultural Diplomacy

Post-1979, the Chinese intelligence focus shifted from inward to outward. Despite accessibility to economical and less risky means of technological intelligence, China has subtly achieved phenomenal success in HUMINT collection through cultural diplomacy.

Contrary to traditional HUMINT collection by a few specialised agents, the Chinese intelligence agencies use a policy of thousand grains of sand or mosaic approach or human wave or citizen spying⁴, wherein they employ several amateur ethnic Han people/diasporas settled abroad. Chinese HUMINT operations are the first in modern times to use the whole of society as a foundation. The Chinese approach does not require a bad person with negative vulnerabilities for espionage but requires a good person or an immature intelligencer, and subject experts. This unique Chinese method has also been able to convince the world regarding the non-involvement of the state. Paul Moore, while explaining the difference said that if a beach were a target, the Russians would discreetly send in a submarine and frogmen to collect several buckets of sand during the night. The United States (US) would use satellites to produce reams of data. The Chinese would send in a thousand tourists to the beach on holiday and in return they would be asked to shake out their towels.⁵

The Chinese intelligence operations prefer ethnic Chinese over others wherein a nationalistic/personal sentiment of helping China become the country they would want to be is leveraged to cultivate potential agents. The Chinese HUMINT operations are relationship-centric, wherein obligations, roles, and relationships are central issues used by Chinese intelligence agencies. While interacting with the Han people three important concepts are observable in essentially every Chinese human collection operation targeting Han. They are *guanxi* (social network), face, and shame.⁶ The Chinese spying and attempts to steal American technology are growing so fast that the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) is opening a new China-related counterintelligence case roughly every 10 hours.⁷ The Chinese are also using overseas students in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) for spying purposes through student associations. The association allegedly has 42 local organisations and 2,20,000 members.⁸

Chinese HUMINT Operations and Cultural Diplomacy

Cultural diplomacy has facilitated China in the settlement of sizable Chinese citizens abroad and re-establishing connections with its diaspora. The Ministry of State Security, Ministry of Public Security, and the Intelligence Bureau are primarily responsible for Chinese HUMINT operations. However, the HUMINT operations through

cultural diplomacy are carried out under the cloak of Chinese cultural organisations.

The United Front Works Department (UFWD) acts as the nerve centre for contacting its citizens/diasporas abroad. After Xi's ascension, the role of UFWD was expanded to strengthen his leadership, spread ideology, and ensure China's national rejuvenation.⁹ UFWD regarded its overseas population as a fertile ground for its operations. Xi referred to "UFWD as an important magic weapon for the party's victory, to co-opt Chinese diaspora communities, build relationships with Western enablers, and make the foreign serve the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and its goals".¹⁰ China has also established an Overseas Chinese Affairs Office, which is an Overseas Expert Advisory Committee and contributes to China's modernisation by giving policy recommendations/feedback on its policies towards overseas Chinese.

Chinese Students and Scholars Association (CSSA) under UFWD is the largest official organisation for overseas Chinese students/scholars. CSSA is primarily responsible for helping students/scholars abroad and bringing them together. CSSA under the cloak of spreading Chinese culture plays a crucial role in monitoring the thoughts and behaviours of Chinese students in foreign universities, limiting academic freedom, prescribing correct speech and harassing anti-Chinese speakers. CSSA's task also entails ensuring Chinese students remain patriotic and supportive of CCP rule. A demonstration welcoming Chinese PM Li Keqiang in Australia (Apr 2017), protests against a Dalai Lama speech at California University (Jun 2017), and denouncing Chinese student speech at Maryland University (May 2017), are some examples of aggressive CSSA activities.

Confucius Institutes (CIs)/Confucius Classrooms (CCs), opened in 2004 are flagship non-profit global educational programs to teach Chinese language, culture, and history in partnership with a foreign university for the projection of soft power. The CIs/CCs were set up as partner organisations in foreign universities/schools abroad, but the Chinese government retains complete control over them.¹¹ The CI are the velvet glove around the iron fist of their campaigns on their campuses responsible for spreading China's political agenda, suppressing academic debate and stealing vital academic research.¹² Michel-Juneau Katsuya (retired senior

Canadian intelligence officer) has gone to the extent of describing the CI as a Trojan horse, operating as a satellite spy offices in Canada.¹³ Within 15 years (2004 to 2018), their global footprint has exponentially expanded to approximately 540 CI and approximately 1200 CC. Several CIs/CCs were closed in the recent past due to a lack of transparency and disregard for key tenets of academic freedom, censorship, propaganda, and espionage activities.

To regain control of the narrative, the People's Republic of China (PRC) announced two developments in Jun 2020:

- It shifted oversight for the global network of Confucius centres to a new non-governmental organisation (Chinese International Education Foundation); and
- It renamed the former Confucius Institute Headquarters (Hanban) to the Centre for Education and Cooperation, ending its involvement in Confucius Institute funding.¹⁴

China Association for International Friendly Contact (CAIFC), established in 1984, is a national social organisation devoted to fostering international and regional people-to-people friendly exchanges and enhancing world peace and development. It is administered by both the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Civil Affairs to respond to the requirements of reform and opening up of the economy. CAIFC performs the dual roles of intelligence collection and conducting propaganda and perception management campaigns.¹⁵ CAIFC with tentacles in more than 70 countries has established extensive ties with foreign organisations and individuals related to culture, education, think tanks, media, arts, and religion. It has also sponsored a wide variety of cultural centres abroad to establish the image of China as a friendly country, tell stories about China, make Chinese voices heard, bring traditional Chinese culture and contemporary values to the world, and build a bridge for mutual learning between world civilisations.

Chinese Institutes of Contemporary International Relations and the Chinese Institute for International and Strategic Studies are some of the Chinese intelligence think tanks which host foreign visitors, regularly send scholars delegations abroad and even post their analysts abroad on visiting fellowships. Such interaction facilitates direct person-to-person interactions and offers another avenue for open-source collection.

Fox Hunt is a covert operation started by President Xi in 2014. The FBI Director said “China describes Fox Hunt as some kind of international anti-corruption campaign. It is not. Instead, Fox Hunt is a sweeping bid by Xi to target Chinese nationals who he sees as threats and who live outside of China, across the world”.¹⁶ China has forced several thousand people back to China and even in the countries like the US, the dissident Chinese are being hunted down by Chinese agents. China has reportedly established 54 overseas police stations on five continents to track and harass dissidents. Between Apr 2021 to Jul 2022, Chinese authorities claimed that 2,30,000 Chinese nationals had been successfully persuaded to return to China to face criminal proceedings for their actions.¹⁷ Bangladesh is the only South Asian nation to have hosted overseas Chinese police stations. China has reportedly closed its overseas police stations in the Netherlands and Czechoslovakia in 2022. The Overseas Chinese Assistance Centres established to assist the Chinese diaspora globally are also indulging in activities of espionage, curbing dissent, and identifying overseas pro-democracy Chinese supporters. Out of 14 Overseas Chinese Assistance Centres in Asia, one is in Sri Lanka. China is also operating a so-called black site or detention jail for dissidents, corruption suspects, or ethnic minorities like the Tibetans or Uyghurs in Dubai. BBC’s Newsnight has also identified multiple cases of targeting exiled Uyghurs by authorities in Muslim-majority countries i.e., Saudi Arabia, UAE, and Egypt, in collaboration with Beijing. The Uyghur Human Rights Project has counted 395 cases of Uyghurs sent to China since 1997. The Vatican is also reportedly receiving USD 2 bn from China for maintaining its silence on the Chinese repression of religious freedom.¹⁸

Consequent to the intensive drive to attract its students back, a phenomenal surge in the return of students was witnessed. As per the Chinese Education Ministry, in 2017, out of 6,08,000 Chinese students who went overseas, 79 per cent returned to China which is comparably much more than the returnee figure of 5 per cent in 1987 and 30.6 per cent in 2007. However, a marginal effect has been noted towards its diasporas or overseas Chinese.

A paradigm shift in China’s approach towards diasporas is seen, wherein from key sources of capital and technology, the Overseas Chinese are now seen as critical enablers of ambitious

BRI projects. The officials have started to see the diaspora not only as a key conduit for high-end technology through involvement in Chinese-led multi-national technology development initiatives but also as a way to realise broader geo-economic ambitions. In 2016, authorities began to hold an annual business conference for overseas Chinese involved in the BRI.¹⁹

The concept of sister cities or city diplomacy was started by China in 1973 to promote and strengthen people-to-people contact between cities in China and other countries. After the ascension of Xi Jinping and the launch of the BRI project in 2013, a steep rise in the new agreement particularly in BRI countries was witnessed. Today, out of approximately 2,600 sister cities, more than 700 cities form part of BRI. Under this agreement commercial, cultural, and social ties at a municipal level and with business leaders are strengthened. The PRC also views sister cities as a means to defuse tensions, reverse negative stereotypes and push more favourable views of China. The focus of these agreements may vary, but they often entail a commitment to increasing trade relations, sponsoring cultural festivals and exhibitions, partnerships on issues of mutual interest, as well as knowledge sharing and capacity building at the grassroots level.²⁰

Chinese intelligence agencies have been successful in cultivating several students for influence/espionage activities through educational scholarships either by attracting international students to China or by sending its citizens abroad for studies on scholarship. US intelligence has already warned that China is using student spies to steal secrets.²² To increase awareness, interest, and opportunity amongst educationists, China is trying to establish a close relationship with the educationists by either organising their China trip or providing free teachers at the college/school level to teach Mandarin.

As an integral part of a hub and spokes policy, the BRI has emerged as a keel to its public diplomacy endeavour, through which China aims to attain an enviable position wherein she can monitor and control the world. After the colossal success of cultural diplomacy towards advanced countries, China has shifted its cultural diplomacy focus towards BRI countries through various cultural diplomacy instruments.

Recommendations

Comparatively, India has far more cultural diplomacy resources than China for executing global HUMINT operations. Unfortunately, India appears to be lagging behind China and there is an inescapable requirement of understanding the innocuous means of Chinese intelligence collection through cultural diplomacy for devising means to counter China's growing footprints and learning from their modus operandi. A comprehensive integrated mechanism on the part of India is required to reap the benefits of the inherent cultural diplomacy capabilities available to India. The recommendations are as follows:

- Substitute CIs/CCs (or its substitute organisation Chinese International Education Foundation), with Taiwan Education Centres to promote the Chinese language and customs in India and abroad to counter Chinese leadership without annoying Chinese people.
- Monitor and review the espionage and propaganda activities of UFWD, CIs/CCs, CSSA, and CAIFC through cultural centres, educational institutes, political parties, think tanks, tech giants, and business communities in India and abroad.
- Monitor activities and expansion of Chinese overseas police stations, Overseas Chinese Affairs Office, and Overseas Chinese Assistance Centres.
- Improve the Global Diplomacy Index and use Indian cultural centres along with tech giants to strengthen relationships with Indian diasporas and project India's image as *Vishwaguru* (world leader).
- Revival of our own education policy to instil pride amongst citizens in our country and integrate development with culture to promote transnational religious circuits in India.
- Develop quality educational infrastructure to promote emerging foreign leaders as students in Indian universities.
- Monitor the footprints of Operation Foxhunt against Tibetans and Uyghurs. Create capabilities to ensure the return of Indian fugitives abroad.

Conclusion

Chinese with the largest population and diasporas have undoubtedly proved conducive cultural diplomacy can create an enabling environment for innocuous HUMINT operations abroad. The HUMINT acquired through cultural diplomacy has significantly contributed towards China's emergence as the second-largest economic power without raising suspicion of state involvement. Post-2013, BRI has emerged as the veil for global Chinese HUMINT operations and directly affects Indian strategic interest in its backyard.

India despite having inherent potential for cultural diplomacy has not been able to reap the benefits. Fortunately, China is witnessing negative indicators in various instruments of cultural diplomacy i.e., negative population growth, decreasing global popularity, closure of cultural institutions, and rising attacks on the Chinese population. Contrarily, Indian cultural diplomacy instruments are witnessing an upward trend. The present environment creates an ideal window of opportunity for countering Chinese cultural expansion in India's area of interest.

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China's Middle Kingdom Dream

Vinayak Sharma[®]

Abstract

Since the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949, it has been busy working assiduously towards establishing its primacy in world affairs. Its actions, apparently benign in the beginning, have become increasingly aggressive over the years. Beijing has systematically improved its own economic footprint while investing heavily in other countries, and at the same time, has increased its territorial expanse. A deeper look into the Chinese actions point to a more complex strategic outlook, aimed at ensuring China's dominion at the global level. For years, the establishment of Pax Sinica¹ has been seen as the endgame of Beijing's efforts. However, China itself, chooses to call Chinese primacy as the fulfilment of the dream of the Middle Kingdom. And as such China has been working towards making the dream a reality. This article focuses on the steps taken by China for the fulfilment of the same, namely, the institutional measures, expansionism enacted, the soft power and economy built up to fuel its rise to the status of superpower.

Introduction

The Second World War served as the turning point for the fate of the global order. The United States (US) emerged as the paramount sovereign state, displacing the United Kingdom (UK) as the dominant power in the western world. For the next 46 years, till the collapse of the Soviet Union, the US and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR) were the predominant powers leading the Western and Eastern blocs respectively. After the

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Soviet collapse, the US effectively was the sole dominating power in the world. Beyond which, the global aim of the US was the continuance of *Pax-Americana*, whereas earlier it was the power contestation with the USSR. The challenge to the US hegemony, finally, came from China. Blessed with a vast store of resources owing to its massive territory and a population of more than a billion to exploit the natural gifts at its disposal.

China's expansionist policies, supported by its economic might, have helped it in both leading and dominating regional institutions like the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). China has become increasingly assertive in its global dealings. For India, much has been made of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) which is both a military as well as an economic threat.²

However, the scope of the BRI extends far beyond Indian interests and territory. The six-corridor BRI³ is ambitious in its scope and, with it, Beijing hopes to make itself the centre of gravity of the world. In order to fulfil the prophecy of *Zhongguo*, or the 'Middle Kingdom', as imperial China described itself, to be the 'civilised' centre of the world, and the link between heaven and earth.⁴ The efforts of China, since the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) snatched power from the Kuomintang (1949), have been for the fulfilment of the dream of the Middle Kingdom. Between its aggressive land grab measures⁵, massive economy (2nd largest in the world) and its chequebook diplomacy, Beijing has managed to put itself in contention with Washington in terms of its global outreach. China is, as the US puts it in their National Defence Strategy, 'A Pacing Challenge'⁶ to the American hegemony and the world order. For fulfilling the aspiration of the Middle Kingdom, Beijing has enacted a four-pronged approach.

Institutional Measures

China in the past decade has been the busiest global power. It has been building new islands in the South China Sea to increase its maritime borders; capturing vast tracts of agricultural land in Africa to feed its near 1.5 bn strong population; and building ports on 99-year leases in countries like Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Bangladesh. At the same time, it has even disregarded the rulings of the International Court of Justice when it ruled against Beijing's claim on the Spratly Islands lying in the Philippines.^{7,8} China finds itself following the *modus operandi* once used by the US in the

period following the Second World War to establish *Pax Americana*. The latter used its economic and diplomatic heft to ensure that its wants were fulfilled on a global scale.⁹

In the aftermath of the Second World War, the League of Nations became redundant. Owing to complete failure of the organisation to avert global wars, its *raison d'être*. As the world came out of the horrors of the Second World War, especially with the advent of the atomic bomb, a need for establishing a new world order governed by universal laws and treaties was felt. The West led by the US, disbanded the League of Nations (dominated by Britain), overhauled its framework and hence, the United Nations (UN) came into being. Although their stated goals differed, the new body effectively served the purpose of maintaining the position of the new hegemon, the US.¹⁰

In the recent years, China has literally followed the same. The creation of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and the SCO is a carbon copy of the US' playbook. The primary driving force of these initiatives is to safeguard and amplify the goals and ambitions of Beijing. At the same time, the CCP has not ignored the UN. Rather it has been increasingly active in the forum. As of Dec 2022, China effectively heads 4 of the 15 principal agencies of the UN and is a member of another 9.¹¹ But, China's presence alone does not guarantee its influence. Since China is well aware of this hard truth, it backs up its presence in the international fora through its economic might. Between 2010 and 2019, the Chinese contribution to the UN rose from USD 190 mn to USD 1.6 bn, an increase of 346 per cent.¹² The money enables China to expand its influence, which in turn fuels the expansion of its economy.

The Chinese global and intellectual expansion effectively began far earlier than most give it credit for. In fact, Deng Xiaoping's now famous dictum: 'Hide your strength, bide your time' was effectively the state policy back in 1970s. Wherein the focus lay on increasing the size of the economy using sustainable development methods. The abandonment of Xiaoping's policy is, in *media zeitgeist*, is usually credited to around 2010. However, China began expanding its influence in the late 90s, though surreptitiously. By 1997, China was a member of 20 per cent of multilateral organisations, up from 12 per cent in 1989.¹³ And by

the early noughties, it did the same quite openly. Over the last two decades, ever since it entered the World Trade Organisation in 2001, China has set out to influence the global multilateral system. In 2002, it had established the SCO and the Americans had recognised the threat of an emerging China. However, after 9/11 all the military and economic apparatus of the US was focused on the 'War on Terror', allowing China to further grow in the shadows.¹⁴ While the War was brought to an unsuspecting Washington's doorstep, in other instances, the US ceded influence wilfully. In 2018, citing "Unending hostility towards Israel"¹⁵ the US left the UN Human Rights Council, allowing China an even bigger influence in yet another UN body.

Furthermore, Beijing benefits from such influence in international fora, heading the various institutions of the UN and having high ranking representatives in others allows it to do so. Hence, other countries in the UN diplomatically leverage their interests by voting in consonance with Beijing's wishes. Which results in, for example, countries either abstaining or voting against the UN Draft Resolution A/HRC/51/L.6, regarding human rights violations in Xinjiang.¹⁶

Expansionism

The expansionism enacted to further *Pax-Sinica*¹⁷ is rather colonial¹⁸ in its approach. China, at present, has more territorial disputes than the number of its neighbours.¹⁹ The Xinjiang Province, Inner Mongolia (southern half of Mongolia) among others, are territories that find themselves mentioned in the Imperial Edict of Abdication of the Qing Emperor (1912) (refer Map 1). The succeeding Republic of China and present-day communist variant under the CCP claim direct inheritance of the lands under the Qing Dynasty. The Edict provides the basis and roadmap of the expansionism affected by China. According to the Edict the territories of China Proper, Manchuria, Mongolia, Xinjiang, and Tibet are all a part of the Chinese state. The latter four, at different time periods, have been annexed by China in the previous century.



Map 1 : (Image Source @ NewsX)

On the Indian front, China has the 'Five Fingers Policy' which states that: Tibet is the right arm of China with five fingers, namely, Ladakh, Bhutan, Nepal, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh. Xi Jinping, the President of the CCP, has taken it upon himself to 'liberate' the Five Fingers, fulfilling the Policy dreamt of by Mao. Out of the five, two are sovereign nations bordering India, the other three are integral parts of India. As part of Xi's 'China Dream', he wants to achieve the 'rejuvenation of the great Chinese nation' that includes recovery of those Chinese territories which were lost through (as China claims) 'unequal treaties imposed by the imperial or hostile foreign powers'. He termed it as the "Greatest dream of the Chinese nation in the modern history".²⁰ The policy, on the surface, appears to be one aiming to bring back the China which existed at the time of its greatest geographical expanse. However, on a deeper look, one can see the strategic game which China is playing in the region. An annexation of the 'Five Fingers' provides China an undue influence in Northeast India. Allowing it to exploit the resource rich region for its uses. But the story does not stop at material gain. If China is able to subsume the region under its

control, its next target will be establishing complete control over the entire Northeast India. The region allows it unfettered access to the Indo Pacific from two fronts, effectively creating a stranglehold on the region, and further south, direct access to the Malacca Strait (separating Singapore and Malaysia).

In Map 2, the region in red is the extent of the Chinese land during the Warring States Era (475-221 BC) before it was unified by the Qin dynasty (221 BC). The other regions were annexed by the later emperors. However, modern annexations by the People's Republic of China (PRC) are not merely a fulfilment of the Edict but also help in maintaining strategic frontage and depth. Much like Russia, majority population and industry of China is limited to a small area out of a vast landmass. Namely, the successor region of the Warring States Era (in red).²¹ Annexation plays not only an important role in the economy but also creates other opportunities. For example, the deserts of Xinjiang Province serve as a weapon testing site.²²



Map 2 : (Image source @ Scholastic.com)

Soft Power

One often overlooked aspect of Chinese global policy is the soft power projection which it employs, especially, in the Indo-Pacific. In 2022 Beijing provided 130 mn Yuan worth of military assistance to the Philippines,²³ and COVID assistance to Indonesia during the initial days of the outbreak²⁴. Further, its 'loans' to Pakistan and Sri Lanka are among examples of aid and loans to nation states suffering internal setback. China has also been organising museum exhibits to celebrate the 600th anniversary of the voyages of Zheng He, a Chinese admiral who sailed across Asia, the Middle East, and Africa. Beijing has been establishing Confucius Institutes²⁵ (Chinese language and culture schools) at leading Southeast Asian universities, expanding China Central Television's (CCTV) international broadcasting and increasing the provision of Chinese language teachers to the region. In Cambodia, Beijing has been more proactive, and the two countries have signed a Memorandum of Understanding for joint development of the Chinese language curricula in public secondary schools.²⁶ In 2013, in Kazakhstan, China's President Xi Jinping proposed a ten-year education plan for SCO members, four of which are Central Asian nations. The proposition was for 30,000 government scholarships to study in China, in addition to 10,000 vacancies for Confucius Institute teachers and students.²⁷ Approximately one-third of the Kazakhs studying in China are on Chinese government scholarships.²⁸ China has effectively usurped Russia as the preferred study destination of Central Asian Students.²⁹

There is also the 'Panda Diplomacy' wherein Giant Pandas (a symbol of peace and prosperity in China) are sent as gifts to nations with which it wishes to create stronger diplomatic ties. Giant Pandas have been a symbol of China's soft diplomacy for decades. Beijing, has, on many occasions loaned out the pandas to countries with which they are signing major trade deals, signing diplomatic initiatives and favourable statements on issues like Tibet or Taiwan.³⁰ In 2019, following a renewed closeness with Russia, Beijing sent two pandas as a gesture of friendship.³¹ On the contrary, in Nov 2023, following a few years of global contestation on trade and territory, China refused to renew the contracts for the Pandas which had been sent to the US.³²

The other side of Chinese soft power is the control it wields over the studios in Hollywood. In the year 2021, American actor, John Cena, had to render an unequivocal apology to the Chinese people for calling Taiwan a country.³³ The Black Panther (2018) movie, under the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) banner, premiered with huge fanfare as it was hailed as a progressive move in the US because it starred a black character in a lead role in a comic book movie- a first for the MCU. However, when the same film made its way to China, the poster showed Chadwick Boseman's (the lead actor) face completely covered.³⁴ The movie's sequel (in 2022) was the first MCU release in the country in over three years, industry sources state that it was due to the depiction of LGBTQ characters, comments critical of China by people involved in the films.³⁵ Another comic book movie, Black Adam, did not release in China because (as The Hollywood Reporter stated) the film starred Pierce Brosnan who had previously shared a picture with the Dalai Lama.³⁶ Owing to its massive population and a revenue of more than USD 8 bn from the China Box office for Hollywood³⁷ coupled with China not being a democracy, meaning it can ban any movie or studio as it wishes without any internal repercussions. Therefore, studios, not willing to lose Chinese money, are compliant with the diktats of Beijing. Allowing the CCP complete control over the depiction of China, its allies and enemies in Hollywood's sphere of influence.

Economy

China also uses its economic power to leverage diplomatic heft. Over the years, China has invested heavily in countries, both major and minor economic powers. The UK, Germany, France and Italy (Two of the Permanent 5 of UN Security Council) have major investments by the Chinese (see Map 3 below).

There is a pattern to such investments by the Chinese. Its investments enable it to create pockets of influence where its reach is limited. And it ensures that the investments go to economies which are faltering due to them being receptive to a much-needed infusion of money while guaranteeing Beijing can dictate the terms of the transaction. A near EUR 80 bn investment lies with the UK and it is on the brink of recession.³⁸ Other examples include the crisis that has befallen Sri Lanka³⁹ and the condition of Pakistan.⁴⁰

Conclusion

If China is to achieve true superpower status, then it could take two routes. The first, by establishing itself as the dominant regional power. Just as the US once did. The second, is to create for itself a region in its vicinity bereft of any American influence. To any rational person the two approaches may not seem mutually exclusive. However, there is a difference. The first approach focuses on building primacy in the region whereas the other makes the expulsion of American influence from the area its primary objective.

Conventional wisdom would dictate the use of the first approach, just as Washington might assume. As it is the approach it once took to establishing the sole hegemony. However, such a mindset opens itself up to the greatest weakness of monitoring geopolitical trends— the projection of one's ideals on another. Something which has been the Achilles heel of the US in the past, Afghanistan and Iraq stand out.

China seems to be going for the second option- evicting American influence from the region. It recognises that it cannot become a true hegemon when the US has allies like South Korea, Japan and Vietnam in its backyard. Chinese officials, in the recent past, have advocated for 'Asia for Asians'. It has openly stated the annexation of Taiwan as part of its One China Policy.⁴⁶ All clear indications that China wants a region without any meddling on part of the Americans. The unsaid policy, at the time is clear, cauterise every ounce of the US from the Indo-Pacific and fill the ensuing void using Chinese military, diplomatic and economic influence that has been built up in the shadows.

The rest shall be evident in the coming days, whether there is a shift in the policy of China with regards to the first approach or the second. Perhaps an amalgamation of the two, as this writer would suggest. However, the one sacrosanct fact that cannot be ignored is— China believes it is the inheritor of the world owing to the Middle Kingdom Prophecy and as such aims to lead the world in terms of composite national strength and international influence by 2049, the year of the PRC's centenary.

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Evolution of India's Ballistic Missile Defence Program: Prospects and Challenges

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Abstract

India has made significant strides in acquiring, testing, and deploying Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) systems. This strategic endeavour, prompted by the ballistic missile threat posed by neighbouring countries, has culminated in a double-layered BMD shield, which, coupled with other defence assets, safeguards Indian airspace. India's BMD program has showcased technological advancements and self-reliance and ambitions to develop laser-based interception technology, albeit over an extended timeline. The program's prospects are promising, offering India strategic autonomy, flexibility in countering diverse missile threats, and potential collaboration with partner nations. Resource allocation and technological adaptation are crucial concerns, necessitating careful planning, coordination, and integration within the existing military infrastructure.

Introduction

Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) capabilities are essential in modern warfare as they can destroy/intercept incoming hostile aerial targets, like drones, fighter jets, and ballistic and cruise missiles (which can carry conventional and potentially, nuclear warheads). Ballistic missiles can deliver tons of conventional and non-conventional warheads directly to the enemy territory, at high

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speeds and within minutes. Therefore, having such missiles and their countermeasures in the national defence arsenal forms an important part of deterrence. While nuclear weapons and their delivery platforms serve the purpose of deterrence, BMD capabilities serve the purpose of self-defence and maintaining a balance of power. BMD systems are thus, essential to defend the national territory and important locations from incoming enemy aerial attacks.

India's journey in aerospace started with the establishment of the Indian Space Research Organisation in 1969, through which Indians gained experience in rocket development and satellite launches. This helped India develop its own launch vehicles and rocket engine technologies. It was followed by a successful nuclear test in 1974, followed by another test in 1998, that helped India develop nuclear weapons.

It was against this backdrop that India decided to pursue an indigenous missile development program which was officially announced in the year 1983.¹ Through this program, India successfully developed and deployed various cruise missiles, ballistic missiles and defensive weapons like Surface-to-Air Missiles (SAM).

Fast forward to more than a decade later, India's strategic rivals, China and Pakistan had developed their own nuclear and missile programs. Thus, it became imperative for India to now develop its own BMD capabilities to safeguard its territory against potential incoming enemy missiles and other aerial threats.

In the year 2000, the then Indian government under Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, sanctioned the development of India's BMD program.² In 2002, the United States (US) put diplomatic pressure on Israel which prevented the latter from selling its Arrow air-defence missile system to India. The American officials argued that the sale was violative of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) guidelines.³

This boosted the political resolve in India to develop a fully indigenous BMD capability. By 2009 India had developed its short-range air-defence missile system that was named Akash, deployed by the Indian Air Force.

Introduced in light of the ballistic missile threat from Pakistan and the People's Republic of China (PRC), India's BMD was planned as a double layered system consisting of land and sea-based interceptor missiles: the first layer named 'Prithvi Air Defence' (PAD) and the second layer named 'Advanced Air Defence' (AAD). The PAD is used for high-altitude interception and the AAD takes care of low-altitude interceptions. Both layers are supported by a range of tracking stations, radars, command and control posts etc. As on date only five countries have such BMD systems: US, Russia, China, Israel and India. India has achieved a good amount of self-reliance in BMD by developing and testing missiles like the Prithvi, Akash, Long Range SAM, Quick Reaction-SAM (QR SAM) and Medium Range-SAM (MR SAM) among others. These interceptor missiles, their related infrastructure and other assets form the basis of India's BMD program. India has also established a nuclear triad: land, air and sea based nuclear weapon delivery capabilities.

Thus, the acquisition of a well-developed BMD system complements the nuclear triad and has established India as a force to be reckoned with globally.

Capabilities and Current Status of India's BMD Program

India's BMD shield is basically a two-layered system that takes care of incoming hostile enemy aerial targets from a range of around 30 km till around 5,000 km. In case of incoming ballistic missiles, this activity of interception can be conducted in any one of the three stages of the enemy missile's launch trajectory:

- In the 'boost phase', when the hostile missile is climbing up in the atmosphere.
- In the ballistic or 'mid-course' phase, during the main flight path of the missile.
- In the 'terminal phase', when the hostile missile has re-entered the earth's atmosphere, and is closing in on its targets.

India has the BMD systems needed to destroy incoming hostile missiles in the mid-course and the terminal phase. Indian scientists are working to further develop these systems to destroy the hostile missiles during the boost phase itself that requires long-range interception, tracking and sophisticated advanced

warning capabilities The land-based BMD systems have been fully developed locally and tested multiple times over the last 20 years. The sea-based system testing happened in Apr 2023, with all parameters successfully met.⁴ The double layered BMD shield is elaborated as under:

- **The First Layer.** The first layer of the Indian BMD shield is the land based Prithvi Air Defence System. This system is developed to destroy incoming enemy missiles at high altitude ranges. Various publicly available sources mention that the altitudinal range is around 50 to 80 km. India has plans to extend the PAD capabilities beyond 180 km altitude. This will be a significant boost for India to help it counter potential incoming missiles from the Chinese mainland. This system can destroy enemy missiles outside the earth's atmosphere, which is known as an 'exo-atmospheric kill'.
- **The Second Layer.** The second layer of the Indian BMD system is the AAD, developed for lower altitude interception: up to 15 to 50 km. The AAD can intercept enemy missiles within the earth's atmosphere, which is known as an 'endo-atmospheric kill'. Since this second phase is under further development, not many details are available about it in the open domain. India is now working to make the PAD as well as the AAD capable of endo-atmospheric and exo-atmospheric kills. The latest development in the Phase 2 BMD was the successful test of a sea-launched interceptor missile, conducted by the Indian Navy and the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), on 23 Apr 2023. With this test, India has once again become a part of an elite group that has sea-based BMD capabilities.

Achieving Comprehensive Ballistic Missile Defence

Both these layers are complemented by other systems like ships, sensors, aircrafts, radars, tracking stations, and satellite support. Thus, this forms a complex web of hundreds of systems, which are a part of the bigger web called 'BMD shield' that protects the Indian airspace.

As far as tracking of targets is concerned, India has a range of different ships, aircrafts, satellites and tracking stations, providing timely information about hostile activities to the command-and-

control centres. India also has a dedicated missile tracking ship named INS Dhruv developed by the DRDO.⁵ It is jointly operated by the Indian Navy, the National Technical Research Organisation and the DRDO. As of date only five countries have such ships: US, Russia, France, China and India.

India also uses the Swordfish radar to track aerial targets, direct the line of fire and guide support the interceptor missiles. In 2017, an upgraded version of this radar, named as Super Swordfish, was developed, and put to use.⁶ This radar can track targets up to a range of 1,500 km. The interceptor missiles also have their own inertial navigation systems.

As per the author's analysis, India's BMD system is fully integrated. It was officially ready to deploy as of 2020 and concerned agencies have started further developments on the second layer of the BMD. However, the armed forces and other agencies are waiting for the union government to issue official orders to deploy the PAD system since 2020.⁷ Reports say that once the government approves, it will take around three to four years to fully deploy the system, which will then have to be tested as a single comprehensive unit.⁸

Scientists are also working towards making interceptors used in both layers operate on solid fuels. This is because chemicals in the liquid fuels corrode the fuel storage tanks easily. Therefore, most of the missiles are not kept in a 'ready-to-fire' mode. Also, it takes a minimum of three to four hours to fill the liquid fuel in the missile,⁹ a hardly acceptable scenario wherein precious time will be lost in case of an emergency. The capability to have the entire missile run on solid fuels has been achieved for the first layer of the BMD, wherein a modified version of the PAD has been created, which is named as the Prithvi Defence Vehicle (PDV). This missile has a three-stage engine, working on solid fuels, and has been successfully tested. The PDV will be capable of destroying missiles beyond 180 km altitude. These initiatives have got more credibility after India successfully conducted its maiden anti-satellite test, in 2019.

An advanced version of the PDV, named as PDV Mark 2, is also ready for production. As niche technologies, it may take around 20 years to be developed, tested and implemented. To complement the BMD program, India has other capable systems like Akash,

SPYDER, MR-SAM, QR-SAM etc. These have been successfully tested multiple times and have been deployed across India.

Media reports indicated in Jul 2023 that the Ministry of Defence is at an advanced stage of clearing a proposal regarding a three-layered BMD system.¹⁰ This long-range SAM system is expected to have a range of 400 km. The project will be totally indigenous and is expected to cost around USD 2.5 bn. Presumably, this project is being created in a way that the new systems will be in the class of the S-400 missile defence systems. Since the PRC has also procured these missiles, India would want to negate China's edge, by relying on not just the S-400, but also alternative options. The Indian Air Force is reportedly the lead agency for this project, as it has been insisting on promoting indigenisation in this domain.¹¹

Prospects for India's BMD Program

Such an extensive and full-fledged BMD program has many prospects for further growth and development:

- **Strategic Autonomy.**
 - India has been investing in developing advanced technologies for its BMD program, including interceptor missiles, radar systems, and command and control infrastructure. These have been made indigenously for the most part, thereby making India capable and self-reliant technologically. Continued testing and validation are then essential to improve the reliability and effectiveness of the BMD system.
 - Prospects here include successful testing of the interceptors under different scenarios, leading to a higher confidence level in the system's performance. The technological advancements could further lead to improved interception capabilities and enhanced performance of the BMD system. It will also help increase the range, accuracy and other parameters thus including a wider geographical area. This in itself has its own consequences for the regional and global balance of power.

- From a geopolitical perspective, this BMD initiative also indirectly benefits from India's close cooperation with foreign countries like the US and Israel, and from it being a part of globally influential bodies like the MTCR, which gives the country access to high-end technology.
- **Flexibility.**
 - India's BMD program aims to establish a multi-layered defence by integrating different types of interceptors and systems. This provides increased flexibility in countering various types of ballistic missiles. India has also engaged in defence cooperation with various countries, which could potentially lead to knowledge-sharing, joint development, and collaborative research in the field of BMD.
 - India can also look forward to helping its immediate neighbours by using its BMD capabilities to safeguard their airspaces, as these nations do not have the resources to pursue their own BMD programs. Further, India can look forward to exporting some of its BMD components like interceptors, radars, and short and medium range SAM systems to friendly foreign countries.
- **Strategic Deterrence.** A robust BMD program can enhance strategic deterrence by demonstrating the country's ability to defend against potential missile threats. This could influence adversaries' perceptions of India's defence capabilities and potentially impact their strategic calculations.

Challenges to India's BMD Program

The Indian BMD program does face some challenges, internally as well as externally, which impact its planning, deployment and usage:

- **Pakistan**
 - India had been preparing for a two-front war scenario for many years because it faces a ballistic missile threat, directly from both Pakistan and the PRC. While Pakistan's missile and nuclear program is India-centric, India has developed its nuclear, missiles and BMD capabilities keeping in mind the Chinese threat.

- On the level of scale, Pakistan has a range of tactical missiles like Hatf-1 and ballistic missiles like Ghaznavi, Babur, Abdali, Shaheen, Nasr etc. These missiles can strike up to a range of 3,000 km, a range that covers the entire Indian territory.¹² Pakistan is now working to develop the Multiple Independently Targetable Re-entry Vehicle (MIRV) technology,¹³ which enables a single ballistic missile to release multiple warheads on the enemy, simultaneously. Accordingly, this requires the defending entity to fire at least two interceptor missiles, separately, for every warhead released by the incoming hostile missile. Media reports in 2017 indicated that Pakistan has already developed and tested the MIRV technology on its newly developed Ababeel ballistic missile.¹⁴
- **China.** A bigger concern than Pakistan is the PRC which is known to have a well-developed nuclear program, ballistic missile program and a fully deployed BMD system. It is also known that Pakistan and the PRC have good collaborations and share military technologies with each other, since India is the common adversary for both. The PRC seeks to compete with the US, in almost every domain, at the global level, and has developed its armed forces and arsenal accordingly. Its ballistic missiles have a range of more than 12,000 km and the PRC also possesses anti-satellite capabilities.¹⁵ Having a strong economy and a huge manufacturing base enables the Chinese to stay ahead of India in all domains, quantitatively as well as qualitatively. In the MIRV domain, the PRC has capabilities comparable to those of US and Russia. A major concern for India here is that the PRC may proliferate these technologies to rogue states like Pakistan thereby negating India's conventional advantage over Pakistan.
- **Cost and Resources.** Overcoming technical challenges related to sensors, interceptors, command and control systems, and integration can be daunting. This exercise is also financially demanding. Securing adequate funding and allocating resources for research, development, testing, and deployment has always been a significant challenge in India, where most of the annual defence budget is spent on revenue expenditure. India may have to hunt for export markets for

some of its air-defence systems to cover the production costs, which will inevitably put India in conflict with existing market players, such as the Patriot, Terminal High Altitude Area Defence and Iron Dome. Thus, India will have to balance its security and geopolitical interests accordingly.

- **Adaptation and Evolution.** Ensuring that the various components of the BMD system can work together seamlessly and coordinate with the existing defence infrastructure can be complex. India will have to eliminate the duplication and mixture of assets and follow standardised methods and protocols. The human error factor must also be considered while training the concerned staff. With the dawn of technologies like quantum computing and artificial intelligence, integrating them in the national security infrastructure will be a bigger challenge for India. Integrating the BMD capabilities with the existing military infrastructure requires careful planning to ensure smooth coordination and functioning during real-world scenarios. Also, as missile technology evolves, potential adversaries may develop more advanced and unpredictable missiles. India's BMD program must stay ahead of these developments to remain effective. Rigorous testing and validation of BMD systems are thus crucial to ensure their reliability.

Conclusion

In its entirety, BMD is a very nuanced subject. Most of the data on this topic is classified. Therefore, all capabilities of such systems, available in the public domain are just projections, as countries do not share the actual capabilities of such sensitive technologies, and therefore all analysis is speculative.

However, the capability of a nation to possess these systems and demonstrate its abilities through continuous testing is necessary to have an edge over its adversaries. What is now needed for countries like India is to keep evolving their BMD systems qualitatively by heavily investing in research and development. By producing a sufficient number of these systems, economies of scale can be achieved in the long run, thus bringing down development costs.

In conclusion, India's evolving BMD program underscores the significance of continuous research and development to maintain a technological edge in contemporary warfare. While specific capabilities remain classified, India's commitment to enhancing its BMD systems contributes to self-reliance in its national defence as well as regional security and reinforces its position as a formidable force in the international arena.

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Counter Drone Warfare

Major HS Mankoo®

Abstract

The proliferation of consumer-grade drones has ushered in a new era of technological innovation and convenience, yet it has also given rise to formidable security challenges. Unmanned aerial vehicles are increasingly being exploited for nefarious purposes, ranging from espionage and smuggling to acts of terrorism. As a response to this emergent threat, the field of counter drone warfare has rapidly evolved. This article provides a comprehensive overview of the current state of counter drone warfare, examining the multifaceted nature of the drone threat and the intricate strategies employed to mitigate it.

The article delves into the technical aspects of countering drones, analysing the diverse methods used for detection, identification, and neutralisation. From radar and radio-frequency technologies to kinetic and non-kinetic counter measures, the discussion encompasses the full spectrum of tools and approaches utilised by military and security forces worldwide.

Furthermore, the article explores the types of counter drone systems being used in the Ukraine-Russia conflict, the lessons learnt in the Indian context and the future of counter drone systems.

Introduction

The Ukraine-Russia conflict has been seen as the first full-fledged drone war with both sides using drones extensively. Drones have been used for tasks like reconnaissance, surveillance, and direction of own artillery fire, even in the form of loitering

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munitions. Looking at the success of drones in this war, it is likely that in future conflicts drones are going to play a larger role than ever. Hence, it is very important that a nation possesses the capability to defend itself from such weapon systems.

Counter Drone Tech

Counter drone technology refers to the methods and systems that are used to detect, track, and mitigate unauthorised Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) or drones. These technologies are designed to identify and neutralise drones that may pose a security threat, such as those carrying explosives, conducting surveillance, or interfering with airspace. This technology typically involves a combination of sensors, radars, cameras, and other equipment that can detect and track drones, as well as jamming or interception devices that can disable or take control of the drones. Some examples of counter drone technology include radio frequency jammers, Global Positioning System (GPS) spoofers, net guns, and even trained eagles.

As the use of drones becomes more widespread, the need for effective counter drone technology is becoming increasingly important, particularly in areas such as airports, military installations, critical infrastructure, and public events. However, there are also concerns about the potential misuse of counter-drone technology and the need to balance security with privacy and civil liberties.

In a conventional war scenario, counter drone technology plays a crucial role in defending against enemy drones, which can be used for recce, surveillance or attack purposes. Some examples of counter drone technology in a conventional war scenario are:¹

Detection and Tracking Systems.²

- **Radar** Detects the presence of small unmanned aircraft by their radar signature, which is generated when the aircraft encounters Radio Frequency (RF) pulses emitted by the detection element. These systems often employ algorithms to distinguish between drones and other small, low-flying objects, such as birds.

- **RF** Identifies the presence of drones by scanning for the frequencies on which most drones are known to operate. Algorithms pick out and geolocate RF-emitting devices in the area that are likely to be drones.
- **Electro-Optical** Detects drones based on their visual signature.
- **Infrared** Detects drones based on their heat signature.
- **Acoustic** Detects drones by recognising the unique sounds produced by their motors. Acoustic systems rely on a library of sounds produced by known drones, which are then matched to sounds detected in the operating environment.
- **Combined Sensors** Many systems integrate a variety of different sensor types in order to provide a more robust detection capability. For example, a system might include an acoustic sensor that cues an optical camera when it detects a potential drone in the vicinity. The use of multiple detection elements may also be intended to increase the probability of a successful detection, given that no individual detection method is entirely failproof.

Interdiction.³

- **RF Jamming** Disrupts the radio frequency link between the drone and its operator by generating large volumes of RF output. Once the RF link, which can include Wireless Fidelity links, is severed, a drone will either descend to the ground or initiate a 'return to home' manoeuvre.
- **GNSS Jamming** Disrupts the drone's satellite link, such as GPS or Global Navigation Satellite System, which is used for navigation. Drones that lose their satellite link will hover in place, land, or return home.
- **Spoofing** Allows one to take control of the targeted drone by hijacking the drone's communications link (also known as protocol manipulation).

- **Laser** Destroys vital segments of the drone's airframe using directed energy, causing it to crash to the ground.
- **Nets** Designed to entangle the targeted drone and/or its rotors.
- **Projectile** Employs regular or custom-designed ammunition to destroy incoming unmanned aircraft.
- **Combined Interdiction Elements** A number of counter-unmanned aircraft system systems also employ a combination of interdiction elements-most commonly and Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) jamming systems that work in tandem.

Platform Types.⁴

- **Ground-based** Systems designed to be used from either stationary or mobile positions on the ground. This category includes systems installed on fixed sites, mobile systems, and systems mounted on ground vehicles.
- **Hand-held** Systems that are designed to be operated by a single individual by hand. Many of these systems resemble rifles or other small arms.
- **UAV-based** Systems designed to be mounted on drones, which can come into proximity with the targeted unmanned aircraft in order to employ interdiction elements at close range.

Types of Counter Drone Systems Being Used in Ukraine-Russia Conflict

Both Ukraine and Russia have reportedly used various counter-drone systems in the ongoing conflict in Ukraine. Here are some examples:

- **Leleka-100 Drone Detection System.** This system uses cameras and acoustic sensors to detect drones and provide early warning alerts to soldiers on the ground.⁵

- **Zaslon Electronic Warfare System.** This Russian-made system is capable of jamming the signals of drones and other UAVs, as well as disrupting the communications of ground-based command and control systems.⁶
- **Aero Scope Drone Tracking System.** Both Ukraine and Russia have reportedly used the DJI Aero Scope system to detect and track drones that are being flown near military installations and other sensitive areas.⁷
- **Drone Shield Counter Drone System.** This system, which is designed to detect and track drones using radio frequency and acoustic sensors, has reportedly been used by both Ukraine and Russia.⁸
- **Sky Net Anti-Drone System.** Developed by a Taiwanese company, this system uses a combination of radar, cameras, and jammers to detect and neutralise drones.⁹
- **Kupol Counter Drone System.** This Russian-made system is designed to detect and track drones using a combination of radar, cameras, and other sensors, and can be integrated with other air defence systems.¹⁰

It is important to note that the use of counter drone systems in the Ukraine-Russia conflict is constantly evolving, and both sides are likely to continue to invest in and deploy new technologies to gain a tactical advantage. However, it is also important to consider the potential implications of these technologies, particularly in terms of civilian safety, privacy, and human rights.

Lessons Learnt for India

There are several lessons that India can learn from the use of drones in the recent conflicts. Here are some key takeaways:

- **The Need for Effective Counter Drone Systems.** The Ukraine-Russia conflict has highlighted the importance of having effective counter drone systems to defend against potential drone threats. India may need to invest in and deploy a range of counter drone technologies, such as

radar systems, electronic warfare systems, and anti-drone guns, to protect military installations, critical infrastructure, and public safety.

- **The Potential for Asymmetric Warfare.** The use of drones in the Ukraine-Russia conflict has demonstrated the potential for asymmetric warfare, where smaller and less technologically advanced forces can use drones to inflict damage on larger and more advanced military forces. India may need to consider the potential for asymmetric threats from drones and develop strategies to counter this threat.

- **The Need for Effective Regulations.** The use of drones also raises important legal and ethical considerations, particularly in terms of privacy and human rights. India may need to develop clear guidelines and regulations for the use of drones and counter drone technologies to ensure that they are being used in a responsible and ethical manner.

- **The Potential for Technological Innovation.** The use of drones in the Ukraine-Russia conflict has led to a significant amount of technological innovation in this field. India has a strong technology industry and could potentially play a leading role in the development of new and innovative drone technologies.

- **The Importance of Intelligence Gathering.** The use of drones for surveillance and reconnaissance purposes has been a key aspect of the Ukraine-Russia conflict. India may need to enhance its intelligence-gathering capabilities to detect and track potential drone threats, particularly in areas where there are security concerns.

In summary, the Ukraine-Russia conflict has highlighted the importance of effective counter drone systems, the potential for asymmetric threats, the need for effective regulation, the potential for technological innovation, and the importance of intelligence gathering. India may need to consider these lessons in the context of its own security concerns and develop appropriate strategies and capabilities to address potential drone threats.

India's standing in Counter Drone Tech

India has been working on developing counter drone technology to address the increasing threat posed by UAVs or drones. We have made some progress in this area, but it is still behind some other countries in terms of its capabilities and infrastructure.

- One of the key initiatives in this area is the development of the National Counter Rogue Drone Guidelines by the Indian Ministry of Civil Aviation. The guidelines provide a framework for managing the threat of rogue drones and include measures such as the establishment of a counter-drone task force, the creation of no-fly zones, and the use of counter drone technology.¹¹
- India has also started developing its own counter drone technology, with the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) leading the charge. In 2021, DRDO developed a counter drone system called 'D4' which can detect and jam drone signals up to 3 km away.¹²
- Indian start-ups are also working on developing counter drone technology, with companies such as Idea Forge, Detect Technologies, and Drone Shield offering various solutions for drone detection, tracking, and interception.¹³

Despite these efforts, India still faces some challenges in countering drones. The country has a huge border that is difficult to monitor, and there have been several incidents of drones being used for smuggling and espionage activities. Additionally, the market for drones is rapidly evolving, with new technologies and capabilities being introduced all the time. As a result, India will need to continue to invest in research and development to stay ahead of the threat posed by drones.

Future of Counter Drone Technology

Counter drone technology is evolving rapidly, and we can expect to see significant advancements in the future. As drones become more common and accessible, there is a growing need for effective countermeasures to prevent them from being used for malicious purposes, such as spying, terrorism, or smuggling.

Here are some potential future developments in counter-drone technology:¹⁴

- **Detection and Tracking.** Advancements in machine learning and computer vision technology will enable more accurate and reliable detection and tracking of drones. This could include the use of advanced radar, thermal imaging, or acoustic sensors to detect and track drones in real-time.
- **Jamming and Disabling.** Counter drone technology may include the use of radio frequency jammers or other techniques to disrupt the drone's communication with its operator, causing it to lose control or even crash. Other technologies may include the use of lasers or electromagnetic pulse to disable drones in mid-air.¹⁵
- **Interception and Capture.** Future counter drone systems could include the use of specialised drones designed to intercept and capture other drones. This could include the use of nets or other physical barriers to trap the rogue drone.
- **Cyber security.** As drones become more connected and autonomous, there will be an increasing need to secure them against cyber-attacks. Counter drone technology may include the use of advanced encryption and authentication protocols to prevent unauthorised access to drones.¹⁶
- **Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning.** Counter drone systems are already using AI and machine learning algorithms to detect and classify drones. In the future, we can expect to see even more sophisticated AI algorithms that can accurately differentiate between authorised and unauthorised drones, and can quickly respond to new and emerging threats.¹⁷
- **More Advanced Sensors.** The use of advanced sensors such as radar, lidar and cameras will continue to improve the ability of counter drone systems to detect drones in all types of weather and lighting conditions.

- **Improved Jamming and Disruption Techniques.** As drones become more advanced, counter drone systems will need to become more sophisticated in their ability to disrupt and disable them. Future technologies may include jamming techniques that can target specific frequencies or even individual drones, as well as more advanced laser-based systems.¹⁸
- **Collaborative Systems.** Counter drone systems will increasingly need to work in collaboration with other technologies such as air traffic control systems, satellite networks, and other sensors to create a comprehensive and effective drone defence network.

We can expect to see a significant increase in the sophistication and effectiveness of counter drone technology in the coming years. As the threat of malicious drone use continues to grow, the development of effective countermeasures will become increasingly important.

Conclusion

Counter drone technology is essential for India for several reasons. First, drones can pose a significant threat to national security, particularly in sensitive areas such as border regions or military installations. Drones can be used for espionage, smuggling, or carrying out attacks, and countering these threats is crucial to maintaining the country's security.

Second, the use of drones is becoming increasingly prevalent in civilian applications, such as agriculture, transportation, and infrastructure inspections. While this has several benefits, it also creates security concerns, as drones can be used for illegal activities such as smuggling or terrorist attacks. Therefore, it is essential to have the capability to detect and neutralise unauthorised drones in sensitive areas.

Third, India has a significant defence industry and is home to several defence manufacturers. Developing indigenous counter drone technology would not only enhance the country's security but also provide opportunities for domestic companies to enter the global market.

Overall, counter drone technology is essential for India to protect its national security, prevent illegal activities, and support its defence industry.

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National Security Dynamics: The Role of India-Taiwan Collaboration amidst Geopolitical Challenges

Brigadier Pawan Bhardwaj[®]

Abstract

Challenges in the Foxconn-Vedanta Joint Venture highlight the necessity for nuanced cross-cultural partnerships and the proposed India-Taiwan Migration Pact aims to fortify exchange, collaboration and trade. While India's 'Act East' policy strengthens Indo-Pacific stability, emphasising strategic priorities, it would have to navigate unique geopolitical challenges for both countries. Shared cultural and religious beliefs between Taiwan and India can serve as potential collaboration bridges, fostering strategic communications and geopolitical collaborations for a more interconnected world.

Introduction

Taiwan has enormous appetite to expand ties with India¹. Dr. Jaushieh Joseph Wu, Taiwan's Foreign Minister, made this significant statement addressing the prospectors in India. Taiwan is encouraging its companies to shift their production facilities to India if their present markets lose profitability.

It is always crucial to collect comprehensive data, market research, understand legal and regulatory aspects, and assess cultural norms before starting a business in a new country. India and Taiwan will surely adapt to the new market, becoming aware of risks or trends and plan wisely for market entry. Though the

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process is long and arduous, it promises productivity and is already overdue. It will require patience, persistence, an understanding of mutual needs and the perspective of a human centric approach to a commercial issue, which will bolster international cooperation and national security for both nations.

Case study analyses in this paper attempts to understand the growth trajectory of India-Taiwan relationships and offers a bouquet of options to contribute to such an alliance and strengthen national security without affecting the diplomatic positions taken on the global stage.

Foxconn Case

Hoping to bask in the Indian Government's policy announcement for electronics manufacturing and Postal Life Insurance scheme, the Hon Hai Technology Group (Foxconn) and Vedanta formed a Joint Venture (JV) company in 2022 to manufacture semiconductors in India. The JV collapsed in Jul 2023. Foxconn was guarded in explaining its pull out, attributing it to the 'growing pains' of investing in a 'new geography'² and leaving 'to explore more diverse development opportunities'.³

Interestingly, Foxconn already has factories in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu that have achieved a turnover of close to USD 10 bn on an annual basis.⁴ This Taiwanese company is also exploring options to make India its third global hub for electric vehicle production. Foxconn's decision to continue with the Indian market indicates profitability, and it is searching for other semiconductor manufacturing options, one such being a joint bid with French-Italian Company ST Microelectronics N.V.⁵ Vedanta is also exploring new possibilities, including splitting the company⁶ to offer 'better options to foreign investors'.

So, what went wrong? A stable and profitable JV necessitates rich human resources (tangible), local market knowledge (intangible), business networks, governmental networks, company control and local partner's international experience.⁷ The challenge could also be attributed to either a shortage of skilled personnel or the failure of a host partner to provide the expected infrastructure and support. While the latest Indian legislations of Digital Personal Data Protection Act and Anusandhan National Research Foundation Bill provide incentives and encourage technology

growth in India, foreign companies have to be accepted and recognised by the society. They have to seek legitimacy by complying with local rules and social norms.⁸ This settling down process is a cognitive process in which the foreign entity expects a major contribution from the local partner. Though as part of initial business intelligence, the 'local geography' is an intrinsic knowledge and is difficult to acquire, if the venturing companies are fundamentally different and unaccepting in their cohabitation models. In societies that are primarily different from one another as in the case of India and Taiwan, such differences will surface quickly and fatally. A collaboration between a highly ordered, disciplined and noiseless (literally) society like Taiwan and a loud, chaotic (cosmic level chaos)⁹ and unorganised Indian one is challenging. In fact, to an Indian visitor, Taiwan, a highly disciplined society, displays a comical aspect in its unwavering dedication to order. The way out would be to understand each other, as PM Modi observed it long ago by providing 'Better Golf Courses'¹⁰ to Japanese Chief Executive Officers and investors in 2014.

Trade Analysis

Economically, India and Taiwan developed strong bilateral relations with the establishment of the India Taipei Association in Taipei and the Taipei Economic and Cultural Centre (TECC) in New Delhi in 1995. Economic interactions gained momentum in the past decade with several bilateral agreements. India now ranks as Taiwan's 14th largest export destination and 18th largest source of imports.¹¹ The exports to Taiwan constitute mineral fuels, aluminium, iron, steel, organic chemicals, and plastics, while the imports consist of plastics, electronic integrated circuits, organic chemicals and electrical machinery. 106 Taiwanese companies currently operate in India, with investments of USD 1.5 bn across various sectors, including information technology, medical devices, and automobile components.¹² The table below gives out the Export-Import¹³ status between two countries with an overall increase in export by 67.06 per cent and import by 139 per cent since 2016.

Table 1

Financial Year	Export (Rs/crore)	Year-over-Year Export (per cent)	Import (Rs/crore)	Year-over-Year Import (per cent)	Balance (India to Taiwan) (Rs/crore)
2022-23	21107	2.70	66479	42.92	-45372
2021-22	20552	71.16	46515	55.89	-25963
2020-21	12007	1.03	29839	4.13	-17832
2019-20	11885	-35.83	28654	-10.46	-16769
2018-19	18520	33.21	32001	26.47	-13480
2017-18	13903	-5.21	25302	20.05	-11399
2016-17	14667	—	21076	—	-6410

The limited people-to-people connection between India and Taiwan will pose a significant impediment to technological transfer and manufacturing. Despite being home to thriving technological ecosystems, fostering stronger ties in this domain is essential for mutual growth. Taiwan's companies seek access to the vast Indian market, and Indian firms will benefit from Taiwan's global supply chain networks. In this era of shifting global alliances, forging strong technological partnerships can help both nations strengthen their geopolitical positions. To overcome this hurdle, India and Taiwan are expected to sign a Migration and Mobility Pact and strengthen ties.¹⁴ This pact, one of many India has with other countries, will promote the mobility of students, professionals, skilled workers, researchers, and lecturers between the two countries. This pact will also work to leverage the respective strengths and resources, aiming to achieve more than what is individually attainable.

Neighbourhood Policies

Taiwan introduced the New Southbound Policy¹⁵ (NSP) to strengthen Taiwan's relations with its neighbours. It addresses a huge swathe from Southeast Asia to Australia and New Zealand. Taiwan aims to reduce risk and overdependence on any single market. Highlights of the NSP include the following:

- Economic, trade collaboration and regional connectivity are needed to reduce single market dependency and integrate deeply into the regional economy.

- Assist small and medium-sized Taiwanese enterprises to expand.
- Expand training programs for young scholars, students, and industry professionals during talent exchange to complement the strengths of partner countries.
- Resource sharing, promoting agricultural cooperation, increasing two-way tourism, and attracting residents of New Southbound countries for top-quality health care and work.

India's Act East Policy (AEP) focuses on strengthening relations with the extended neighbourhood in the Indo-Pacific Region¹⁶ including Southeast Asia, East Asia, South Asia and Oceania to promote economic cooperation, cultural ties and develop strategic relationships in the region. The AEP emphasises following:

- Continental neighbourhood with specific focus on physical regional connectivity, regional growth and development.
- Enhance people to people contact.
- Developmental cooperation through lines of credit, grants-in-aid and capacity building programs.
- Scholarships for students and professionals to build human bridges.
- Human centric efforts to restore and renovate heritage cultural sites creating endearing relationships with India.
- Increase the technology threshold of the neighbourhood by setting up a satellite tracking and telemetry centre, software development institute and agricultural research.

While both policies aim to enhance regional influence, they operate in different geopolitical contexts.

- Taiwan's NSP is implemented in the context of cross-strait tensions with China, which can create diplomatic challenges, and India's AEP seeks to secure more opportunities in this environment, creating balanced aspiration in Southeast Asia and the Indo-Pacific.
- India's AEP places an emphasis on trans-regional cooperation and including Taiwan in this conundrum will require substantial diplomatic and negotiation skills.

- Promoting home-grown industries in the target nations may become a conflation point, which India-Taiwan will have to avoid.

***Xiāngsì* (Similar)**

Understanding culture through direct people-to-people contact offers a more authentic and profound insight compared to traditional market research. The personal, unbiased, and immersive nature of such interactions provides a deeper understanding of cultural nuances. One notable similarity between Taiwan and India is the prevalence of gods and temples. Both nations boast an abundance of temples, often surprisingly large, dedicated to various deities. The rituals associated with temple visits, such as preparation, offering of gifts, and circumambulation, exhibit uncanny resemblances. The presence of city gods and their consorts in almost all temples, and use of incense sticks, highlights the shared reverence for divine feminine figures. While India and Taiwan have distinct cultural practices and religious beliefs, their mutual appreciation for female deities underscores the universal appeal of both cultures. In India, goddesses like *Durga*, *Lakshmi*, and *Saraswati* hold esteemed positions, while Taiwan venerates goddesses like benevolent *Guanyin*¹⁷ (Longshan Temple in Taipei is devoted to her) and protector *Mazu*. These female deities are associated with various facets of life, from motherhood to wisdom, power, and protection, and their worship is deeply ingrained in daily life, creating a cultural commonality between the two nations.

Anthropomorphism is another shared cultural trait between Taiwan and India. Both cultures attribute human characteristics, emotions, and behaviours to deities, making them more approachable and relatable. For instance, in Taiwan, the Love God *Yue Lao*,¹⁸ known as the 'old man under the moon', is characterised by a long white beard, yellow robes, and a friendly demeanour. He is believed to possess a 'book of marriages' and is invoked to find and bind individuals to their life partners. Similarly, in India, Lord Krishna is worshipped as an Infant God named *Laddu Gopal*, cared for like a child and adorned with daily outfit changes, a bed, and regular baths. This anthropomorphic approach fosters a close connection between devotees and their gods, enabling them to seek guidance and blessings without fear of judgment bringing the gods closer to the people. As two separate

nations decidedly devout to the gods there exists a possibility to celebrate their births, marriages, and victories together or concomitantly in gaiety and for perpetuity.

- The birthday of the benevolent mother Goddess *Guanyin*¹⁹ is celebrated throughout the various temples in the country during Feb and Mar. Effigy of *Mazu*, Taiwan's most important sea goddess and female deity, is carried by believers throughout Western Taiwan temples during *Dajia Mazu* pilgrimage²⁰ in Apr.
- Indian gods are celebrated throughout the year with great festivities. *Jagannath Rath Yatra* (Odisha, in Jul), *Thrissur* (Kerala in Apr/May), *Karaga* (Karnataka), *Nanda Devi* (Uttarakhand in Sep), Royal *Rath Yatra* of Lord *Padmanabhaswamy* of Travancore (Kerala in Mar/Apr) are a few.

There are abundant cultural, seasonal and regional festivities in the two countries. Indigenous people, known as 'tribal' in India, celebrate their unique culture and are an integral part of the respective countries. Joint investments in the land of these people in North Eastern India and Eastern Taiwan to support indigenous crafts and practices will bring the ancient tribes closer to each other, as will the synchronised celebrations of their histories and cultures.

- Taiwan's *Keelung Ghost Month Pole Climbing*²¹ (Jul and Aug) honours ancestors who died protecting their families. *Yimin Festival* celebrates Haka²² warriors in July.
- In India, *Hola Mohalla*²³ (Punjab in Mar) commemorates Sikh valour, initiated by Guru Gobind Singh. *Keil Poldu*²⁴ (Karnataka in Sep) honours the Kovada clan. Hornbill²⁵ Festival (Nagaland in Dec) celebrates Naga warriors and their rich history.
- Taiwan's Dragon Boat Festival (Jan) parallels Kerala's Snake Boat Festival (Aug and Sep). Taiwan's Mid-Autumn Festival aligns with India's *Onam*, Ladakh, Ziro, Pushkar, and Rann of Kutch festivals (Aug to Nov).

- Similar community activities exist in both nations. *Bu Dai Xi*²⁶ (glove puppetry in Taiwan), *Tholpavakoothu*²⁷ (shadow puppetry in Kerala), and *Sakhi Nach*²⁸ (glove puppetry in Odisha) connect to folklore and history. Indian *Panchtantra* tales also resonate with Taiwanese storytelling.
- Traditional Chinese Medicine²⁹ emphasising balance and vital energy (Qi), aims for harmony and balance in Yin and Yang. It seeks equilibrium and a healthy flow of Qi, similar to Ayurveda³⁰ treatments in India that focus on *doshas* (*vata*, *pitta*, *kapha*) aiming to balance the human body and emphasise prevention over treatment.
- Traditional performing arts like Taiwan's Traditional Opera, Theatre, and Dragon Dance align with India's diverse classical dance forms like *Bharatanatyam*, *Kathak*, and *Kathakali*, reflecting shared artistic expression.³¹

National Security

Given India's substantial interests in the Indo Pacific region, India is already paying constant and careful attention to new relationships. The security dynamics in the region, driven by the AEP, underscores the critical importance of India's role in contributing to regional stability and safeguarding national security. As per media reports,³² defence forces have been studying the impact of the Taiwan crisis since Aug 2023. This study will suggest newer thoughts and accomplishments, much in line with strategic autonomy, which has redefined India's arrival on the global stage and actions in 'interest of Indian people'. An academic paper by a senior diplomat³³ too suggests the exploration of 'possible policy' during such an event. Another diplomat³⁴ observes that there are restrictions to what India can do and suggests a 'limited role' and proactive defence of its territorial interests and the security of supply chains in the crisis. People-to-people connections suggested in this paper will play a vital role in communicating intent and concerns to improve India's national security, serving as a critical factor for global aspirations. These connections foster diplomacy, cultural exchange, and economic collaboration, all of which are essential components of a comprehensive national security strategy.

Conclusion

As with people, Taiwanese and Indian foods are quite different too. Taiwanese cuisine tends to be light, loaded with seafood and tofu dishes, almost uncooked with a hint of flavours. In contrast, Indian food is known for its strong spices, mixed vegetables and meats and curries. This culinary diversity also imprints on people-to-people connections. Understanding and appreciating preferences can sometimes bridge hurdles to the stark contrasts in flavours and ingredients, thus, there is a special need to foster additional people relationships that are benign in form but effective in result. Collaborations on shared festivities will allow both nations to express their rich cultural heritage, traditions, and artistic expressions to a broader audience. These events will serve as a bridge between the two countries, attracting tourists and locals alike, encouraging them to explore and appreciate each other's unique customs, and build bridges of friendship and cooperation. Celebrating shared heritage and festivals reinforces the idea of common threads that connect people despite geographical distances.

The exploration of people-to-people relationships as a means to increase collaboration has profound implications for national security too. When nations introduce their people to each other, it enhances strategic communications, diplomatic relations and promotes better geopolitical collaborations. These human connections and bridges, serve as the bedrock of a more secure nation, fostering a network of allies, allies that can be counted on during times of crises. The role of people-to-people relationships in the realm of national security is thus indispensable, as it empowers nations to fortify their security apparatus while striving for a more peaceful, interconnected, and secure world.

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Manipur - The Way Ahead

Brigadier Dinesh Mathur (Retd)[®]

Abstract

The Ministry of Home Affairs must take on the responsibilities of reorganising and upgrading its security forces, especially the Assam Rifles deployed in the North Eastern (NE) so that they can perform their basic duties. Unfortunately, the full potential of this great force has not been fully realised. They are the mainstay of our country in NE states and would deliver, if purposefully utilised.

Introduction

For ages, the social fabric of Manipur was held together by two major tribes Meiteis and the Kukis, from May 2023 until very recently, Manipur has been the scene of bitter ethnic conflict, with no signs of violence abating soon or being brought under control. The filial bonds that existed earlier have completely broken down in the atmosphere of growing xenophobic insecurity and the ethnic animosity between the two tribes. The settling of old scores by pre-planned attacks on each other, rioting, molestation of women burning down of habitation areas, and thousands rendered homeless, all follow the same old pattern of the last three decades or even more. This time, of course, violence crossed all limits and has taken a heavy toll on the lives of both communities. What surprises one, is the fact that Manipur like each one of our North Eastern (NE) states enjoys a decent growth rate as compared to the rest of the country; has well-developed democratic institutions, good infrastructure and communications, transport, agriculture, and micro, small, and medium enterprises/small industries and per capita income better than the rest of the country. Then why is the region still as turbulent and unstable as it was during the times of the ongoing insurgencies between 1956 to 1980s?

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A brief genesis or background is necessary to put things in the right perspective. In the early years of the British Raj when the Great Game was being played, the need for secure frontiers was a prime concern for the defence of the British Empire. Consequently, a multi-layered northwest frontier with Afghanistan as the buffer and North-West Frontier Province emerged against Russia. On the open land frontier of the Raj in north and NE India against China, the strategic planners applied the same template and two/three frontier zones came up, once Burma was added to the Empire. Interestingly, both our NE states and Burma were governed from Calcutta till 1936; they came up in British India without Indian laws and administrative infrastructure.

Weak state infrastructures mean porous borders between the NE states Myanmar and Bangladesh; a free-for-all environment where the locals govern the sovereign territory on their whims and fancies. Here smuggling often exceeds foreign trade; the booming local economy is heavily dependent on illegal poppy cultivation in the 'jhooms', arms and ammunition, cheap electronic goods, and textiles which are freely available. These provide the opportune getaway to the youth between 18 and 35 years of age for easier 'business' employment options like gun running and narcotics trade.

Status of Signed Agreements with Central Government since 1963

- **1963.** Nagaland was formally inaugurated as a state based on the commitment to the Naga people by the PM.
- **1975.** Shillong Accord between Naga National Council and Centre. Breakaway factions like National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Isak–Muivah) [NSCN (I-M)] did not surrender their weapons and remained underground after AZ Phizo's death abroad.
- **1985 to 1986.** Mizoram Accord between Laldenga and Centre and Mizo insurgency ends.
- **1988.** The Tripura National Volunteers Agreement was signed ending the insurgency.
- **1993.** Accord with Bodo insurgents signed but with limited success.

- **1997.** Breakaway faction NSCN (I-M) calls off talks with the Centre.
- **2015.** NSCN (I-M) demands Greater Nagaland, a separate constitution and flag, and no surrender of arms raised but issues remain unresolved.
- **2022.** NE Treaty to resolve interstate border issues, like Meghalaya and Assam, Mizoram and Assam but is still awaiting resolution. A Suspension of Operations (SOO) agreement with Kuki–Zo leadership is yet to be implemented.

Narcotics smuggling

The poppy plant grown in jhooms, on hills bordering Manipur and Mizoram, is also transported by carriers as 'raw opium' (along with precursor chemicals sourced from Chennai) to the sheds at the collection points in Moreh in Manipur and Champai in Mizoram. This opium is processed in the Golden Triangle makeshift factories into profitable drugs such as heroin, meth, and yaba and sent back with fresh carriers. Consignments of heroin seized in Indian cities like Guwahati, Kolkata, and Dimapur, have originated from the Golden Triangle. With the Free Movement Regime (FMR) in place, smuggling has gone on for years now. One can only surmise that porous borders, gaps in domestic security, and the connivance of local officials, are responsible for this thriving trade. It is also a fact that NE states are among the top ten states of India affected by drug abuse. The gunrunning which also runs parallel to the narcotics trade should also be a matter of concern.

Indemnification of the Armed Forces

The Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSP Act) 1958 grants special powers to security forces (Indian armed forces/paramilitary forces/police forces) in areas classified as 'disturbed areas'. This act empowers the security forces to arrest a person without a warrant, enter or search premises without a warrant, and perform other actions against activities prejudicial to national security. AFSP Act 1958 is being progressively withdrawn from Assam, Manipur, and Nagaland and the Inner Line Permit (ILP) is about to be withdrawn from Manipur, given the improved security situation. Coupled with this, aid to civil authority provides guidelines for the armed forces for the maintenance of law and order, essential

services, assistance in natural calamities, and any other type of assistance. Though it does not indemnify the armed forces, it has worked well so far.

Current Situation in Affected States

After the Hindu and Buddhist minorities in Bangladesh and Myanmar were systematically squeezed out into India in the early seventies, the turn of the unwanted surplus population of poor Muslims seeking greener pastures in NE states followed next. Vote bank politics ensured their absorption in states like Tripura, Mizoram, Manipur and Assam. Now, the Rohingyas from the Rakhine State of Myanmar joined in after their persecution there. Today, the changed demographics are one of the biggest problems faced by NE states today.

Manipur.

- There is a hue and cry in the country on the current situation in Manipur. If one has gone through the historical perspective from the earliest times, the Manipuri's are a very proud race. When the state acceded to the Indian Union in Oct 1949, it was the scene of bitter ethnic conflicts for various reasons. Of the 3 lakh population, 67 per cent is indigenous Meitei, some Thangkuls Nagas in the north and the remaining are Kukis. In consonance with the British policy of divide and rule, buffer zones created between two main warring tribes, have resulted in two separate habitation areas. The Imphal Valley plains are one and the other, the hills around it on its east and west. Affluence came first to the Imphal Valley, being part of the state's democratic apparatus while the hills remained backward, being autonomous councils.
- The Christian Nagas and Kukis consider themselves racially separate from the indigenous Meitei in Manipur, who are dubbed the plainsmen. While the indigenous Meitei are only looking for safeguards to preserve their independent cultural identity, the Nagas and Kukis feel, is at their cost. The local Zo tribals, some Tangkhul Nagas of North Manipur anti-social elements, and disgruntled elements sidelined from power along with overground NSCN sympathisers/ex-surrendered hostiles could not have found a better opportunity to discredit the Meiteis. It is well known that Tangkhul Nagas

and Zo tribals infected with fissiparous tendencies, aspire for Nagalim (Greater Nagaland) of their dreams, with more trappings of power and money. The role of Christian states like Mizoram and Nagaland to channelise the Rohingyas into Manipur cannot be ruled out.

- After the military junta took over in Myanmar in Feb 2021, there has been a steady influx of over 10,000 Myanmar Nagas and Kukis from Chin district in Manipur. More Nagas crossed into Manipur's Chandel district in Jul this year at a time when the violence was at its peak. Despite the state government's efforts, these illegal immigrants do not wish to return to their home country. Temporary shelters for 5,000 Nagas and Kukis have been set up by the government in the border towns of Moreh, Tengnoupal, and Chandel districts. The exodus of Nagas and Kukis is confined to the border areas in the hills alone and not to the Imphal plains.

Mizoram.

Zo is the name of an ethnic group of people that occupy North Western Myanmar, NE India, and NE Bangladesh normally known as Lushai, Chin, and Kuki (as known in India) each with a separate identity but collectively known as Zo people. The erstwhile Lushai Hills District (LHD) was carved out of Zo land and came to be known as LHD. Its remaining areas were carved out and annexed to the adjacent districts. One of the districts was administered from Sylhet in Chittagong Hill Tract (CHT) of British India and the other, Chin Hills, from Rangoon of British Burma. The Zo people have nothing in common with the plains people of Bengal and Assam and the Nagas, Kukis, or Manipuris (Meitei). However, all ethnic groups except Meiteis are from the same Mongoloid stock with close similarities in their culture and traditional habits. Some Zo tribes, like Paite and Hmars, distanced themselves from the Kukis and showed solidarity with the Mizos people, forming a distinct block of 18 odd tribes. This is one of the reasons why the peace accord signed with Laldenga still stands and the state continues to be peaceful.

After Myanmar security forces began flushing out operations against their rebels in Chin Hills in 2022, there were reports of 40,000 Myanmar nationals of Mizo origin and some Rohingyas,

inhabiting areas close to South Mizoram, having crossed over. There have been recoveries of smuggled arms and ammunition from them and reports of widespread misuse of Indian identity cards. In addition, very recently after the disturbances in Manipur, the exodus of 8,000 to 10,000 Mizo tribals from the north into Mizoram is also confirmed.

In addition, another 1,000 suspected Kuki insurgents from the CHT in Bangladesh have been pushed in by the security forces. With them, some sympathisers of the Kuki Chin National Front, Jamaa tul Ansar Fil Hindal Sharqiya, a terror organisation are also believed to have entered South Mizoram. Most of the refugees are Kuki women, children, and elderly and their numbers are expected to go up in the coming months. Once they have physically charted the route through the difficult jungles of South Mizoram, these could subsequently be the routes/trails to smuggle arms and narcotics. The state government, in contravention of the existing policy on illegal immigrants (of Mizo tribes), has allowed them entry and wants the centre to act on humanitarian grounds. This means asylum for the refugees and the state exchequer to foot the bill for the basic amenities and shelter provided. The chief minister knows fully well that south Mizoram has neither the resources nor the living space to accommodate these refugees.

Estimate of Current Situation in Manipur

The NE region since early antiquity has been politically divided and that is what ails it now. The ongoing violence in Manipur does appear to be a simple riot between two tribal groups the Christian Nagas and Kukis and the Hindu Meiteis, because neither can indefinitely combat power with their limited resources. It is a fully orchestrated covert operation to achieve political and strategic goals by using all available resources beautifully timed to coincide with the run-up to the forthcoming general elections in 2024. The Manipur High Court provided the spark that ignited the fire for the Nagas and the Kukis who feel threatened by the decision to grant scheduled tribe status to the indigenous Meitei tribals despite the fact, that it is only a recommendation to the state government and the actual grant by the Central Minorities Commission is a way off.

De Novo Approach to Resolve the NE Tangle

While evolving a holistic approach toward national security management, two facts stand out clearly. The colonial-era security policy of underdeveloped borders, communication voids, and unmapped and unfenced boundaries is a thing of the past and the sooner this mindset goes the better. Myanmar and Bangladesh have an equally long history of insurgency in their provinces bordering Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, and Mizoram. With the situation in Bangladesh now quite stable, there is ample scope for backlash from communal disturbances from Myanmar, especially after the military coup and taking the China factor into account.

For the last seven decades or more, we have been facing the insurgency in the NE, thanks to the roots of this estrangement laid so carefully by the foreign missionaries. The Nagas and Mizos have always been opposed to the existence of the state apparatus and considered it interference in their existing tribal society, its well-established culture, customs, rites of passage, and traditional laws. Unfortunately, most tribals have not developed the desired loyalty to their state, what to speak of the country. Instead, the pan Mongoloid sectarian affinity is more pronounced and does pose a serious security risk.

Theirs has always been a free looking, fully educated society, a loose union of tribals of various denominations and regions, practicing various Christian faiths, such as Anglican, Baptist, Catholic, Presbyterian, etc., competing with one another for their social upliftment. Except for Manipur which has a slender Hindu majority of 53 per cent, Tripura with 83 per cent Hindus and Arunachal with 31 per cent Christians and 29 per cent Hindus, the population is predominantly Christians. Each tribal belt in Manipur, Nagaland, and Arunachal Pradesh practices its religions and customs and is not interested in conforming to what Hindutva, uniform civil code, or for that matter, any other scripture has to offer.

Tribal areas of Manipur, Nagaland, and Arunachal Pradesh are imbued with group loyalties of varying degrees. What exists is a superficial form of nationalism in a subdued form, with a confused notion of opportunistic democracy or socialism/socialistic pattern of society promised by the party in power at the centre.

Regional parties, especially in our NE states, have always looked up to national parties, seeking alliances for the development of their regions. Otherwise, what ideology can a national political alliance like National Democratic Alliance or Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance offer to the hillman? Sadly, what is on display is the crass disunity and corruption at the national level, which percolates to its state's constituents.

All groups are convinced that they are better off under the Indian Union but the local general apathy is based on their fear of reprisals, if the tribal aspirations are betrayed. The day the administration becomes firm enough to guarantee the safety of loyal elements and inflict exemplary punishment on those who act otherwise, this fear psychosis will disappear. Tampering with their culture in the guise of social upliftment projects is best avoided. The centre must transform attitudes and scout for better ideas for devising multipurpose machinery for the economic, social, and cultural development of the NE states. Instead, a functional NE Council with a tangible and practical common minimum program, designed to benefit the local people, framed in the language of the tribal area must be executed rather than forcing a national-level policy down the throats of the gullible tribesmen.

Restoration of Peace in Manipur

The ebullience of the warring factions must be tackled firmly and decisively. What was required was a firm hand to deal with the disturbances at the very incipient stages so that the evil was nipped in the bud. Even now it's not too late for peace to be restored, through the institution of some decisions as below:

- Isolate Nagas and Kuki insurgent groups from the local Meiteis and disarm all three groups. Issue an ultimatum for the surrender of weapons looted from state armouries. Fix responsibility for the state's connivance in the looting of weapons. The formation of buffer zones is a bad idea as it creates more problems than solves them.
- Review the status of all accords signed so far with various insurgent groups and work for an early resolution of differences by following a mutually agreed timeframe.

- Review the efficacy of the ILP for entry and FMR for entry/exit in Arunachal, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram and if the situation warrants, rescind them immediately. These two have not strengthened the emotional integration between the plainsmen and the hillmen.
- Revoke the AFSP Act 1958 immediately. Declare the complete border area belt of 10 km with Myanmar and Bangladesh, as the newly disturbed area, with fresh ordinance to curb the trans-border moves to Myanmar.
- Complete border fencing on Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Arunachal Pradesh borders with Myanmar on top priority. This would reduce cross-border crimes, smuggling of weapons, and the illegal narcotics trade.
- Establish proper check posts all along the fenced boundary with Myanmar and Bangladesh with proper manning by Excise and Customs Officials, foolproof communications, and administrations. Ensure adherence to Indian customs and immigration rules for entry/exit as applicable to the rest of the country.
- Implementing the Kaladan River project on priority, being a strategic asset to improve connectivity and interstate coordination. The proposed Common Markets at Guwahati and Dimapur are yet to function to facilitate trade between Bangladesh, Myanmar, and India's NE states.
- Complete pending works on connectivity with cross-border waterways, electricity, and other grids with our neighboring countries.
- Speeding up measures for the removal of disparity in incomes in the NE states based on a study by development/economics experts from Niti Aayog.
- Reinforce the local police resources with any state police force or the Rapid Action Force temporarily till the restoration of normalcy in Manipur.

Maintenance of Law and Order in Manipur

The maintenance of law and order is the responsibility of the state government. The police are the most visible symbol of state

administrative authority and provide much-needed credibility to the Manipur government. The Ministry of Home Affairs has the basic responsibility for the maintenance of internal security in the country and must deal with the consequences of responsibilities at the state and local level and must therefore play a proactive role in concert with the state government. Today, we have a full-fledged police force in all states, central forces like central reserve police force, Border Security Force (BSF), Indo-Tibetan border police, and central industrial security force to assist in law and order, National Disaster Response Force and State Disaster Response Force to take care of natural calamities and BSF and Assam Rifles for border management.

The Ministry of Home Affairs must take on the responsibilities of reorganising and upgrading its security forces, especially the Assam Rifles deployed in the NE so that they can deal with their basic duties. Unfortunately, the full potential of this great force has not been fully realised. They are the mainstay of our country in NE states and will deliver if purposefully utilised. This may call for a complete reorganisation of the force, enhancement of its manpower, augmentation of its weapons and equipment, and improved logistics. There may also be some increases/decreases in the span of control after force accretion and the re-deployment of its headquarters in the NE. Where then, is the need for the army to take over the situation in Manipur?

Concluding Remarks

Initially, the tribals of our northeast region, especially Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram were fighting the Indian Army, considering them to be aliens. The roots of this estrangement were embedded in a carefully orchestrated program of foreign missionaries, which came to an end in the sixties. The reorientation in the central government's policies, the well tried out welfare schemes and the 'de novo' approach to integrating the region with the rest of the country, worked well. This ensured reasonable development, removed some causes of discontent, and insulated the Chinese support in our tribal belts. In the last five decades or more, 'winning the hearts and minds of the locals' has also been attempted by the central government but the malaise (of inter-tribal rivalries) runs deeper than the failed results. In Manipur, now a full-fledged state with democratic traditions, the Christian Nagas and Kuki's

tribals still harbor fears of being swamped by the majority Hindu Meitei, who have been distrusted, from times immemorial. The misinterpretation or misunderstanding of orders from the centre has inevitably fueled riots and the total breakdown of law-and-order. Therefore, the solution to the NE problem lies within the region itself; more noticeably, on the improvement of its governance, the public servants assuming their authority and responsibilities with accountability, the optimised use of potent force like Assam Rifles and least of all, without the interference and assistance from New Delhi.

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A New Discourse on Indo-Maldives Relations: Challenges and Opportunities

Tanya Jain[®]

Abstract

The Indo-Maldives relationship is evolving with the recent election of President Dr Mohamed Muizzu which serves as a watershed moment in the bilateral relationship of both nations. With the victory of Dr Muizzu, this relationship is poised to enter a new phase, impacting the shared strategic, security, economic, and developmental interests of the two nations. Political changes in the Maldives, economic concerns, and India's assistance as a development partner are also addressed in the article. This article critically analyses the role of the new president in balancing relations with both India and China, with far-reaching consequences for the Indo-Pacific region.

Introduction

In the vast expanse of the Indian Ocean, the Indo-Maldives relationship has been a story of enduring friendship and strategic relevance, nurtured by mutual respect, collaboration, and a persistent commitment to each other's interests. Despite the absence of common land borders. The Maldives, is a strategically positioned archipelagic republic and plays an important role in India's security interests due to its historical and cultural links.¹ With about 1,300 coral islands and sandbanks, the Republic of Maldives is in the western part of the Indian Ocean, provides an important link in the Indian Ocean's east-west maritime commerce route.² The Maldives is deceptively small, with only 202 permanently

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inhabited islands distributed across 180 sq mi, yet it has an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) comprising over 3,25,000 mi² containing valuable Indian Ocean real estate.³ With President Muizzu's recent win, a new chapter in the Indo-Maldives relationship is set to be written. The twenty-first century might bring a potential change in the political trajectory of the relationship between both nations, as Mohamed Muizzu, candidate of the Progressive National Congress (PNC) secured victory defeating the incumbent President Ibrahim Solih with 46 per cent of the votes.⁴ His tenure is likely to have a substantial influence on the course of this long-standing cooperation, with both countries continuing to protect their common strategic, security, economic, and development interests. As we go deeper into the growing dynamics of this relationship, it is critical to comprehend the intricacies, challenges, and possibilities that the Indo-Maldives connection will present.

Strategic Importance of Maldives

Given its strategic position, the Maldives has a geopolitical significance extending beyond its geographical size, making it a vital strategic player. India-Maldives ties have historically been distinguished by a great affinity, with India being one of the first nations to recognise Maldives following its independence in 1965.⁵ Both countries have steadily improved their relationships, and the Maldives opened a full-fledged High Commission in New Delhi in 2004, demonstrating the importance of their bilateral relationship.⁶ The Maldives is considered a natural ally of India in the Indian Ocean region, and both nations maintain regular high-level diplomatic interactions. In this environment, the Maldives' attitude has been impacted by its 'India First' strategy, which emphasises the importance of its connection with its larger and more powerful neighbour. India, too, recognises the Maldives' strategic importance, as the country is near its west coast and protects critical Sea Lanes of Communications which includes Gulf of Aden, the Gulf of Hormuz, and the Strait of Malacca, which are critical for global marine trade and India's own economic interests, transporting a large portion of India's external commerce and energy imports.⁷ With the increasing maritime activity in the Indian Ocean; India has prioritised regional peace and security and hence the Indo-Maldives relationship becomes even more important. The Maldives plays a crucial role in India's goal of security and growth for all in the region, exhibiting the amplitude of their strategic partnership.⁸

However, this relationship has been laden with difficulties. The political environment in the Maldives has a consequential effect on its diplomatic connections with India. Moreover, the presence of significant countries such as China, India, and the US has driven the Maldives to carefully manage the difficult choices between promoting its economic and national security goals while safeguarding its sovereignty.⁹ The ties between both the nations are notably influenced by factors such as the growth of Islamic extremism, and China's growing influence in the Maldives.¹⁰ Over the last decade, there has been a significant upsurge in the number of Maldivians influenced by Islamic State of Iraq and Syria and Pakistani-based madrasas and extremist groups.¹¹ Political instability and socio-economic uncertainty have been the principal causes of Islamic extremism in the Maldives, with some Maldivians participating in anti-India actions. Jihadist groups headquartered in Pakistan, such as Lashkar-e-Taiba have exploited these weaknesses through philanthropic fronts, notably in the Southern Maldives, frequently under the idea of delivering help following the 2004 tsunami.¹² Developments in West Asia and the Af-Pak area have also influenced Maldivians to become radicalised.¹³ Moreover, given China's expanded strategic footprint in neighbouring nations, the Maldives has come to play an essential role in China's 'String of Pearls' strategy.¹⁴ With bolstered economic links between China and the Maldives, Beijing has been boosting its investment in the country as part of the Belt and Road Initiative.¹⁵ Hence, with growing Islamic sentiments, China's increasing presence in the Indian Ocean and the 'Pro-China' stance likely to be followed by Muizzu, the fundamental diplomatic issue for India lies in properly managing and overcoming these differences to preserve cordial ties.¹⁶

Maldives Political Transformation and Act of Balancing Two Asian Giants

President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom assumed power in 1978 and since then, the Maldivian political environment has changed dramatically, affecting India's bilateral relationship with the Maldives.¹⁷ The Maldives' foreign policy towards India was uncertain during his tenure. Despite India's help in preserving Gayoom's rule from a coup attempt in 1988 through 'Operation Cactus', he never granted India any special privileges.¹⁸ In his quest for international alliances, he looked to China, a rising global power with important strategic interests in the Indian Ocean. Gayoom's

first visit to China was in 1984, and then in Sep 2006, further cementing the Maldives-China alliance.¹⁹ China, infamous for making strategic advances in critical nations through infrastructure projects, was no exception in the Maldives. Chinese firms began joining the Maldives project-contracting market in 1985, with projects valued at USD 46.37 mn by the end of 2001.²⁰ These projects included the establishment of the Maldivian Foreign Ministry, a museum, housing developments and the expansion of road and drainage systems. The Sino-Maldives relationship deepened as China provided annual funds for its efforts in the Maldives, including sending aid following the 2004 tsunami. Though he maintained friendly relations with India, he also moved towards China, a rising power in the Indian Ocean.

The Maldives's first democratic government, led by Mohammed Nasheed emerged as a result of the first multi-party elections held in 2008, which was welcomed by the international community.²¹ The emergence of multi-party democracy, however, has created uncertainty in the Sino-Maldivian bilateral relationship. Prior to the multi-party presidential elections in Oct 2008, Nasheed openly accused Gayoom of curling up to China.²² Nasheed's government articulated the 'India first' approach, refraining from actions that would cause concern in India, and not providing a base for countries such as China to build strategic infrastructure. The Maldives permitted the installation of Indian radars on 26 atolls, combined naval drills with the Indian Navy, and training provided by India to the Maldivian National Defence Force (MNDF).²³ However, the strengthening of opposition forces in the 2009 Maldivian legislative elections, led by former Maldivian President Mohammed Gayoom, created tensions between the administration and the People's *Majlis* (Parliament House).²⁴ The opposition mobilised public opinion in disagreement with actions such as giving major infrastructural projects to major Indian contractors such as Grandhi Mallikarjuna Rao (GMR) without the *Majlis'* agreement.²⁵ The resignation of Nasheed in 2012 and the creation of a 'unity government' led by Vice President Mohammed Waheed did little to alleviate political tensions but this transition failed to bring political stability.²⁶

During Waheed's presidency, Maldivian foreign policy orientation shifted again which was marked by an anti-India sentiment and a pro-China stance. Even though India was relatively

swift in recognising Waheed's government, he developed closer ties with China and cancelled the GMR contract which strained bilateral India-Maldives relations. In response, India froze aid to the politically unstable Maldives.²⁷ The decision to terminate the contract was not solely a result of domestic politics but was also influenced by external factors, particularly China's growing presence.²⁸ Waheed adopted a confrontational attitude towards India, even challenging foreign powers to stay out of Maldivian affairs. In the context of this shifting landscape, India had to be cautious in its role as an intermediary in the Maldivian presidential elections. It tried to maintain a pro-active approach but ultimately allowed the internal process to address the issues arising from the transfer of power to Waheed, widely appreciated by the United States (US) and Sri Lanka.²⁹ Despite the hostile political environment, India did not proactively manage the situation but rather allowed the internal processes to resolve the issues.

In Nov 2013, through an extensive electoral process Abdulla Yameen ultimately became the president and the Progressive Party of Maldives (PPM) dominated the parliament.³⁰ Yameen's campaign emphasised his commitment to safeguarding Sunni Islam.³¹ The Maldives' ties with China became stronger during Yameen's leadership. The visit of Chinese President Xi Jinping in Sep 2014 was a turning point in their bilateral relationship.³² Xi sought Maldivian assistance for his contemporary maritime 'Silk Road' project, especially for a maritime route between China and Europe via West Africa.³³ Both countries signed nine agreements concerned with expanding the Maldives' international airport, a power plant project, road building, and the construction of a bridge between Malé and Hulhule.³⁴ Moreover, the Maldives agreed to support China's Maritime Silk Route initiative and the Chinese-led Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank.³⁵ The Indian government responded by integrating the Indian Space Research Organisation in the joint construction, launch, and operation of a Maldivian communications satellite as a response to China's involvement in the former for strengthening bilateral relations.³⁶ Indian Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj's Maldivian visit in Oct 2015 signified India's deliberate efforts to enhance bilateral relations, marking it as a watershed moment.³⁷

With the election of Mohamed Ibrahim Solih in 2018, the situation took a dramatic turn, resulting in the restoration of democracy and the reinvigoration of strong connections between

the Maldives and New Delhi. Solih implemented his 'India First' policy to strengthen the varied and mutually beneficial cooperation between India and the Maldives.³⁸ The Maldives implemented this approach by withdrawing from its trade deal with Beijing.³⁹ India offered USD 1.4 bn in loan repayment assistance to the Maldives, as well as additional financial help for community development programs.⁴⁰ India's ability to strengthen its close relationship with the Maldives has been influenced by President Solih's political choices, particularly in enhancing defence and security cooperation with India as part of its regional foreign policy agenda. During Prime Minister Modi's state visit to the Maldives in 2019, both countries released a joint statement reaffirming their strong commitment to further strengthening their historically strong and cordial relations.⁴¹ The statement also hailed India's financial assistance in addressing debt issues emanating from China's previous investments. Following bilateral agreements, India's USD 800 mn line of credit facilitated the implementation of various development projects, including the USD 100 mn Greater Malé Connectivity Project, the supply of construction materials for public parks on 67 local islands, and the construction of bridges connecting the capital city, Malé, with regional and industrial islands.⁴² Indo-Maldives relations flourished during Solih's tenure.

Dr Mohamed Muizzu's Victory and altered Indo-Maldivian Relationship

With completion of his term, elections were conducted in Sep 2023 and on 01 Oct 2023, Dr Mohamed Muizzu became the new president of the island nation. Dr Muizzu is a member of the PNC and formerly served as opposition leader in partnership with the PPM.⁴³ He will succeed the incumbent president, Ibrahim Mohammed Solih of the Maldives Democratic Party, on 17 Nov 2023.⁴⁴ The change of leadership in India's neighbouring area is crucial for New Delhi because of historical links, geographical closeness, and China's rising influence in the region, both in terms of development and strategic concerns. The Maldives' government's evolving stance has generated uncertainty in India-Maldives ties. Beyond political shifts in the Maldivian administration, the issue needs a deeper understanding of the relationship. The appointment of Dr Muizzu has alarmed some, who perceive it as a setback for Indian diplomacy in the Maldives. President Muizzu's statement on the withdrawal of foreign armed forces to protect its

sovereignty and territorial integrity has sparked international interest.⁴⁵ The strategic world instantly viewed this action as a tilt towards China and away from India. India is the only country that has 75 military personnel that are stationed in MNDF bases at Hanimaadhoo in the north, Kadhdhoo in the centre of the country and Addu Atoll in the south, principally to operate two light combat helicopters, the Dhruv, and the Dornier aircraft.⁴⁶ These aircraft have been used to monitor the EEZ and give medical aid to the islands, saving many lives over the years. India has traditionally been the Maldives' principal security ally, providing considerable assistance to strengthen the Maldives' maritime security capabilities.⁴⁷ As Malé strives to balance its economic and developmental alliances, it must do so while maintaining key security connections with India, which are critical for maintaining peace and stability in the Indian Ocean area. The Maldives understands the significance of a safe, secure, and stable Indian Ocean for its own security. Hence, to foster security relationship with India more transparent and aligned with the Maldives' objectives, the future administration will need to examine and change it.

Moreover, the World Bank has warned the Maldivian government of an economic slowdown over the next two years, especially if the government continues to borrow at high interest rates given the global economic recession.⁴⁸ According to the World Bank's study Maldives can expect a real Gross Domestic Product growth of 6.5 per cent in 2023, with an average growth rate of 5.4 per cent from 2024 to 2025.⁴⁹ While the Muizzu administration is expected to seek debt restructuring from India and China, it may still require foreign investment for new development projects that produce assets and jobs, hence maintaining the economy. In comparison to China, which not only supplies finance but also imports labour, possibly displacing local people and their earnings, India has a great track record as a development partner for third-world nations. India's 'neighbourhood first' policy has historically aided nations such as Sri Lanka during times of crisis and announced 100 mn Maldivian Rufiyaa for community development projects in the Maldives to generate employment.⁵⁰

Way Forward

Following the relationship between both nations, Prime Minister Narendra Modi was the first foreign leader to congratulate President Muizzu on his win.⁵¹ He also conveyed his support in a letter given by Indian High Commissioner Munu Muhawar during their post-election meeting.⁵² The PPM-PNC alliance of President Muizzu praised the conference as ‘fruitful’, emphasising that discussions focused on improving bilateral relations.⁵³ Despite Muizzu’s initial India-out campaign, he has also expressed a desire to maintain a balanced relationship between India and China.⁵⁴ This places the responsibility on Malé to navigate a delicate path between the two regional giants, India and China, which will be a necessary challenge for any leader who assumes power. The incoming administration must negotiate carefully to sustain the benefits of cooperation with India while also exploring prospects for engagement with other key players in the Indo-Pacific region. The recent Maldives election highlights the tangled web of internal politics and foreign policy. While Muizzu’s views on India and China appear to be diametrically opposed, the region’s geopolitical realities need a complex balancing act. His ability to cross this gap will not only be a credit to his leadership but will also play a critical role in moulding the Maldives’ international fate in the geopolitical world. The emerging relationship between India and the Maldives under Muizzu will be widely monitored since it could influence regional dynamics and alliances in the Indo-Pacific.

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Space Domain Awareness: The Global Common

Lieutenant Colonel Amandeep Singh®

Abstract

Space as an operational sphere has arrived for good times to come. The earlier we appreciate it, the earlier and faster we will be prepared, equipped, skilled whilst organised to respond to any incident upsetting the access and management of our national space proficiencies. Satellite operational business has been becoming challenging day by day due to increased democratisation of space, which has taken leaps in this arena at both the international and national levels. This has resulted in making space more accessible and reachable to public and private players, however, that comes at a pricey value. Space Domain Awareness (SDA) means our capability to examine the space settings and securely function within it. SDA involves the tracking of space objects, understanding their actions, monitoring space weather actions, and detecting probable threats to space activities. SDA encompasses all of the information that is essential to provide a preparedness for the space environment. It is related to space weather conditions, natural phenomena that can disturb and disrupt satellites as well as the tracking and identification of orbiting space objects. Indian space capability is on dual verticals i.e., civil and military. The Indian SDA programme, NEtwork for space object TRacking and Analysis is an Indian Space Research Organisation's initiative intended to support India's autonomous space access and

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utilisation through the timely and precise transfer of data concerning the space environment. SDA allows the monitoring of the space environment and empowers the attribution of space events affecting space systems. Establishing a process to regularly identify and evaluate commercial SDA capabilities could enhance ability to conduct important national security mission.

Introduction

Space as an operational sphere has arrived for good times to come. The earlier we appreciate it, the faster we will be prepared, equipped, skilled whilst being organised to respond to any incident upsetting the access and management of our national space proficiencies. These proficiencies with dual use applicability i.e., civilian/military are very expensive and exclusive, and are measured to be as both strategic and sovereign assets. Satellite operational business is becoming challenging day by day due to increased democratisation of space, which has taken leaps in this arena at both the international and national levels. This has resulted in making space more accessible and reachable to both public and private players, however, that comes at a pricey value.

Space debris is considered as a great risk to space assets as presently an estimated of 8,400 tonnes of space objects of varied sizes have found their way into the orbit around the earth with speeds up to approximately 7 km/sec (28,000 km/hr). At such speeds, one can very well envision the consequences of the impact of any object, no matter its size. The numbers of active satellites orbiting the earth are estimated to be around 2,000 which will significantly increase with the launches of new mega constellations within the next ten years. Most of these new satellites are strategically planned to be launched in the Low Earth Orbit, which is already the most crowded and polluted orbit. Consequently, the risk of collisions cannot be ruled out, and the risk of accidental collisions will be compounded by the knowledge that a satellite can be manoeuvred to impact another targeted satellite. These dangers are becoming serious security threats, and the number of passive control measures, such as collision avoidance manoeuvres, will surely strengthen and intensify.¹

Space Domain Awareness

In general domain awareness and situational awareness, both arrive from very similar structures of actions which are 'knowing what is going on around us'. However, as space has become more congested, enhancement and change of posture regarding space was very much needed. Space is considered as a 'Domain of Warfare' like air, sea or land. Space Domain Awareness (SDA) means our capability to examine the space settings and securely function within it. SDA involves the tracking of space objects, understanding their actions, monitoring space weather actions, and detecting probable threats to space activities. SDA encompasses all of the information that is essential to provide a preparedness for the space environment. It is related to space weather conditions, natural phenomena that can disturb and disrupt satellites as well as the tracking and identification of orbiting space objects.

Establishing SDA is an indispensable part of any space activity. Meaningful knowledge of where space objects are positioned in orbit, their orbital courses and their status permits operators to commence missions securely, decrease the hazard of collisions, and avoid intrusive actions with the space activities of other entities or nations. SDA also means classifying potential destructive natural phenomena in space, such as electro-magnetic interference formed by astronomical conditions and threats posed to the spacecrafts by asteroids.²

SDA can be accomplished by utilising varied prevailing technologies, domain knowledge and services. Such technologies and services regularly comprise of tracking of space objects through ground stations, retrieving space object tracking catalogues, and the launching of space-based SDA hardware. These methods and procedures enable operative actions to realise varying levels of consciousness and alertness that are appropriate for their specific requirements and objectives.

Application of SDA

Space is transforming into a more contested and disputed zone and this category of competition brings out a new theatre of operations with deliberate and intentional coercions to different national capabilities, turning them into easy targets and, therefore,

altering the nature of space. There is no singular end state of accomplishing SDA. The degree of awareness necessary for an operator to reach depends on the nature of their actions and what they hope to accomplish in outer space.

The security environment is multifaceted and complex and is expected to remain so. There are numerous space faring players and with space technologies and skills becoming progressively easier to attain, it is anticipated that this number will continue to see an increasing trajectory. Most actors are using space capabilities to better human existence and to improve the management of resources, but the intent of some other nations and organisations are based on self-centred missions which could be detrimental due to vested interests.³

Satellite systems are intrinsically fragile which makes them vulnerable and susceptible with a substantial dependence on space arrangements and the proliferation of space agents. With hostile intentions, such space agents, can create an unhealthy state of affairs that if comprehended could destructively influence the normal way of life. In other words, this combination produces a productive ground for hostile entities to contemplate space systems as targets for disruption resultantly causing disturbance. Contingent to the level of interference or damage created, it could have dire consequences. Deterring anyone from threatening to disrupt a country's space systems must be a national strategic objective.⁴

However, the significant positive potential in space gives a valid reason for the rising geopolitical competition on earth, it is bringing substantial risks for how expansions in space perform. Competition in space is being shaped by fragmentation and great power rivalry and has the potential to reshape the global power map. Adversaries which seek to exploit reliance on space and monopolise technologies and services for their own advantage might limit the geopolitical advancements of others. Space is also recognised as a potential warfare domain. The increasing militarisation of space and the development of counter space technologies is evolving rapidly. Space can be and is already being used as a tool of statecraft for enhanced surveillance and espionage.

At present, the mainstream space situational awareness data comes from external sensors. This may change in the future, with increasing amounts of space navigation data being collected by sensors such as Global Positioning Systems receivers on satellites themselves. Such a change will possibly generate another SDA warfare attack trajectory for a challenger by manipulating the navigation data reaching the satellite, a variety of effects might be achieved, extending from missed data group opportunities to complete misperception of the satellite's attitude and orbit regulator system. Similar confusion could be generated by deliberately inserting optical or infra-red objects into the star cameras or infra-red earth sensors used by the satellite to determine its orientation.⁵

Economic Aspects of SDA

Situational Awareness Platform market displays comprehensive evidence that is a valuable source of perceptive data for business planners. On the basis of historical data, Situational Domain Platform (SDP) market report affords key sectors, their sub-segments, revenue and demand and supply data. In view of technological innovations and breakthroughs of the market, SDP industry is expected to appear as a lucrative platform for emerging investors.

Successful commercial establishments that have shaped catalogues into government databases are doing so by triangulating observations from a system of many smaller telescopes and radar sites instead of depending on a handful of powerful telescopes. Commercial companies are able to automate and decrease the operational costs of these broad networks, and they can establish partnerships and position innovative new technologies at a quick pace. These fast innovation series recommend that commercial SDA operators may be able to comprehend gaps in SDA capabilities and services and address them at a faster rate than the governments.

Accelerating commercial innovation and a surge in international interest into tracking proficiencies emphasises the vital need for consistent and dependable SDA data. With an intensification in operators launching more assets into space, governments and private entities depend on SDA data to safeguard critical infrastructure in the space domain. The investment from an increasing number of nations and private companies involved

in SDA has seen a direct bearing on the capability to track smaller objects with more accuracy, decrease the size of sensors needed to make observations, and maintain a safe and predictable space domain.

The important trends like globalisation, growth, regulations and ecological concerns have been examined and the future projections are quite promising based on the subdivision of the market.

Global SDA Capabilities and Initiatives

The United States (US) operates the largest network of sensors and keeps the most comprehensive register of space objects, though there are gaps in its coverage and database. The system is known as the Space Surveillance Network (SSN) and it is regulated and controlled by the military. It comprises primarily of phased array radars mainly used for missile warning and optical telescopes, along with a few tracking radars and a large space fence located along the southern US. There are also two space-based tracking telescopes as part of the SSN, the US Space Based Space Surveillance satellite and the Canadian Sapphire satellite.⁶

Russia operates the second largest network of sensors and preserves a relatively complete catalogue of space objects. The Russian system is identified as the Space Surveillance System (SSS), which also comprises of phased array radars used primarily for missile warning, along with some dedicated radars and optical telescopes. Several of the SSS sensors are in former Soviet republics and are operated by Russia under a series of mutual arrangements with the host countries. Russia is also in the process of upgrading and modernising its SDA capabilities with the Automated Space Danger Warning System to track space debris and sustenance of national security.⁷

Over the last few years, the private sector has commenced evolving its own SDA capabilities. The Space Data Association, a not-for-profit organisation shaped by commercial satellite operators, uses data provided by members to provide improved combination assessment and radio frequency interference services. More than a few commercial companies are now offering commercial SDA data services from their own radars and telescopes and others

have formed their own operations centres to fuse information from multiple sources and provide commercial SDA services. Private sector SDA capabilities are getting refined and improving rapidly and are expected to surpass those of the governments in the near future.

India's Capability in SDA

Ever since the beginning of India's space programme, space-based assets have played a fundamental role in the nation's growth story by contributing to the vital services in the field of weather monitoring, communications, resource monitoring, navigation etc. However, the ever increasing space object population, including that of operational satellites, orbital debris and the allied collision risks pose a danger to the safe and sustainable use of outer space. The cumulative overcrowding of earth's orbit poses an impending threat of collisions among larger fragments of debris that could trigger a self-sustained cascading process of further collision, known as Kessler Syndrome. This could considerably intensify the density of space debris population, rendering outer space inaccessible for future generations.⁸

Operational management of safe and sustainable operations in outer space involves an all-inclusive approach regarding multiple areas related to observation and monitoring of space objects and space environment. Additionally, examination of development for space environment, risk assessment, data exchange and collaboration. The multi domain awareness platform will bring prompt, accurate and efficient information on the on-orbit collision, fragmentation, atmospheric re-entry risk, cataloguing of observational data, hazardous asteroids and space weather forecast. Accurate orbital information from ground-based sensors is a pre-requisite for mitigation of any collision threats to an operational space threat from other objects.⁹

India's approach to space defence and security, like many other countries, has a purpose to enter this new theatre of operations. As India has a very progressive space programme, the need to safeguard and defend the space assets i.e., military, civilian, or dual has always been of paramount importance. Being a 'question of sovereignty', the objective is to maintain a positive level of self-sufficiency to assure the strategic autonomy. Indian defence forces policy considers operations in high ground i.e.,

pace, integrated with no clear dividing grounds, from the ground, through the air until outer space. Space oriented service from its origin and having units providing intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, command and control, up until geostationary earth orbit, are interrelated.

Indian space capability is on dual verticals i.e., civil and military. The Indian SDA programme, Network for Space Object TRacking and Analysis (NETRA) is an Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) initiative intended to support India's autonomous space access and utilisation through the timely and precise transfer of data concerning the space environment. It also focuses on the data pertaining to threats to both in orbit and ground infrastructure. SDA programme also provides a segment of Space Surveillance and Tracking designed to track active and inactive satellites and space debris.¹⁰

In view of the ever-growing population of space objects and the recent trend towards mega constellations, SDA has become an integral and indispensable part of safe and sustainable space operations. For the last five decades, ISRO has been carrying out SDA activities with main focus towards safeguarding India's space assets. Recognising the need for dedicated efforts to tackle the emerging challenges of operating in an exceedingly crowded and contested space domain, Directorate of Space Situational Awareness and Management has been established at ISRO. The Directorate engages in developing upgraded operational mechanisms to defend and protect Indian space assets through effective coordination among ISRO Centres, other space agencies and international bodies. To establish necessary supporting infrastructures, such as additional observation facilities for space object monitoring, and a control centre for centralised SDA activities. NETRA project is initiated as a first step towards meeting this goal, its main elements include radar, an optical telescope facility, and a control centre.¹¹

Recently, Government of India released the Space Policy 2023, which conveys a fused and dynamic framework to implement the reform vision. The Space Vision Policy is aimed at augmenting space capabilities, enabling, encouraging and developing a flourishing commercial presence in space, derive benefits in allied areas and create an ecosystem for operative applications of space

operations among all stakeholders. As a result, the SDA gets more involved and promises to be an indispensable part.

Space Sustainability and Security - Role of SDA

SDA warfare integrates a series of procedures which a space actor might follow to attain information dominance. SDA warfare might involve three key principles.¹²

- To maintain the accuracy of own SDA information.
- To degrade the accuracy of the adversary's SDA information.
- To avoid collateral threats.

SDA warfare activities that permanently degrade the overall SDA capability would reduce the effectiveness of the overall catalogue of space objects. As a result, the commercial satellites operators would have less assurance in corroborating the warning messages they receive, and the possibility of an inadvertent collision would increase. In view of the many applications that satellites presently support, any reduction in capability in the areas of navigation, communications, meteorology, etc. could result in the loss of life of non-combatants external to the theatre of operations which is considered illegal under the rules of armed conflict.

One of the significant issues associated with SDA dominance is the geographic location of the sensors. It is not difficult to find information on the locations of the US tracking networks that are likely to be subject to surveillance.

The Way Ahead - Integration is the Way to Go

As the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation has declared Space as an operational domain, it has initiated the preliminary steps to intensify the cooperation, collaboration and coordination of all allies and the space capabilities they own. As SDA being a global domain autonomous subject, it becomes necessary to take into account the interests and prerogative of nations to maintain operational command and control of their assets.

New tactics, techniques, and procedures for space are making incremental advancements towards evolving new SDA tactics, techniques, and procedures to achieve better upstream, midstream and downstream capabilities for operations. The completion of the new formats depends on a variety of factors, including the modernisation of outdated hardware and software. Integration, more than coordination, will offer the best standards to advance the domain of security, solidity and sustainability of space. However, the challenge is how that level of integration is implemented.¹³

Conclusion

As part of the development progress, we have refined sophisticated procedures for monitoring the health, position, and operational status of space vehicles. However, the growth and setting up of sensors to caution and detect attacks on them were to some extent neglected. The rapid rise in the importance and challenges of operating in space necessitates enhancements to SDA capabilities, including consideration of commercially available data and tools. Significant challenges remain unaddressed with respect to consistent and systematic assessment of commercial capabilities for space operations. In particular, while there has been periodic evaluation and use of some commercial capabilities, these efforts have been limited.

SDA allows the monitoring of the space environment and empowers the attribution of space events affecting space systems. Establishing a process to regularly identify and evaluate commercial SDA capabilities, could enhance the ability to conduct an important national security mission. SDA therefore becomes a key element for space deterrence. SDA is an area that has received increased international attention in the last decade due to the space environment becoming increasingly congested, contested and competitive. The next 10 years will likely see further improvement in the accuracy and timeliness of SDA services, including reducing the size of the object that can be detected and how frequently the location of objects in space can be monitored and updated.

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The Enduring Bonds: Soft Power Diplomacy in the India-Bhutan Relationship

Dr. Beena®

Abstract

This paper highlights the role of soft power diplomacy in the enduring India-Bhutan relationship. It emphasises cultural affinities, historical connections, and shared values that have fostered deep bonds. The article underscores the influence of yoga as a cultural bridge and environmental conservation as a mutual goal. It showcases the power of soft power diplomacy in shaping a resilient partnership, transcending political boundaries, and nurturing enduring connections built on common understanding and friendship.

Introduction

In the complex landscape of international relations, soft power diplomacy has emerged as a potent tool for nations to strengthen bonds, foster goodwill, and exert influence without coercion. Within the pages of the *Arthashastra* by the venerable Kautilya, there exists discourse about the Six Stratagems, known as *Shadgunyas* (excellences), alongside the four *Upayas* (approaches), which can be understood as strategic tools. These comprise *Saam* (conciliation), *Daan* (charity), *Bhed* (divide), and *Dand* (punishment).¹ Among these, the initial two options are inclined toward peaceful methodologies and incentives. Joseph Nye coined 'Soft Power' in 'Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power', noting three dimensions: military might, economic persuasion, and cultural assimilation. Military strength is typically seen as strong but not favourable in Soft Power.² However, its use in peacekeeping and disaster relief is valued. Promoting culture

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is generally positive, yet imposing it forcefully on smaller neighbours can be seen as imperialism. The key is how tools are used.

Soft power aims to engage and influence individuals' sentiments and thoughts. A people-centred approach is essential, as governments have constraints and typically facilitate rather than lead.³ Two instances from the last century exemplify this. India gained global popularity twice: during the Independence Struggle with Gandhi's nonviolent approach and in the 1960s Hippie movement which was drawn to yoga and Indian spirituality. The role of the Government was minor, even opposed to the popular movements. In both instances soft power prevailed despite government limitations.

On 12 Dec 2022, the Parliamentary Committee on External Affairs led by Mr. PP Chaudhary, released findings in a report titled 'India's Soft Power Prospects and Limitations'. Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) defines soft power as non-coercive influence through appeal. It has pinpointed four issues hampering India's soft power: limited funding, institutional coordination gaps, skilled workforce scarcity, and the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) ambiguous role. The Committee's report comprises noteworthy insights and suggestions, among which are the following key observations and recommendations⁴:

- **Cultural Diplomacy Working Group.** The committee observed the dual involvement of the MEA and the Ministry of Culture in promoting India's cultural diplomacy. The Ministry of Culture develops policies and projects for cultural propagation, while the ICCR operates as the external executing body for conserving cultural heritage globally. The committee proposed establishing a working group between the MEA and the Ministry of Culture to synchronise and strategise cultural diplomatic efforts. Additionally, it suggested forming a comprehensive database of cultural resources.
- **Yoga Certification Board.** The committee acknowledged yoga's worldwide appeal and its potential as a soft power asset. It advised cooperation between the Ministry of AYUSH and the MEA to establish a Yoga Certification Board. This board would authenticate Indian yogic practices and therapies.

- **Engaging Indian Diaspora.** India possesses a substantial diaspora, exceeding 31 mn individuals, including 13 mn NRIs and 18 mn Persons of Indian Origin. The committee recognised the diaspora's role as a soft power asset in enhancing ties between their country of origin and host nations. The suggestion entails creating a mechanism for proactive interaction with the diaspora through Indian missions/posts abroad. Additionally, targeted events should be organised to gather their insights and ideas for more effective ongoing engagement with the host country.
- **Boosting Tourism.** The committee recognised tourism as a vital gauge of a nation's soft power influence. It stressed expanding overseas tourism offices and adopting tailored approaches for promoting tourism. The recommendation involves gathering input from diverse types of tourists to formulate comprehensive, country-specific strategies.

India and Bhutan have nurtured a unique and profound connection since the 1950s. The outreach made by the former Indian Prime Minister (PM), Jawaharlal Nehru, to Bhutan during that period stands as a demonstration of soft power; a concerted effort to fortify the bond linking these two nations. India's utilisation of soft power in its dealings with Bhutan is evident across a spectrum of foreign policy areas, spanning from economic collaboration to cultural engagements.⁵ An illustrative instance pertaining to India's provision of financial aid to support Bhutan's five-year development plans. Additionally, a consistent thread of cultural exchange programs unites both countries, underscoring the depth of their interconnectedness.

The soft power diplomacy approach's outcome has been the cultivation of goodwill, thereby reducing the potential for misinterpretations. Conversely, it can be argued that isolating soft power as a distinct policy instrument is counterproductive. Instead, it serves as the foundational element that underpins a nation's comprehensive policy architecture. This article explores the multifaceted role of soft power diplomacy in shaping the India-Bhutan relationship.

Historical Ties and Cultural Affinities

India and Bhutan share deep-rooted historical ties that have served as the foundation for a resilient diplomatic partnership. Their proximity, cultural similarities, and shared values have forged a unique bond that transcends political boundaries. The role of cultural diplomacy, encompassing elements such as shared traditions, religious practices, and cultural exchanges, has been instrumental in cultivating people-to-people connections and mutual understanding.⁶

PM Shri Narendra Modi picked Bhutan as his first foreign destination as India's leader, stating that the country's foreign policy interests lie in the region. According to PM Modi, it was a 'logical option' because of India-'unique' Bhutan's connection. Ever since the 8th century, when the renowned Indian saint, *Swami Padmasambhava*, recognised as the 'Second Buddha' or 'Rinpoche', introduced Buddhism to Bhutan, the influence of this religion has profoundly shaped every aspect of Bhutanese life, fostering enduring ties between the two nations.

Since the 1950s, India and Bhutan have maintained a particular relationship. Their official ties were established in 1968, though the essential foundation of bilateral relations was laid out in the 'Treaty of Perpetual Peace and Friendship' signed in 1949.⁷ The soft power diplomacy from India has helped to build strong commercial and cultural relations with Bhutan since then. Throughout Bhutan's five-year plans and investments in hydroelectric projects, India has been Bhutan's major development partner. The former having supported the country's seamless transition to democracy. A mutually beneficial collaboration between the Indian and Bhutanese governments has resulted in both countries greatly benefiting from Bhutan's hydroelectric capabilities.⁸

Bhutan's Unique Cultural Identity

There exist multiple avenues by which India can enhance its comprehensive approach to exerting soft power influence on Bhutan. Initially, fostering cultural cooperation between the two nations should evolve into a more formalised and structured endeavour, concentrating especially on regions adjacent to the borders rather than the capitals. Secondly, Bhutan's distinct cultural identity has been diligently conserved, evident in its policy

landscape. Bhutan's distinct cultural identity, highlighted by its concept of Gross National Happiness (GNH), has captured international attention. This emphasis on holistic well-being, social harmony, and sustainable development aligns closely with the principles of soft power diplomacy. The exceptional notion of GNH exemplifies this uniqueness, and India should create platforms for the exchange of knowledge. India has acknowledged and appreciated Bhutan's cultural uniqueness, thereby fostering a sense of respect and mutual admiration that forms the bedrock of their diplomatic ties. Through these platforms, India can glean insights from this indigenous concept, which presents a balanced trajectory between materialistic and spiritual aspirations.⁹

Education and Capacity Building

Indian and Bhutanese connections have always been based on the importance of education and learning. India's role in supporting Bhutan's education system through scholarships, exchange programs, and technical assistance has been a significant soft power instrument. 4,000 Bhutanese students are now enrolled in Indian colleges, making India the most preferred destination for Bhutanese students. Four Memorandums of Understanding on academic exchanges and science, technology engineering, and mathematics collaboration between Bhutan and India have been signed by the two governments to help young people in the Himalayan nation find jobs based on their education and skills. Students from Bhutan can now apply for special permission from the Indian government to study at prestigious universities like St. Stephens College, University of Delhi, and AIIMS after being nominated and recommended by the MEA and the Royal Government of Bhutan. Additionally, in Jan 2020, the two nations inked an agreement to prolong the Nehru-Wangchuck Scholarship Programme for an additional five years. The Indian government invites Buddhist students from Bhutan to India's famed Nalanda University, thus, extending the priceless spiritual tradition and ties that bind the two nations.

Also, the government schools in Delhi have introduced an educational program termed the 'Happiness Curriculum'. Although the inception of this idea is attributed to the efforts of the Delhi Government, it is widely acknowledged that the concept draws inspiration from Bhutan. In Feb 2018, Manish Sisodia, Deputy

Chief Minister, and Education Minister of Delhi, acknowledged the influence from Bhutan, saying, “As Bhutan is devising policies to elevate the Happiness Index among its populace, we, by crafting an interactive Happiness Curriculum for our school children, can not only enhance their individual development but also impact the trajectory of our society and nation”.¹⁰ These innovative policy notions should be expanded and consciously promoted on a larger scale. By empowering Bhutanese youth with education and skills, India has not only contributed to Bhutan’s development but has also strengthened people-to-people links that extend beyond national borders.

Buddhism, Yoga and Shared Values

The enduring influence of Buddhism and the propagation of yoga serve as pillars of soft power diplomacy between India and Bhutan. To develop and strengthen international relations, India’s foreign policy under PM Modi has placed a greater emphasis on promoting India’s ‘soft power’. The government’s adoption of the notion of ‘*Panchamrit*’ (five nectares), which includes five themes: ‘Dignity’, ‘Dialogue’, ‘Shared Prosperity’, ‘Regional and Global Security’, and ‘Cultural and Civilisational Ties’, has opened new pillars in India’s foreign policy architecture.

Political and cultural ideals and traditions of the Himalayan state of Bhutan have shaped India’s relationship with Bhutan. Two formal trips to Bhutan by Indian PM Shri Narendra Modi underlined the long history of cultural and spiritual links between India and Bhutan, as well as the need of expanding people-to-people contact between the two countries’ populations. The Indian state’s ties to Bhutan have been bolstered by India’s prominence in Buddhist thinking. “Without Buddha, this century cannot be Asia’s century”, said Indian PM Shri Narendra Modi in one of his statements at the United Nations General Assembly in New York city in Sep 2014.

“The common spiritual legacy here between two states is an unchangeable constant in their long age-relationship and complements India for their greatest gift of Buddhism to its people”, says Bhutan. As a result of the two nations’ strong ties in terms of culture and religion, there have been numerous cultural exchanges, including the annual celebration of Bhutan Week in India, pilgrimages to Buddhist holy places in both countries and the holding of Buddhist conferences.¹¹

Also, the common Buddhist background of the two countries has enabled them both to connect better and develop their humanitarian ties. Indian PM Narendra Modi expands the pursuits of Indian connections with the Himalayan country based on the ideals of integration and unity derived from the ancient cultural and civilisational concept of '*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*' (The World is One Family) India's commitment in providing ongoing technical help and critical medical supplies to Bhutan during the current COVID-19 outbreak exemplifies the notion in practical reality.

The ancient practice of yoga is another important cultural link between India and Bhutan. Yoga, an ancient practice rooted in Indian culture, has emerged as a significant cultural link between India and Bhutan, strengthening the enduring bonds of their diplomatic relationship. This connection showcases the power of soft power diplomacy, fostering mutual understanding and friendship. Yoga's global popularity has resonated strongly with Bhutan, leading to collaborative efforts to promote physical and mental well-being. Many Bhutanese people are practicing yoga, an ancient Indian form of mental, physical, and spiritual discipline. When it comes to dealing with the pain, sorrow, and strains of modern life, they turn to yoga, which emphasises the concept of GNH as a yardstick by which to gauge their country's well-being. The Bhutanese have embraced this technique because it promotes physical and mental connection.

Furthermore, the foundation of India-Bhutan relations is firmly grounded in robust interpersonal connections. India holds allure for Bhutanese pilgrims, and the provisioning of facilities and licenses to tour operators merits careful consideration. Collaborative efforts between both nations can be orchestrated to streamline these processes effectively. Additionally, the spiritual connection between the two nations through Buddhism fosters a shared sense of values and ethics that contribute to their diplomatic synergy. It is essential to factor in the real-life encounters and perspectives of the people, as these can yield fresh insights for informing and shaping the diplomatic ethos of South Asian nations.

Infrastructure Development and Connectivity

India's role in supporting Bhutan's infrastructure development, including hydropower projects and road connectivity, has not only enhanced Bhutan's economic growth but has also underscored

India's commitment to Bhutan's progress. Cooperation between India and Bhutan in the hydropower industry is an excellent example of cooperation that benefits both countries.¹² Clean electricity is provided to India, while Bhutan earns export revenue. Several power agreements have been signed between the nations. The Jaldhaka Agreement, signed in 1961, marked the beginning of Indo-Bhutan hydropower cooperation. In 1987, the Chukha Hydropower Project (CHP) with a capacity of 336 Mega Watt (MW) was officially inaugurated, marking a watershed moment in Indo-Bhutan relations CHP.¹³ In the wake of CHP's overwhelming success and economic advantages, more projects were given the go-ahead. One of the largest collaborative projects between India and Bhutan, the 1,020 MW Tala Hydroelectric Project was also funded by the Government of India. Under the Framework Inter-Governmental Agreement, which the two nations signed in Apr 2014, public sector undertakings in both countries would build joint venture hydropower projects. Kholongchu, Bunakha, Wangchuk and Chamkhar are all included in this Inter-Governmental Agreement, which serves as a framework for developing the four hydroelectric power plants totalling 2120 MW on a joint venture-model between Public Sector Undertakings of the two nations. These four projects might get off the ground more quickly thanks to the Inter-Governmental Agreement, in addition to improving bilateral hydropower collaboration.¹⁴

Environmental Conservation

The mutual commitment of India and Bhutan to environmental conservation and sustainable practices further strengthens their diplomatic ties. Collaborative initiatives in preserving the Himalayan ecosystem and addressing climate change demonstrate shared values and a common goal, reinforcing the narrative of cooperation and mutual benefit. This connection underscores the potency of soft power diplomacy in fostering mutual respect and collaboration.

Both nations prioritise sustainable development and environmental preservation, echoing common values. Bhutan's commitment to maintaining carbon neutrality aligns with India's efforts to combat climate change. Such shared environmental objectives have facilitated a natural bridge for diplomatic cooperation. Collaborative initiatives, like joint conservation projects and knowledge exchange, demonstrate the tangible impact of their

soft power approach. This environmentally conscious partnership showcases how cultural and value-based ties can transcend political boundaries, fostering goodwill and friendship.

Exploring New Areas of Collaboration in India-Bhutan Relations

Bharat to Bhutan is a vision of shared prosperity that is anchored on the Indian state's belief that a partnership between the two countries can only succeed if it is based on people-to-people cooperation. Indian government's decision to strengthen ties with Bhutan's youth was motivated by the desire to meet the aspirational needs of Bhutan's youth, bridge the information gap to build trust and mutual understanding and facilitate collaboration to find innovative solutions to challenging problems that have a direct impact on the lives of young minds.

The Indian government emphasised the importance of capacity-building and decided to expand and diversify the collaboration between India and Bhutan to include new fields such as education, space research, information technology, digital payments, disaster management, and others in order to maintain the long-term relationship between the two countries. Building strong ties and an information highway among people, India's government emphasised the need to establish collaboration between India's National Knowledge Network and Druk Research and Education Network.

In addition, India encouraged the Bhutanese youth to keep pace with technical advancement by extending its cooperation in the fields of space, digital, and new technology. PM Narendra Modi inaugurated the Thimphu Ground Station erected by the Indian Space Research Organisation and welcomed the involvement of young Bhutanese scientists in India to work on building and launching Bhutan's satellite. As part of its efforts to improve educational opportunities for students throughout the Himalayan Kingdom, India established an e-library gateway for Bhutan. It is expected that the introduction of the Ru-Pay card and Bhutan's QR code payment system would further promote financial technology cooperation between the two nations by making cross-border QR code payments more easy, secure, and affordable.

For the sake of promoting a better understanding of the two nations and their inhabitants, both countries hold annual youth summits to bring together the next generation of diplomats and policymakers. In contrast, events like the India-Bhutan Start-up Conference help in establishing stronger future economic relations and foster more cooperation between the two countries' corporate sectors.

Conclusion

The India-Bhutan relationship exemplifies the profound impact of soft power diplomacy in building and nurturing bilateral ties. Historical, cultural, and geographical affinities, along with shared values, education initiatives, cultural exchanges, and collaborative projects, have collectively contributed to the growth of a relationship rooted in mutual respect and understanding. As both nations continue to harness the potential of soft power diplomacy, they pave the way for a future of enduring cooperation and shared prosperity.

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What Lessons can be Drawn from Russia-Ukraine Conflict by Indian Army with respect to Modernisation and Capital Procurement

Colonel Ashish Dutta[@]

“Tactics are based on weapon-power and not on the experiences of military history. The commander who grasps the true trend of any new, or improved, weapon will be in a position to surprise the adversary who has not”.

~ Capt JFC Fuller

Abstract

The long-drawn Russia-Ukraine conflict has shaken up geo-political narratives. Whether the conflict will result in changing the unipolar world order and brings about multi polarity is yet to be known. The conflict has largely been covered by the media through a prism of ideology, with a few independent sources covering the event from neutral perspective. While it is too early to analyse geo-political aspects, the conflict has brought forth important lessons related to weapons performance, especially as this is the first conflict involving use of advanced weaponry of both western and Russian origin by well-trained belligerents. This paper discusses lessons that can be drawn by Indian Army with respect to force modernisation and capital procurement.

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Introduction

Russia launched a special military operation against Ukraine on 24 Feb 2022, reaching the outskirts of Kyiv and withdrawing. This was branded as failure of Russia and largely attributed to failure of logistics. It has now emerged that this withdrawal was part of Russia's commitment under the draft ceasefire agreement.¹ While Russia upheld its part, Ukraine reneged on its commitments. Moot point being that many aspects of the conflict are shrouded in midst of information warfare. Any meaningful lessons from the conflict can only be drawn only when factual details are available to scholars.

Apropos, this article is based on the coverage of the conflict by news agencies and YouTube channels not only from both sides of the conflict but also neutrals.

Conduct of Operations

The conflict commenced using Eastern Bloc equipment and few drones. Military aid flowing into Ukraine comprised of Eastern Bloc equipment supplied by former Warsaw Pact nations. Subsequently, modern western equipment was provided. The conflict has provided good analysis of performance of equipment developed based on different operational philosophies and operated by trained and motivated belligerents.

Success of Bayraktar drones against Russian Armoured Fighting Vehicle (AFV) led to successful development of mobile high-powered microwave countermeasures.² Subsequently, Russia employed its own drones along with missiles and rockets to attrit Ukraine military and civil infrastructure. Hypersonic missiles rendered Patriot Systems ineffective, though few missiles may have been intercepted.³ Extensive use of missiles, Long-Range Vectors (LRVs) drones and air supremacy have turned the operational situation in Russia's favour.

Large numbers of modern western equipment were delivered to Ukraine Army for the planned spring offensive. Despite modern weapons and training abroad, the offensive has not made any headway while many western equipment have been destroyed.

Russians are conducting slow, methodical and attrition-based operations with focus on avoiding collateral damage. While military casualties are extensive on both sides, civilian casualties have been low.

Key Observations

It would be prudent to analyse performance of various equipment or arms and visualise the trajectory to be followed for equipment procurement by Indian Army (IA).

Drones. Drones have been employed for tactical as well as strategic targeting by both sides, though less successfully by Ukraine. Effectiveness of drones in shaping the battlefield and the psyche of adversaries and global audience has been established. Initial success of drones led to development of mobile electromagnetic counter measures. Based on evolutionary trajectory, Indian Airforce should focus on development and procurement of futuristic drones and counter measures. As strong domestic industrial base for drone and counter drone manufacturing exists, systems already procured should be extensively exploited to develop a cogent employment philosophy rather than preserving these for future conflicts.

AFVs. While LRVs and drones have inflicted heavy attrition, need to physically traverse large distances on battlefield has made AFVs a weapon of choice. Based on emerging threats, review of design philosophy to optimise the Iron Triangle needs to be undertaken. Deliberations on whether protection is to be achieved by heavier armour, active or passive protection or through better agility must be undertaken. As videos of tank engagements indicate that tank battles have taken place at shorter ranges, need for powerful guns with ranges of four to five kms may be reconsidered. Empirical data from the conflict and meticulous analysis of terrain obtained along India's borders should be the basis of legislating desired effective ranges as bigger guns result in weight and size penalty. Engagements beyond 1500 to 2000 m may be planned using drones and Loiter Munitions (LMs). Effectiveness of KA-52 Alligators in blunting Ukraine's summer offensive suggests the need to provide air defence resources down to troop level.

Indirect Fires. Missiles, rockets, guns and weapon locating radars were critical in shaping the battlefield.⁴ LMs, if used in counter bombardment role, can free guns for other tasks. Considering need for rapid relocation, strike corps may be equipped with mobile gun systems and pivot formations with towed guns. Sensors that can see through clouds, foliage etc are needed for targeting as well as providing real time updates to decision makers. Robust sensor-shooter links will help achieve desired effects with better efficiency. Multi barrel rocket systems with precision strike capability have proved very effective, hence greater numbers should be procured. Hypersonic missiles were effective in shaping the conflict, or at least the narrative, hence, it is imperative to focus on developing hypersonic missiles.

Air Defence (AD). Counter drone capability with a mix of hard and soft kill systems should be available at troop and platoon levels as well as all logistics echelons either by suitable groupings or changes in war establishments. In addition, AD systems capable of interdicting hyper-sonic missiles need to be inducted, especially along northern borders. With high manoeuvrability of missiles, aircraft and drones, capability to destroy launch sites should be enhanced.

Communications. Ukraine was provided Starlink Satellite Service for seamless internet connectivity which proved useful in planning, coordination and operations.⁵ Starlink connectivity remained unaffected due to easy portability of light weight, battery powered ground terminals. It's versatility and inbuilt redundancy presents a strong case for India to deploy her own swarms of satellites with similar capabilities. There were reports of effective strikes against Russian positions subsequent to interception of unsecure communications,⁶ highlighting the importance of multi layered secure communications, particularly in enemy territory.

Electronic Warfare (EW). Russian EW capabilities were central in destruction of drones and spoofing GPS guidance of LRVs.⁷ IA may also focus on developing EW capabilities to spoof or destroy adversary's satellite communication, navigation and guidance systems as well as autonomous systems. These capabilities need to be developed specific to each theatre based on terrain, environmental conditions and adversary's capabilities.

Infantry. Till commencement of the the summer offensive, media coverage of infantry operations was restricted to fighting in built-up areas with greater attention to Wagner militia. There may have been few pitched battles involving infantry, however, details are not available. From the limited coverage, effectiveness of flame throwers and thermobaric bombs emerged as an important lesson. It also appears that infantry was largely used to exploit initial success of armour. This presents a strong case for infantry to be provided with good mobility, communication and battlefield situational awareness suites to exploit fleeting opportunities. During the summer offensive, ability of Russian defences to inflict heavy casualties on Ukraine Army,⁸ highlights the need to equip defenders with mechanical and remotely delivered mining capabilities along with dedicated artillery and air power for stalling and destroying enemy columns.

Engineers. Bulk of the destruction of AFVs seems to have occurred when static. Therefore, enhancement of tactical mobility in obstacle ridden terrain has to be a focus area. While each formation fabricates crossing expedients, additional carrying capacity needs to be provided through induction of additional vehicles capable of carrying greater volumes of stores. Further, for the engineer task forces to be effective, support vehicles must be of same class and vintage as the main AFV. Accordingly, phased procurement should be based on family of AFVs which include AFV variants like bridges, trawls, ambulance etc. An important lesson drawn from Ukraine's stalled offensive is the need to equip strike corps with large number of mine breaching systems. It would also be prudent to develop robotic/drone based mine clearance systems to enhance flexibility and save lives.

Logistics. Vulnerability of logistics dumps to LRVs and aircrafts underscore need for engineers to acquire capability to construct underground infrastructure in field including for strike formations for storage of ammunition, fuel oil and lubricants, field hospitals etc. Containerised logistics including maintenance bays should be provisioned at all levels. In peace time, this would lead to huge savings by doing away with the need for brick-and-mortar infrastructure while speeding up mobilisation. There is a need to induct trucks with good cross-country mobility in first and second

line fleets. High-capacity heavy-duty trucks should be inducted in third line fleets.

Obsolete/Vintage Equipment. As the war progressed, both sides resuscitated and employed obsolete equipment.⁹ Russia, reportedly employed T-55 tanks in artillery role in light of its limited mobility and protection.¹⁰ With domestic defence industrial base at nascent stage and low production capability, IA may formulate discard policy which involves preservation of certain equipment for contingencies.

Lessons and Recommendations.

Deterrence. North Atlantic Treaty Organisation's open support against the largest nuclear power in the world put a question mark on nuclear deterrence. Russia has maintained a strategic ambivalence. The term 'Existential Threat' has been repeatedly used. It is possible that this ambiguity has been a factor in ensuring that battles have generally been fought on Ukrainian soil and limited efforts have been made towards fomenting internal turmoil in Russia or to exploit brief window of the short-lived Wagner mutiny. Beyond the current conflict, United State's limited resolve to go beyond sanctions against North Korea does indicate that direct wars between nuclear powers are not likely. Being surrounded by two nuclear powers, India should expand her nuclear arsenal and diversify delivery triad. In order to minimise threat from the adversaries, anti-ballistic missile systems should also be inducted in an accelerated manner.

Equipping Philosophy. A two front war remains a distinct possibility precluding move of dual-task forces or re-location of equipment in such scenario. Therefore, each theatre must be equipped with theatre specific equipment. Qualitative requirements for equipment to be employed in rarefied high-altitude areas, hot and humid obstacle ridden or riverine terrain and dry and hot deserts should be different. This would make equipment development and mass production easier and most likely cheaper. It would be prudent to procure equipment as per operational concept. For example, a tank of strike corps would be used for manoeuvre battles, hence, would need better mobility and a fire control system that enhances accuracy while firing on the move. On the other hand, tanks employed for counter attacks or break

in battles would require higher rates of fire in static mode, (hence less powerful engine and less sophisticated fire control system would suffice) but would require enhanced protection due to ease of targeting by adversary against static AFVs. Similarly, assault rifles required by infantry sections in occupation of defence could be heavier and have longer ranges as compared to requirement of a section undertaking assault.

Synchronisation of Requirements and Availability. In context of IA, close coordination between the 'Strategic and Capability Development & Sustenance' (CD & S) verticals is critical to achieve desired outcome from limited capital budget. At present, Line Directorates initiate proposals for 10-year Integrated Capability Development Plan which is approved by the strategic vertical. The Five-year Defence Capital Acquisition Plan and the the two-year Annual Acquisition Plan flow out of this. Battles are won by synergistic application of all arms and equipment; hence, procurement process must flow from a doctrine wherein the strategic vertical defines envisaged capabilities and CD & S completes procurement in a time bound manner. While there may be a mismatch between requirements and what the industry is capable of delivering in a finite timeframe, trial directives could be made flexible to allow for certain tolerances in parameters. It must be remembered that any equipment inducted in service, even as part of hand holding or limited series production will remain in service for many years. Therefore, such procurement should be based on quantity required for facilitating exploitation and product development rather than for filling voids.

Developmental Timelines. Operationalisation of any cutting-edge military equipment is a complex and long-drawn process. Even the most advanced military-industrial nations take many years to develop next generation systems. Russia took 18 years to develop Pantsir system as a replacement of Tunguska Gun Missile System.¹¹ T-90 tanks, despite being an upgrade of T-72 tanks were developed in six years. It took 20 years from conception to induction of M-142 High Mobility Artillery Rocket System in the US Army.¹² AH-64 Apaches were inducted more than 10 years after commencement of development.¹³ Indian defence sector is still at nascent stage; hence, the services need to cater for more time for Research and Development (R&D) and should be prepared on

case to case basis in consultation with R&D organisations as well as industries. Considering the vast requirement of the three services and the government in sync with various industry chambers could earmark private industries for specialisation in specific equipment and sub-systems. This would facilitate focused R&D and better investments, thereby achieving economy of scales and faster development of cutting-edge technology.

Atmanirbharta. Russia's self-reliance in defence sector and its 'No Limits Friendship' with China have been a major factor in its ability to produce requisite weapons and ammunition despite numerous economic sanctions. Western countries on the other hand have not been able to supply adequate weapons and ammunition to Ukraine due to limited stocks and inability of the defence industries to increase the output to meet immediate needs.¹⁴ Indian industry is still finding its feet in the defence sector. Its annual production capacity is limited and industries remain heavily dependent on foreign countries for critical military material as well as components. The Russia-Ukraine conflict has broken the chimera of short and swift wars in future. It is imperative that stocking of 100 per cent War Wastage reserves be made up on priority. Further, the Govt should lay down a stocking policy, akin to that for petroleum reserves, for military material, electronics and components required for production of defence equipment.

Conclusion

Any meaningful change comes from in-depth deliberations. For improvement in the capability development process, a cognisant decision needs to be taken at the strategic vertical of the IA with respect to force structure, organisation, concept of operations, equipment and training philosophies. Regular firing and large-scale manoeuvres are necessary to maintain operational sharpness as well as to draw realistic lessons on performance of equipment. Expenses need to be managed by restricting inventory and drawing a balance between basic equipment and niche technology within all families of equipment.

Domestic defence production, self-sufficiency in raw materials and military materials must be achieved at the earliest. Promulgation of a realistic strategy (pro-active or incremental operations) would facilitate equipment preservation by means of

mothballing, thereby freeing up funds for better maintenance of equipment. An optimum balance between sustenance and modernisation can be achieved by enforcing a policy on holding of vintage, current and state of the art equipment. It may be prudent to place capability development and sustenance verticals under Deputy Chief of the Army Staff (CD & S) as per original plans.

The lessons from the conflict need to be analysed and incorporated in light of changes in global as well as regional strategic scenario. Fresh strategic planning with an open mind, independent of current way of thinking, may be essential to enable incorporation of the lessons in Indian context.

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 - (c) BBC.com.
 - (d) CNN.com.
 - (e) Foxnews.com.
4. Neutral agencies include:-
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 - (ii) @Jeffery Sachs Official (Jeffery Sachs is an American economist, academic and public policy analyst).
 - (iii) Interviews of Seymour Hersh (Investigative Journalist and Pulitzer Prize winner).

(iv) @stephangardner (Stephan Gardner is an author from USA).

(v) @scotrittershow (Scot Ritter is a former US Marine intelligence officer and UN Weapons Inspector)

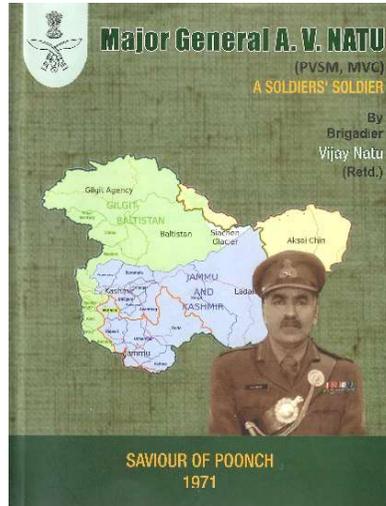
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Review Article

Major General AV Natu, PVSM, MVC A Soldier's Soldier: Saviour of Poonch 1971



Brigadier Vijay Natu (Retd)

Introduction

Major General AV Natu, PVSM, MVC; 'A Soldier's Soldier: Saviour of Poonch 1971' is an excellent biography written by his son Brigadier Vijay Natu (Retd). In this inspiring account the author has recalled the important events in his father's life and talked about how these impacted him and shaped his personality.

A weak boy at a boarding school in Akola, Maharashtra, Anant showed signs of leadership at a very young age when he challenged an older bully at school to a wrestling bout and beat him. He, thereafter, became fearless in life and this character trait remained with him. Having joined the Ramakrishna Mission to be initiated as a monk, in 1945, he could not resist the uniform calling and left the *Belur Math* to join the Army. He was then commissioned into the 13 Frontier Force Rifles in Oct 1946, after passing out from the Officers Training School at Belgaum. Post-partition General Natu was transferred to the 9 GORKHA RIFLES and he served in challenging appointments in operational areas,

participated in wars and held important command and staff appointments.

In the 1950s, he also had two very fulfilling innings in Nepal that were historic, where he contributed to reorganising the training of the Royal Nepal Army and in his second innings, he contributed vastly to the Ex-Servicemen Welfare, which included setting up seasonal pension paying camps and a hostel for the wards of Gorkha ex-servicemen at Kathmandu. Students from this hostel excelled and went on to tenant appointments in the Nepalese Army, administration and other professional fields.

The Author

Brigadier Vijay Natu, the son of Major General AV Natu, MVC did his schooling from Daly College, Indore and graduated from Fergusson College Pune. Commissioned into 4th Battalion the 9 GORKHA RIFLES in Aug 1975, he went on to command the battalion, which his father too had commanded and in which his nephew Major Varun Vaidya is presently serving. He has served in various operational areas including Sri Lanka and Siachen and has attended the Higher Command Course. He retired in 2007 and is settled in Chalisgaon, Maharashtra where he has been involved in Ex-Servicemen Welfare.

About the Book

The book can be divided into three parts, the first is his early years and the second part is General Natu's service in the army and finally his post-retirement years. Apart from dwelling on each of these parts of his father's life, it is the wonderful manner in which Brigadier Vijay Natu has captured the effect General Natu had on the various people with whom he came into close contact with and most particularly the unit bonding and esprit de corps when he discusses the family ties that existed between him and Colonel Nasib Singh as well as the ethos of the 9 GORKHA RIFLES.

Since a unit is the most important part of one's service there was an instance, when Second Lieutenant Natu was going on leave from Abbottabad in May 1947. He had accompanied Captain Usman Shaikh from his battalion, when their bus was surrounded by an unruly mob of Muslim League supporters at Attock, who

wanted to pull out and slaughter all Hindus travelling to Punjab and beyond. It was at this stage that Captain Usman kept quiet and did not reveal his religious identity thus saving him 'from lynching and certain death'. The 'camaraderie and bonding' endured.

Joining 1/9 GORKHA RIFLES post-independence, he saw action in 1947/48 in Naushera, Jammu and Kashmir. It is here that he served with Major Eric Vas, who later rose to be an Army Commander, whom he described as 'a straight forward and courageous man'. Eric once submitted a report to the division headquarter on a '*chapatti*' and when asked to explain the unusual behaviour sent a classic retort; he said "I regret the use of my stationery but *atta* is the only commodity I have for fighting, feeding and for futile correspondence". He was the brainchild behind setting up the Higher Command Course at the College of Combat; one of the most incisive courses in the Army. Anant looked 'up to Major Eric Vas as a friend, philosopher and guide' throughout his service and even later in life.

Posted to 4/9 GORKHA RIFLES on the raising of the battalion in 1960, he was the Second in Command under Lieutenant Colonel Nasib Singh in Dehradun. In Jun 1962, the Battalion was moved to Ahlihal in Himachal Pradesh and was later airlifted to Bomdila in Oct 1962. During the move one aircraft flew a platoon to Bombay which was promptly deployed for airport security.

Post-war the battalion was involved in a series of exercises where the commander of 77 Infantry Brigade, Brigadier Sartaj Singh, was greatly impressed by his professionalism. Incidentally, General Natu served under him while commanding his battalion when he was General Officer Commanding (GOC) 5 Mountain Division and later as Commander 93 Infantry Brigade when he was GOC 15 Corps. General Sartaj's professionalism, values and conduct left a deep impression on him.

Nasib, who raised 4/9 GORKHA RIFLES had joined Hodson's Horse as a *Sowar* in World War II and General Messervy, who was their Commandant 'saw a spark' in him and groomed him to become an officer. He laid the strong foundations for the battalion. General Natu considered him his 'professional *guru*'. Later, Nasib was selected to be part of the raising of Indo Tibetan Border Police. Incidentally, the sons of the first three Commanding Officers

(COs) of 4/9 GORKHA RIFLES, Colonel Rajinder Singh, Brigadier Vijay Natu and Major General Kishen Singh, the son of Lieutenant Colonel (later Brigadier) Hari Singh who took over the battalion from General Natu all joined 9 GORKHA RIFLES while Major General KVS Lalotra, the younger son of Nasib joined 11 GORKHA RIFLES. As per Lieutenant General Anil Bhatt PVSM, UYSM, AVSM, SM, VSM, (Retd) who also belongs to this battalion, the tradition still endures and, he said that General Natu's grandson Varun Vaidya also joined the battalion and was his ADC.

General Natu's best came when he went on to win glory for India in Poonch during the 1971 Indo-Pakistan War. The author has captured the events and memoirs very well by those who served with him during the defence of Poonch for which he was awarded the Maha Vir Chakra, the second highest gallantry award in India.

He had prepared the formation extremely well by not only physically visiting each post since taking over but also by rehearsing the drills and putting his formation through a two-sided exercise. In a novel step he ensured that he was 'party to the process of distributing compensation to the civilians whose land had been appropriated for security reasons', by accompanying the District Collector he instilled a 'sense of trust about the Army'.

During the war though attacked by superior strength, his battalions of 6 SIKH, 1/4 GORKHA RIFLES, 8 JAT and 11 J&K Militia stood firm and repulsed the attacks, 13 MAHAR and elements of 9 PARA (Commando) also successfully counter-attacked Thanpir, a location that had been captured taking the Pakistanis by surprise by attacking along a 'precipitous slope'.

He also heeded the advice of his Brigade Major then Major (later Brigadier) AK Sahni, for not executing an offensive plan initially and for waiting for artillery build up and for the situation to stabilise before he launched 21 PUNJAB and C Company 9 PARA (Commando) to capture a Pakistani post successfully.

His meticulous preparations involved studying Brigadier Pritam Singh's battle for Poonch in 1947/48, his perseverance, diligence and ability to motivate his subordinates and stand by them. Major (later Lieutenant General) VM Patil, who was posted as his Brigade Major recalls his initial briefing in which he said 'his command is based on team work, trust and transparency'.

No wonder, Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw at the Investiture Ceremony remarked to his wife “Silu do you remember the young Captain from 1/9 GORKHA RIFLES from our days in Ferozpur in the early 50’s. Here he is, a decorated soldier. I knew he would not let me down when I selected him to command the strategically important 93 Infantry Brigade at Poonch”.

On promotion General Natu went on to command 4 Infantry Division at Babina and here too he left his mark. This is where he instituted the concept of divisional battle schools which though not appreciated at that time has gone on to become an ‘important facet’ of most divisions.

In Dec 1975, he was posted as Chief of Staff of 16 Corps at Nagrota. The Corps Commander was Lieutenant General KV Krishna Rao, who went on to become the Army Chief. In this appointment he had to resolve a sensitive incident that occurred on the line of control in the Rajouri Sector.

An officer in a unit had overstayed leave, but the CO had overlooked it. However, a Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO) in the same unit was punished for a similar offence. The company commander of the NCO protested to the CO for applying two different yardsticks and sought the intervention of the brigade commander who took no action. Deeply offended, the company commander asked his company on the post to revolt. The situation escalated as the company commander refused to back down and a neighbouring battalion was being asked to ‘assault and capture the post’. General Natu intervened, and he drove up to the base of the post against all apprehensions and then walked to the post and with a loud hailer, talked to the officer and told him that the officer’s elder brother had served with him during his previous tenure. When the officer admitted that he was ‘fearful that he would be killed if he surrendered’ he assured him of his physical safety but told him he would face disciplinary action. The officer and NCO then surrendered. This ‘prevented an ugly scenario’. There are many lessons that stand out in this episode including the fact that an officer was willing to go to any lengths to look after his men.

Fond Reminisces

Major (later Lieutenant General) YM Bammi, who was a company commander in Poonch recalls General Natu allowing the officers to speak frankly and give out their views to the Corps Commander who was a hard task master during his visit and operational discussion and recalls that; 'due to his initiative the visit went off well'.

Lieutenant General Inder Verma, who served with him in Kathmandu says; "an important part of his personality was his humility and kindness, his feet firmly on the ground". General BA Karriappa as GOC Maharashtra and Gujarat Area recalls an incident in which General Natu asked him to help out a widow with her emoluments and once he had got her dues released, General Natu brought the widow and her children to Mumbai so they could thank him.

Colonel Balbir Singh Purewal recalls an incident during grenade training when General Natu was the CO and Havildar Min Bahadur had passed away. This was due to an 'innovative method of training' but the GOC, General Sartaj Singh, gave a '*shabash*' for trying this method of grenade throwing. Such were the leaders at that time, willing to stand by their orders and for their subordinates.

General Natu was deeply influenced by Swami Vivekananda and the Quit India Movement and stands tall as a great patriot and a brave 'Soldier General'. He contributed post superannuation to nation-building through social service.

Conclusion

This book is remarkable in many ways because it not only talks about the contribution of General Natu but also throws light on a very important period of the history of our army from partition to post 1971. How the army was shaped by the debacle of the 1962 War, and it imbibed the lessons learnt and went on in 1971 to attain a decisive victory in the war with Pakistan by concentrating on professionalism. The turnaround in those nine years which included the 1965 War with Pakistan was exceptional.

A large part of this success can be attributed to the leaders in the army, men of integrity who stood tall and firm, confident and

supportive, some of whose personalities have been covered in this book. What also stands out in the book is our regimental system, where 'the unit is a family', and deep relationships endure. The bonding is tremendous, and the ties within this family persist.

There is no doubt that this book should be widely read not only in the forces from a professional perspective but also by others as it provides an insight into the ethos and values of the army and a unit which is the foundation and the manner in which it shapes one's character.

Major General Jagatbir Singh, VSM (Retd)

RESULT OF ESSAY COMPETITIONS 2023

USI GOLD MEDAL ESSAY COMPETITION

Subject: 'Ukraine Conflict: Military Lessons for India'

First	0921-Q Commandant (JG) Gaurav Sharma Indian Cost Guard Bureau of Navikas Near MSEDCL Office Old Mumbai-Pune Highway Bhingari, Panvel, Navi Mumbai-410221	Gold Medal, Cash Award of Rs. 15,000/- and entry accepted for publication.
Second	24574-H Gp Capt Swaim Prakash Singh Centre for Air Power Studies P-284, Arjan Path, Subroto Park New Delhi-110010	Cash Award of Rs.10,000/- and entry accepted for publication.

LIEUTENANT GENERAL SL MENEZES MEMORIAL ESSAY COMPETITION

Subject: 'China's Galwan Aggression, Military Lessons for India'

First	IC-74790P Maj Yogeshwer Rana TCW/Army AD College Pin-928992 C/o 99 APO	Cash Award of Rs 10,000/-, Certificate and entry accepted for publication
Second	42994-N Cdr Anurag Tiwari Naval War College INS Mandovi, Goa-403109	Certificate

USI- WAR WOUNDED FOUNDATION JOINT ESSAY COMPETITION

Subject: 'Looking at the Disabled Soldier – Past, Present and Future – His Care, Career Prospects and Rehabilitation'

First	06813-H Cdr Anirudh Kumar Singh C/o Navy Wing DSSC, Wellington Tamil Nadu- 643231	Cash Award of Rs 15,000/-, Certificate and entry accepted for publication
Second	06843-A Cdr Subhash Ranjan C/o Navy Wing DSSC, Wellington Tamil Nadu- 643231	Cash Award of Rs 10,000/- and Certificate

USI LATEST PUBLICATION DURING 2022-2020

Pub Code	Title of Book & Name of Author	Price(Rs)	Year
Adm-6 (UNPO)/ 2022)**	"UN Peace Operations Part - VI : Challenges of Mission Leadership in UN Peace Operations in delivering the mandate" Edited by Maj Gen AK Bardalai and Maj Gen PK Goswami, VSM (Retd)	350	2022
OP-2/ 2022**	"India and Blue Economy : Challenges and Way Forward" by Dr Roshan Khanijo & Ms Samridhi Roy	325	2022
OP-3/ 2022**	"Military Manual on Laws of War" by Wg Cdr Umesh Chandra Jha (Retd)	250	2022
M-1/ 2022**	"Eastern Military Thought" by Colonel Harjeet Singh (Retd)	325	2022
Adm-5 (UNPO) /2022**	"UN Peace Operations Part - V : Women, Peace & Security" Edited by Maj Gen AK Bardalai and Maj Gen PK Goswami, VSM (Retd)	350	2022
CMHCS-5	"History of Indian Air Defence Artillery 1940-1945" By Col Mandeep Singh (Retd) M/s Manohar Publishers & Distributors	1495	2022
OP-1/ 2022**	"Military Legal System in China" By Wg Cdr Umesh Chandra Jha (Retd)	250	2022
CMHCS-4**	"BATTLE TALES" – Soldiers' Recollections of the 1971 War" Edited by Sqn Ldr RTS Chhina, MBE (Retd)	1350	2022
R-111**	"STRATEGIC YEAR BOOK 2021" Concept and Structure by Maj Gen BK Sharma, AVSM, SM & Bar (Retd), Edited by Lt Gen GS Katoch, PVSM, AVSM, VSM (Retd), Gp Capt Sharad Tewari, VM (Retd) and Dr Roshan Khanijo	1850	2021
R-112	"Maritime Corridors in the Indo-Pacific : Geopolitical Implications for India" By Cdr Subhasish Sarangi M/s Pentagon Press	1295	2021
NSP-38**	"Role of Niche and Disruptive Technologies in India's Deterrence and War Fighting Capabilities" By Lt Gen PJS Pannu, PVSM, AVSM, VSM (Retd)	295	2021
NSS-66**	"TRANSNATIONAL TERRORISM – Evolving Threats and Responses" Edited by Maj Gen RPS Bhadauria, VSM (Retd) and Dr Roshan Khanijo	850	2021
M-1/21**	"The Determinants of India's National Military Strategy" By Lt Gen (Dr) Rakesh Sharma, PVSM, UYSM, AVSM, VSM (Retd)	295	2021
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CS3 /R-113**	"Cyber Security & Cyberspace in International Relations - A Roadmap for India's Cyber Security Policy" By Professor Gautam Sen	895	2021
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CMHCS-3	"WITH HONOR AND GLORY - Five Great Artillery Battles" By Maj Gen AJS Sandhu, VSM (Retd) Published by USI (CMHCS)	-	2020
R-105**	"Tao of Soldiering the Chinese Paradigm – The Shift in Human Resources Development in PLA and Lessons for India" By Col Nihar Kuanr	1995	2020

* Available at USI of India ** Available at M/s Vij Books of India Pvt Ltd

USI

(Estd. 1870)

OUR ACTIVITIES

Library and Reading Room

The library holds over 68,000 books, and journals, including some books of 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, on an astonishing variety of subjects. While the principal emphasis is on strategy and defence, there are a large number of works on different vistas of Indian life. There are memoirs, biographies, recollections, diaries, journals, manuscripts for scholars and researchers. The reading room is air-conditioned, spacious and well stocked in terms of current reading material. The library was automated in 2002.

Correspondence Courses

The Institution runs regular correspondence courses for officers of the Armed Forces to assist them in preparing for promotion examinations, and for the entrance examinations to the Defence Services Staff College and Technical Staff College. Over the years, this has been a significant and well-received activity.

USI Journal

The *USI Journal* is the oldest surviving defence journal in the country and in Asia, having first appeared in 1871. In an era when there is a feeling that free expression of views by Defence personnel is not looked upon kindly by the establishment, the Journal in fact provides just such a forum, without regard to seniority and length of service in the Armed Forces, subject of course, to propriety and quality of the written work.

Centre for Strategic Studies and Simulation

The Erstwhile Centre for Research and its resources have been merged into the new Centre named as USI Centre for Strategic Studies and Simulation (USI-CS3) w.e.f. 01 January 2005. The Centre aims at conducting detailed and comprehensive enquiry, research and analyses of national and international security related issues, and gaming and simulation of strategic scenarios, to evolve options for wider discussion and consideration.

USI Centre for UN Peacekeeping (CUNPK)

The Centre was established in 2000 and functioned with USI till Aug 2014, when it moved out of USI premises and was delinked from USI. Its aims were organising workshops, seminars and training capsules for peace-keepers, observers and staff officers – both

Indian and foreign. It also oversaw the practical training of Indian contingents. It functioned under a Board of Management headed by the Vice Chief of the Army Staff and worked in close coordination with the Service Headquarters and the Ministries of External Affairs and Defence. In August 2014, CUNPK moved out to the accommodation allotted by the Army HQ.

Centre for Military History and Conflict Studies (CMHCS)

The USI-Centre for Military History and Conflict Studies (USI-CMHCS) was established in December 2000 at the behest of the three Service Headquarters for encouraging an objective study of all facets of Indian military history with a special emphasis on the history of the Indian Armed Forces. It focuses on diverse aspects of the history of Indian military evolution, policies and practices-strategic, tactical, logistical, organisational, socio-economic, as well as the field of contemporary conflict studies in the broader sense.

Gold Medal Essay Competition

Every year the Institution organises a gold medal essay competition open to all officers. These essays, the first one of which was introduced in 1871, constitute a barometer of opinion on matters that affect national security in general and the defence forces in particular.

USI-War Wounded Foundation Joint Essay Competition

This essay competition was instituted in 2021 after signing of the MoU between USI and the War Wounded Foundation. The competition is open to all across the globe and must be on the subject of issues relating to the experiences and/or rehabilitation of war disabled personnel of the Armed Forces of India.

Lt Gen SL Menezes Memorial Essay Competition

This has been instituted from 2015 on a subject related to Armed Forces Historical Research. The Essay Competition is open to all across the globe.

Lectures, Discussions and Seminars

A series of lectures, discussions and seminars on service matters, international affairs, and topics of general interest to the Services, are organised for the benefit of local members in Delhi.

MacGregor Medal

This medal is awarded to Armed Forces personnel for valuable reconnaissance and adventure activity they may have undertaken.

MEMBERSHIP

The following are eligible to become members of the Institution :

- Officers of the Armed Forces
- Class I Gazetted Officers of Group 'A' Central Services.
- Any category mentioned above will be eligible even though retired or released from the Service.
- Cadets from the NDA and Cadets from the Service Academies and Midshipmen.

For further particulars, please write to Director General, USI of India, Rao Tula Ram Marg, (Opposite Signals Enclave) Post Bag No. 8, Vasant Vihar PO, New Delhi – 110 057