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DEFENCE AND DIPLOMACY

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DEFENCE AND DIPLOMACY

IN PURSUIT OF NATIONAL SECURITY

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Kiran Krishnan Nair
- China's Military Aviation Industry
Ravinder Singh Chhatwal



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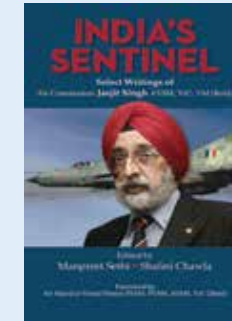
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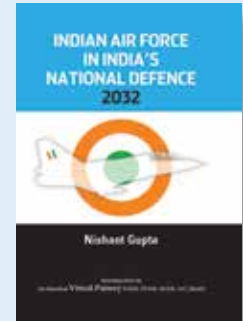
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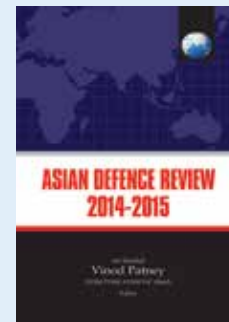
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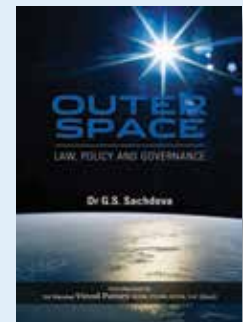
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New Delhi

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Editor-in-Chief

Air Marshal **Vinod Patney**, SYSM PVSM AVSM VrC, (Retd)

Consulting Editor

Dr Shalini Chawla

Distributor

KW Publishers Pvt. Ltd.

All correspondence may be addressed to

Editor-in-Chief

DEFENCE AND DIPLOMACY

Arjan Path, Subroto Park, New Delhi 110 010

Telephone: (91.11) 25699131-32 Fax: (91.11) 25682533

e-mail: diroffice@aerospaceindia.org

capsnetdroff@gmail.com

website: www.capsindia.org

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CONTENTS

Editor's Note	V
1. Analysing the Greek Crisis <i>Nitin Gadkari</i>	1
2. Challenges of the Security Transition in Afghanistan Post US Drawdown <i>Shalini Chawla</i>	11
3. Al Qaeda to Islamic State: A Lesson Failed <i>Aersh Danish</i>	27
4. Post-Earthquake Nepal and the Constitution: An Opportunity Missed for an Inclusive and Fair Constitution? <i>Uday Deshwal</i>	37
5. China's Foreign Policy Towards Sri Lanka: Implications For India <i>Shaheli Das</i>	47
6. Assessing the Challenges of Deterring China <i>Swati Arun</i>	61
7. India-China Military Space Cooperation: Evolving Beyond Joint Statement to Engagement <i>Kiran Krishnan Nair</i>	71

CONTENTS

8. China's Military Aviation Industry 81
Ravinder Singh Chhatwal
9. Cyber Security Challenges for India:
An Assessment of its Preparedness 91
E Dilipraj
10. Social Media: Opportunities and Challenges 109
Kriti Singh

EDITOR'S NOTE

This edition of the *Journal* comprises articles embracing varied themes but a common factor is that they all relate to the *Defence and Diplomacy* aspects of national security.

The 2015 Greek economic crisis threatened the continuance of the European Union (EU) till a temporary salve was agreed to. It is a moot point whether the crisis is over or has merely ebbed a bit, and will reappear in a more troublesome manner. After all, it was only in 2011 that the first bailout package of as much as Euros 110 billion was given to Greece, but the situation soon returned to square one. In the lead article, **Maj Gen Nitin Gadkari**, gives his individual view on the possible similarities of the Greek problem with India. The Greek system wherein all civil servants enjoy all life employment, cannot be sustained. On the other hand, governments that introduced austerity packages could not last for too long. It is, indeed, a conundrum. However, the author opines that in India, 80 percent of public expenditure goes towards salaries and pensions, and that too demands that the quantum of moneys available to the government must increase.

Academics and strategic analysts will continue to discuss the situation in Afghanistan and Pakistan for many years. Apparently, the problems in the war-torn land that is Afghanistan are difficult to solve or even ease. The best we can hope for is to contain the situation. The difficulties are magnified by Pakistan's approach to Afghanistan, Pakistan's support to the Taliban and other terror outfits, and the problem of terrorism in homeland Pakistan as well. The immediate consideration is the impact of the impending US drawdown from the region. In a well-researched and reasoned article, **Dr Shalini Chawla** argues that although the attempted transition, starting in 2011, to give the Afghanistan Army the responsibility for security has resulted in improved capabilities of the Afghan National Army, the Taliban

remains a potent force. There have been many attempts to negotiate with it, but have not succeeded. In some cases, the attempts appeared promising but the promise soon fizzled out. The constitution of the Afghan National Army has its own problems due to tribal loyalties, and the lack of potent offensive air power makes the task of combating the Taliban and other terrorist organisations very difficult.

The birth of both Al Qaeda and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) was, arguably, midwived by states or coalitions seeking to reap immediate benefits. Unfortunately, the long-term impact was not seriously considered. They started as organisations seeking an Islamic world but soon degenerated into *jihadi* outfits. **Aersh Danish** examines this phenomenon and compares the two movements.

Moving on to Nepal, in an article written before the Nepalese Parliament approved the new Constitution, **Uday Deshwal** wondered why it was taking so long to finalise a Constitution. It had taken many unsuccessful attempts to cobble together a Constitution and even the 2011 Seven-Point Agreement did not bear fruit till now. Tragedies should normally bring people together but, he says, even the massive April 2015 earthquake failed to galvanise the Parliament. His views were somewhat premature as the Constitution was approved soon after he wrote the article. However, the article is still worth reading.

China continues to be a subject of study by all think-tanks. There are many aspects about China that impinge on national security and, in this issue, we carry four articles touching on different themes.

Some prescient analysts had forecast the recent fall in the Chinese stock market and the devaluation of the yuan. More importantly, like any country gaining in economic wealth, China needs markets and raw materials. Hence, it was but natural for China to make inroads into Africa, the Central Asian Republics, the Af-Pak region and Sri Lanka. Chinese support in building the Hambantota port has strategic connotations as well. **Shaheli Das** examines the impact of China's foreign policy towards Sri Lanka with the assumption of power by President Sirisena, who has made it clear that he wishes to reduce dependence on any one country.

Swati Arun boldly assesses the challenges of deterring China. She argues that although it was the US that aided the rise of China, today's China is posing many challenges and demonstrating

brinkmanship bordering a dare. Hence, countries in Southeast Asia and in the Western Pacific have been forced to increase their defence budgets and military preparedness. Should the US not challenge the Chinese expansionist designs?

In a thought provoking article, **Wg Cdr K K Nair** refers to the May 15 Joint Statement at the conclusion of Prime Minister Modi's visit to China where cooperation in space was mooted. He suggests that civilian space cooperation should extend to military space cooperation for mutual benefit.

In the fourth article on China, **Gp Capt Ravinder Singh Chhatwal** looks at the Chinese military aviation industry. He discusses how from relatively humble beginnings when it was beholden to the then Soviet Union, China has made heavy investments in the sector. The progress made since the turn of the century has, indeed, been impressive. However, there are areas like the manufacture of aero-engines where China still lags behind.

The recognition that cyber is now the fifth domain of warfare is now well accepted. It is now an important ingredient of military planning and demands continuous study, and research and development of strategy. **Dilipraj**, in an informative article, and discusses the role of the government agencies and the service providers. The threats to our cyber environment are also addressed and some recommendations are made that we should adopt.

The last article takes a different tack and examines the opportunities and challenges afforded by the social media. **Kriti Singh** suggests that the importance of the social media is growing and it now impacts nearly all facets of personal and government activities. She addresses the question of whether and how it may be controlled and opines that it is time to evolve a strategy.

Happy reading.



ANALYSING THE GREEK CRISIS

NITIN GADKARI

INTRODUCTION

The recent crisis in Greece has necessitated that we all take stock of the respective regional and intra-regional economic alliances. The trouble for Greece had been brewing for a long time and, finally, the matter has gone beyond loans and bailouts. As a strategic thought, does this crisis have any similarity with the state of economics in India, and the implications for India? This is the matter under discussion. What happens in the EU (European Union) countries is of little consequence or significance from the point of view of policy formulations, yet somewhere there lies a lesson in the Greek crisis which needs to be taken note of by nations which lie within an alliance.

Greece joined the euro zone in 2001. At that point in time, the EU was looking to consolidate and add new members to the union in a bid to improve the trade and commerce ties and expand the political consensus on matters which had defined European history in the better part of the 20th century. The aim of introducing a common currency, the euro, was to reduce the trade costs and increase trade volumes amongst member nations. Greece joined the euro zone in 2002. Greece, at the time of its entry, had a declared debt to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) ratio of 60 percent and a budget deficit equal to 1.5 percent, which was in line with conditions stipulated to join the EU. (It was

Major General **Nitin Gadkari** is a reiterated army officer with a distinguished career. He writes extensively on issues of strategic and economic importance.

much later that it was realised that the budget deficit figure actually was way beyond, and stood at 8.3 percent.) Expenditures were reduced by issuing shares like railway bonds which the government bought and the expenditure was converted into a financial transaction. Such financial subterfuge reduced the deficit from an actual of 8.3 percent to a mere 1.5 percent, well below the threshold mark of 3 percent which was the precondition to join the euro for any nation as enshrined in the Maastricht Treaty of 1992 and ran a debt to GDP ratio of nearly 100 percent. Under these circumstances, Greece's entry into the EU should have at least been watched with caution. But optimism threw caution to the winds. The European nations were doing well and there was no reason to suspect the onset of depression and string of collapses like that of the Lehman Brothers in the US which were to follow within the next five years. Greece was scheduled to host the Olympic Games in 2004, and the new government, instead of reforming and getting its act together, compounded the problem by borrowing heavily. The banks were happy to lend as there was no fear of a sovereign default and Greece borrowed at a cheap rate of interest, the same as the Germans, as there was no mechanism to distinguish between the German and Greece economies, i.e. healthy and not so healthy economies, as all were at par. This was disastrous as the markets failed to see the mountain of debt that was being created in Greece. Why did it happen in Greece? To understand this, one has to peek into Greece's history.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Takis Michas in his paper "Putting Politics above Markets: Historical Background to the Greek Debt Crisis" calls Greece a rent seeking society. Signifying that the landlord is only interested in seeking rent at the end of the month and is not bothered about how the client will earn it. Coupled with it is the political clientelism which means, that those who are in favour of the political masters will benefit at the cost of others. The influence of the Eastern Orthodox Church and the legacy of the Ottoman Empire left a very weak civil society.¹

The state was supreme and all sought favours from it. Due to the overemphasis of the state in all forms of civil and social life,

1. <http://www.cato.org/publications/working-paper/putting-politics-above-markets-historical-background-greek-debt-crisis>

government jobs or public sector employment was most sought after. Greece has a system in which political support is provided in exchange for material benefits known as “*rousfeti*” in Greek. The state is the instrument for creating and distributing rents or benefits among various interest groups.²

There are three favours that a party in power can provide to its clients: employment in the civil sector, establishment of rules and regulations which limit competition, and imposition of levies and taxes which benefit those groups which are not part of the transactions.

We need to explain them one by one. The granting of civil services jobs was one of the prime favours a government would grant to ensure loyalty votes. But a very significant change was made in 1919: all civil servants were given life employment, meaning that there was no retirement. What this did was to bloat the bureaucracy over the years and the government salary bill was going only one way: up, without adding any value to the output. Nearly 80 percent of the public expenditure in Greece goes towards payment of the salaries and pensions of the civil servants. Getting a government job in Greece is like a sinecure and not a contractual agreement for work.³

The second method that the government adopts is limiting business to certain factions, namely, the clients, and discouraging others by putting in unusual conditions such as regulating closing times, dictating the geographical proximity of two similar business ventures, putting minimum fees for professional services employed and limiting or restricting employment. An example comprises lawyers—they are a must in any business deal and the government stipulates their minimum fees limits. Similarly, drug stores and optician shops—these cannot be run by anyone without having the necessary degrees. This discourages entry of competitors. Then there is the case of labour unions. Loading and unloading of goods from a vegetable lorry or a truck, for example, can only be done by union workers for whom the minimum wage is stipulated by the government. On top of that, the businessman has to pay the real loaders to do the job as the union workers are never available, and never on time.

2. <http://object.cato.org/sites/cato.org/files/pubs/pdf/WorkingPaper-5.pdf>

3. <http://www.quora.com/What-is-Greeces-crisis>

The third way by which the political distribution of benefits operates is through the imposition of levies on transactions benefitting “client groups” that are not a party to the transaction. The following are some examples. If you want to start a business in Greece, you have to pay one percent of the starting capital to the lawyer’s pension fund. If you have a business and you want to advertise your brand or product you have to pay an amount equal to 20 percent of the advertising expenses to the pension funds of the journalists. Each time you buy a ticket on a boat, 10 percent goes to the pension fund of the harbour workers.⁴ A part of the ticket price that covers the insurance of passengers goes to the sailors’ social security fund. This was to the extent that there were some heads for which beneficiaries did not even exist.⁵

RAMIFICATIONS

What does it result in? The Greek economy is like the socialistic economies. The government regulates all aspects of the economy for all other considerations other than economic. It is a welfare state for a majority, at the cost of a few. It encourages corruption and discourages wealth creation. The government is not the provider but the redistributor of wealth. It is not surprising then that not many people want to create wealth. An economy where the underlying message is that the state is good and markets are bad has a long-term disaster written all over it. As long as the Greeks were on their own with their own currency, this state of affairs did not worry the rest of Europe. But after the entry of Greece in the euro zone through an act of guile and subterfuge, as explained already, the Greeks were now eating out of the kitty of some other hard working nations and this is where the crisis came to roost.

Since their entry into the euro zones, the Greeks have been borrowing money and the European Central Bank (ECB) has been lending in the hope that with every tranche, the Greeks would try and improve their state of affairs. In 2009, the euro zone nations realised that Greece was likely to default on interest payments and this would have been the first case of sovereign default. This was

4. n.2.

5. n.3.

after the EU realised that the Greece government had fudged its own debt data submitted earlier. The first bailout happened in 2011 when the ECB provided a bailout sum of € 110 billion. This was preconditioned by austerity packages to be implemented by the Greek Parliament. However, these austerity packages did not go down well with the common public as they impinged upon their sinecure privileges which the government had bestowed on them as part of the political clientelism philosophy. So when pensions were reduced or working ages were restricted and public servants' salaries were capped, there were widespread protests and disruption of public services. Six austerity packages were approved by the Greek Parliament but these resulted in the fall of two governments, till January 2015, when Alexis Tsipras, the present Greek prime minister, was sworn in. He came to power on an anti-austerity vote and wanted to abandon the path of austerity. By June 2015, it was clear that the first sovereign default for payment of International Monetary Fund (IMF) loans would take place as the Greeks were unwilling to bend to the EU conditions mandatory for a bailout receipt. Tsipras referendum gimmick only made things worse for Greece as other euro zone countries were convinced that Greece would not mend its ways. Alexis Tsipras was able to get a deal on the bailout package from the euro members and saved a **Grexit** at least temporarily.

CAN THINGS CHANGE FOR GREECE?

Is it possible for Greece to come back on track or stand on its feet? Only time can give a certain answer, but as things stand, Greece will find it extremely difficult to manage its economic affairs any better in the future. The reasons are explained in the next part of this article. If things have to change for Greece, then serious and wide ranging structural reforms are required for the Greek economy.

In mathematical terms, the ratio of debt to GDP is a clear indicator of an economy's strength and robustness. All advanced economies have debts as they borrow for future economic growth. It is believed by economists that as long as the debt to GDP ratio is below 100 percent and the rate of growth of the GDP is more than the rate of interest of the loan repayment, the economy has hope.

So suppose the debt to GDP ratio is 100 percent and the rate of growth of the economy or the GDP is 3 percent and the rate of interest for repayment is 2 percent and if the budget is balanced, then in real terms, there is growth of 1 percent for the economy. But, on the contrary, if the country is paying interest at 4 percent in the above example, then in real terms, there is retardation of the economy in spite of a mathematical growth of the GDP at 3 percent. The corollary to this is that if the rate of interest is greater than the GDP growth, then, to keep the same level of debt, the GDP would have to grow proportionately more than the GDP growth as compared to the last year's growth. To be more precise, if the debt to GDP ratio is 150 percent, a 2 percent interest rate would require a 3 percent growth rate to keep the debt stable at 150 percent.⁶

Keeping this simple maths in mind if one looks at Greece's figures, it would be apparent how precarious a situation the country's economy is in. Greece has a current debt to GDP ratio of 170 percent. So, applying the logic from above, Greece's GDP growth rate prior to the current bailout needed to be 1.70 times greater than the rate of interest that Greece pays on its debt just to keep its ratio constant. The following are some facts which will allow us make judgments on Greece's ability to improve or at least sustain its debt to GDP ratio.⁷

Since 1970, Greece's best annualised GDP growth rate in any five years has been + 1.50 percent, and its average annual growth rate is + 0.46 percent. However, in the last ten years, Greece's average growth rate has been + 0.50 percent.⁸ Compare this to the interest rates payment. Since 1997, Greece's lowest interest rates on 10-year bonds was 3.41 percent, with an average rate interest being 7.5 percent. In the past ten years, the ten-year bond interest rates were averaging around 8.16 percent.⁹ It can, thus, be seen that the maths is all stacked against the Greeks. Using the Greeks' current debt to GDP ratio, as stated above, the best case and the likely case for the ensuing 10 years¹⁰ has been drawn below (both have been drawn from figures

6. <http://www.zerohedge.com/news/2015-07-14/greek-2025-debtgdp-336>.

7. Ibid.

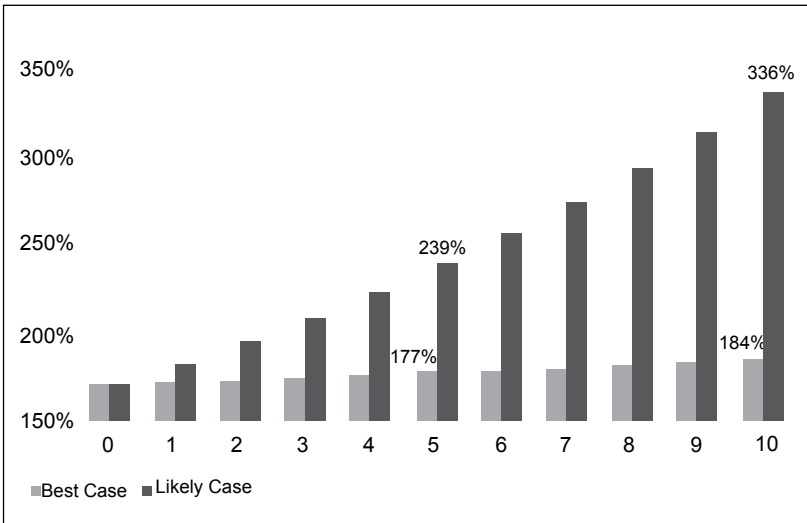
8. Ibid.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid.

stated above). As can be seen, in the best case, the GDP to debt ratio will rise to at least 184 percent and in the likely case, it would rise to 336 percent. Both are alarmingly high (see Fig. 1).

Fig 1: GDP to Debt Ratio



Data Courtesy: St. Louis Federal Reserve (FRED) and Bloomberg

At this rate, any bailout will only bring temporary relief and postpone the inevitable to a later date. The bailout package comes as a loan and not as a grant. Thus, the debt keeps mounting. The current loans, as in the past, go towards clearing the old debts first. Meaning that the Greeks are borrowing to pay back old debts. Whatever is left, goes into payment of salaries and, thus, the bailout package does not add wealth to the Greek economy, it just keeps it afloat until a later date. Most economists argue that ultimately debt forgiveness may be the only option for the EU. It is this author's belief that even after that, the state of affairs of the Greek economy would not change, for, collectively, as a nation, it has not hit the Greek psyche that they have been fundamentally wrong in the way they run their economy. Greece has to make serious structural changes in its economic policies, i.e. move away from putting the state before the markets and follow a free market economy principle before it can see prosperity.

SIMILARITIES WITH INDIA?

How is the situation similar to that of India? This is a good question and most readers would be puzzled at any similarities drawn. Yet, there are a lot of similarities, and lessons to be learnt from this crisis. Not long ago, in 1991, before the economic liberalisation of the Indian economy under Prime Minister Narsimha Rao and Finance Minister Manmohan Singh, India resembled the present Greece state. We had to pledge 67 tons of our gold to the Bank of England, restructure our economic policies towards a market orientation, moving away from socialistic practices which the government had been practising for a long time. India was having a GDP to debt ratio to the tune of 74 percent at the time of the crisis. But what was more grave was the balance of payment crisis. India had a foreign exchange reserve of \$ 1.2 billion, just enough to meet the country's import needs for three weeks. India came close to a sovereign default in repayment of the external balance of payment. It had to borrow from the IMF which was preconditioned like the Greeks on structural reforms and physical move of 47 tons of gold out of India. The IMF then provided India with an emergency loan of US \$ 600 million of the US \$ 2.7 billion US agreed to as a loan amount. This situation was similar to what is happening to Greece now. Since then, India has made structural changes to its economy and today, it has come out of the nightmarish situation of 1991.

But how is India similar to Greece? It is, in more than one ways: Indians have the same psyche as the Greeks—they love a huge government establishment. Indians too love rent seeking, thus, the taxation rates are amongst the heaviest in the developing world. And the licencing raj doesn't seem to be ending in spite of everyone's best efforts. Corruption and crony capitalism are rampant in India. All the conditions of social significance are similar and, thus, we landed up in the same spot in 1991. Fortunately, for India, the government of the day stood up to the challenge and made genuine structural reforms, liberalised the economy and encouraged market forces and, thus, the macroeconomic parameters took a turn for the better. Today, India's foreign exchange reserves are in excess of US \$ 300 billion, the debt to GDP ratio hovers around 65 percent and the fiscal deficits are around 4 percent. While these parameters are decent, they are not

brilliant. It means it would be foolish to think that India cannot go into an economic crisis again. A bad monsoon, poor implementation of economic policies and a few cases of corporate frauds could erode the investment confidence in India, forcing many a turn of events, like the fleeing of foreign capital, low Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the country, downgrading of credit ratings, and raising of the risk ratings for borrowings. While this might be a pessimistic outlook, in macroeconomics, planning for a worst case scenario might be the best economic wisdom. Thus, India needs to be careful not to slip back to the old days, and must continue the march ahead on the reforms agenda. One visit to Greece will convince an observer that the governmental outlook can change the way people think and approach a crisis.

History and culture go a long way in influencing how societies look at business and means of earning a livelihood. Yet in no sensible society, would it be prudent to eat more than you earn. Nations and nation states are complex societies in which the principles of small groups do not apply. Policy frameworks are abstract as the common man does not perceive the large and long-term implications, till these affect his daily bread, and then it becomes too late, as by then, he is a slave of the policy and not its master. Towards this end, India and Greece share similarities. India is fortunate to have better government servants and political masters than Greece, that's what history has been trying to show us till now.

CHALLENGES OF THE SECURITY TRANSITION IN AFGHANISTAN POST US DRAWDOWN

SHALINI CHAWLA

The announcement of the spring offensive by the Afghan Taliban was followed by a series of deadly attacks in Afghanistan, including the attack on the Afghan Taliban and the August 4 attacks in Kabul, making the security environment even more complex. The UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) reported :

Between 1 January and 30 June 2015, UNAMA documented 4,921 civilian casualties (1,592 civilians deaths and 3,329 injured), marking a six per cent decrease in civilian deaths and four per cent increase in civilians injured. These figures amount to an overall one per cent increase in civilian casualties compared to the first six months of 2014, and the highest number of total civilian casualties compared to the same period in previous years. Between 1 January 2009 and 30 June 2015, UNAMA recorded 52,653 civilian casualties (19,368 deaths and 33,285 injured).¹

Dr. **Shalini Chawla** is a Senior Fellow at the Centre for Air Power Studies, New Delhi.

1. "Afghanistan Midyear Report on Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict: 2015", UNAMA, OHCHR, Kabul, Afghanistan, August 2015, p.1, http://unama.unmissions.org/Portals/UNAMA/human%20rights/2015/PoC%20Report%202015/UNAMA%20Protection%20of%20Civilians%20in%20Armed%20Conflict%20Midyear%20Report%202015_FINAL_%205%20August.pdf. Accessed on September 1, 2015.

One of the most important pillars of the transition is, obviously, the security transition. The US drawdown transfers the responsibility of peace and security onto the Afghan National Army. On August 11, 2003, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) took the lead of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. The ISAF's mission in Afghanistan (2001-14) states: "Mandated by the United Nations, ISAF's primary objective was to enable the Afghan government to provide effective security across the country and develop new Afghan security forces to ensure Afghanistan would never again become a safe haven for terrorists."²

The security transition to the Afghan forces started from 2011; it took the lead for security operations across the nation by summer 2013, and the transition was completed with Afghan forces assuming full responsibility at the end of 2014.³ On January 1, 2015, "a new, smaller non-combat mission (Resolute Support) was launched to provide further training, advice and assistance to the Afghan security forces and institutions."⁴ Under the Resolute Support Mission, around 12,000 personnel from both NATO and partner nations have been deployed in support of the mission.⁵ The mission is scheduled to operate with one central hub (in Kabul/Bagram) and four spokes in Mazar-e-Sharif, Herat, Kandahar and Laghman.⁶

The ISAF is NATO's most challenging mission till date and was one of the largest coalitions in history. The troops were from 51 NATO and partner nations and the force number went up to as high as 130,000.⁷ Originally, the ISAF was deployed around Kabul and gradually its presence was increased to cover the whole country by 2006. The ISAF fought the growing insurgency in the ensuing years and in 2009, after the new counter-insurgency operation was launched, approximately 40,000 more troops were added.⁸

2. "ISAF's Mission in Afghanistan (2001-2014)", *North Atlantic Treaty Organisation*, January 13, 2015, http://www.nato.int/cps/in/natohq/topics_69366.htm. Accessed on February 20, 2015.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. Fourteen partner countries are contributing to the Resolute Support Mission.

6. "Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan", *North Atlantic Treaty Organisation*, February 27, 2015, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_113694.htm. Accessed on March 15, 2015.

7. n.2.

8. Ibid.

The gradual transition to the Afghan forces was started in 2011, as agreed at the NATO Summit in Lisbon in 2010. The Lisbon Summit declaration stated:

We are entering a new phase in our mission. The process of transition to full Afghan security responsibility and leadership in some provinces and districts is on track to begin in early 2011, following a joint Afghan and NATO/ISAF assessment and decision. Transition will be conditions-based, not calendar-driven, and will not equate to withdrawal of ISAF troops. Looking to the end of 2014, Afghan forces will be assuming full responsibility for security across the whole of Afghanistan.⁹

At the NATO Lisbon Summit, a set of principles guiding the ISAF's gradual withdrawal from a combat role to a supporting one were agreed upon by the heads of states and governments. The principles included :

- ensuring a better alignment of NATO/ISAF assistance with Afghan national priority programmes;
- working through increasingly capable Afghan institutions;
- adjusting the ISAF's troop profile and configuration with the view to meeting critical security, training and mentoring needs;
- further strengthening the Afghan National Security Force's capacity; and
- supporting the evolution of the international civilian effort, including that of the ISAF Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), to enable greater Afghan capacity and leadership.¹⁰

The declaration for withdrawal came even though there were rising numbers of terrorist attacks and activities by the Haqqani network, with active support from the Pakistani establishment. The

9. Lisbon Summit Declaration, Issued by the Heads of States and Governments Participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Lisbon, November, 20, 2010, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/officila_texts_68828.htm#afgha. Accessed on December 20, 2013.

10. "Inteqal: Transition to Afghan Lead", NATO, http://www.nato.int/cps/in/natohq/topics_87183.htm. Accessed on September 12, 2014.

process started in 2011 when around 10,000 troops were withdrawn, 23,000 in September 2012, and 34,000 in February 2014.¹¹

The agreement on the status of NATO forces and NATO personnel which was signed immediately after the Bilateral Security Agreement in September 2013, in Article 2, states:

The Parties hereby agree to the presence of NATO forces in Afghanistan for the purpose of post 2014 NATO non-combat training, advising and assistance mission, as well as for the purpose of all other mutually agreed NATO-led activities. It is envisioned that the focus of training, advising and assistance delivered by this mission would be at the security ministry and national institutional level.¹²

The announcement of withdrawal did not in any way dissuade the Taliban from conducting its operations. The Taliban expressed unhappiness on the signing of the agreement, and said that it would not allow the “infidel invaders” to remain in the country. The Taliban further stated, “By signing the security pact, the slaves of the Americans further revealed their true face to the Afghan nation..... when the time comes, our nation is committed to punish those slaves who have signed the agreement.”¹³

THE SECURITY SITUATION

Afghanistan continues to deal with the strong presence of the Al Qaeda in the remote areas and the Haqqani group in most parts of the country, which have the capability to conduct high profile attacks on the Afghan forces and also the ISAF. The most active and widespread is, obviously, the Quetta Shura, the Taliban led by Mullah Omar (now under the leadership of Mullah Akhtar Mansour), based in Quetta, Pakistan. Another major Taliban group, the Hizb-e-

11. Vishal Chandra, *The Unfinished War in Afghanistan : 2001-2014* (New Delhi: Pentagon Press, 2015), p.159.

12. Article 2, Agreement between the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan on the status of NATO Forces and NATO Personnel Conducting Mutually Agreed NATO-led Activities in Afghanistan, <http://mfa.gov.af/Content/files/SOFA%20ENGLISH.pdf>. Accessed on January 20, 2015.

13. Margherita Stancati and Nathan Hodge, “Afghanistan Signs Security Pact With US., NATO”, *The Wall Street Journal*, September 30, 2014.

Islami Gulbuddin, is also based in Pakistan.¹⁴ The Taliban which had transformed itself into a resurgent force by 2006, is well organised, and possesses excellent weaponry, new field equipment, improvised explosive devices and communication systems. The Taliban continues to control the remote and sparsely populated areas in the southern and eastern parts of Afghanistan and along Highway 1 and other main transport routes.¹⁵ The insurgency in Afghanistan draws largely from the ethnic Pashtun community, the majority of which resides in southwest, south and east Afghanistan. There are a few pockets in western Afghanistan and Kabul also. After the announcement of the death of Mullah Omar, peace in Afghanistan is likely to become more elusive and there are strong indications of divisions within the Taliban. It remains to be seen how Omar's successor, Mansour manages the divisions.

While the core insurgent faction in Afghanistan comprises the Taliban, Al Qaeda and affiliated groups (like the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and Islamic State Organisation), the Hikmatyar faction and the Haqqani network are also active and continue to carry out attacks.

The manpower for the insurgent groups is not difficult to recruit as there are youths in Afghanistan who can be easily motivated with financial and ideological dividends. Coupled with these factors, the local grievances certainly play a big role in getting the youths to join the insurgency movement. More importantly, as Ben Barry has very rightly analysed, "The insurgents seek to intimidate the population and reinforce the message that their victory is inevitable after 2015.....the killing of former President Burhanuddin Rabbani in October 2011, although disavowed by the Taliban, suggests that some key insurgent figures want to derail the Afghan government's efforts to negotiate."¹⁶

Although the new political set-up with Ghani and Abdullah has been talking about negotiating with the Taliban and China has

14. Ben Barry, "The ANSF and the Insurgency" in Nicholas Redman and Toby Dodge, eds., *Afghanistan: To 2015 and Beyond* (Abingdon, New York: Routledge, 2011), p.124.

15. Department of Defence (DoD), 2013:14, as cited in "The Afghan National Security Forces Beyond 2014: Will They be Ready?", *Centre for Security Governance*, e Seminar Series, Primer Paper, 2014, www.ssrresorcecentre.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/eSeminar-Primer-No.-2.pdf. Accessed on January 12, 2015.

16. Barry, n.14, p. 125.

stepped in to facilitate the negotiations, this has not dissuaded the Taliban from conducting terror strikes and scaling up violence in the country. There has been an increasing trend in the number of terrorist incidents after 2006 (see Fig 2). The Taliban announced the spring offensive in April 2015, indicating the scaling up of violence and terror attacks in Afghanistan. Although, every year after the melting of the snow, violence has scaled up in Kabul, this is for the first time that the Taliban is facing only the Afghan troops on the ground. The Taliban said in a statement: "If the foreign occupiers really want to relieve themselves from this nuisance of fighting, they should immediately withdraw".¹⁷

According to the UN report, the security situation in Afghanistan remains volatile. The UN has continued to monitor the security-related events, safety and mobility of civilians across the country, and also analyse the impact on the UN mandated activities and programmes.¹⁸ According to the report, in 2014, there were 22,051 recorded incidents, which surpassed those of 2013 by 10 percent. In terms of the incidents recorded, 2014 was the second- highest after 2011, which is indeed alarming.¹⁹ Around 68 per cent of the incidents were recorded in the southern, southeastern and eastern regions, with Nangarhar province alone recording 13 per cent, projected as the most volatile.²⁰ Armed clashes and improvised explosive devices accounted for 76 per cent of the total incidents, which was around 13 percent increase as compared to 2013.²¹ There has been an increase in the civilian deaths and injuries in the last three years (Fig 1).

17. "Taliban Announce Plans to Ramp up Attacks in Kabul", Reuters, April 22, 2015, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/04/22/us-afghanistan-war-idUSKBN0ND0UW20150422>. Accessed on April 24, 2015.

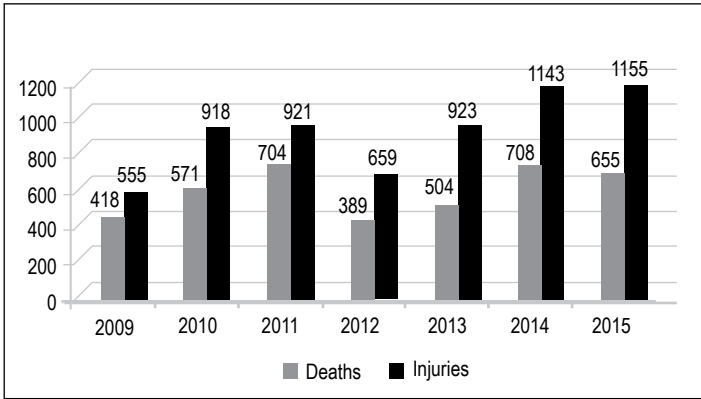
18. *United Nations Report*, A/69/801 S/2015/151

19. *Ibid.*

20. *Ibid.*

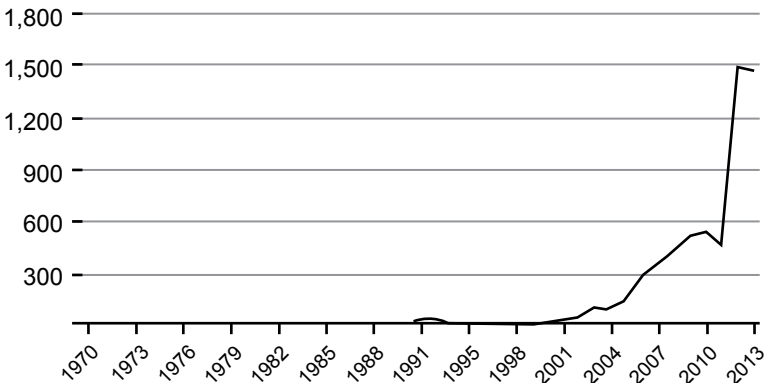
21. *Ibid.*

Fig 1: Civilian Deaths and Injuries
January to March 2009-2015



Source: Press Release: Latest UNAMA figures show continuing record high civilian casualties UNAMA, <http://www.refworld.org/publisher,UNAMA,552cc4ee4,0.html>. Accessed on July 1, 2015.

Fig 2: State Department Estimate of Trend in Number of Terrorist Incidents in Afghanistan



Source: Global Terrorism Database
 Afghanistan – Incidents Over Time, 1970-2013
<http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?search=afghanistan&sa.x=0&sa.y=0>

THE AFGHAN NATIONAL SECURITY FORCE AND THE CHALLENGES

The Afghan National Security Force (ANSF) refers to the Afghan National Army (ANA), Afghan National Police (ANP), Afghan Local

Police (ALP), and National Directorate of Security. The size and strength of the ANSF have been increased with a major recruitment push and it is now nearly double the size of what it was in 2009. As per the latest reports, the ANSF numbers over 350,000 personnel.²² These personnel are divided amongst the two main components of the ANSF – ANA and ANP.

Aggressive efforts to develop and empower the ANSF commenced in 2009 after the arrival of Gen Stanley McChrystal as the ISAF commander. With the inclusion of the concept of “embedded partnership,” Gen McChrystal increased emphasis on building the capacity of the ANSF. The concept of embedded partnership combined the strengths of the two forces – the combat and technical sides of the ISAF and the situational awareness of the ANSF.²³ The concept was widely applied at all levels and yielded positive results. The US and NATO efforts to build the capacity of the ANSF were stepped up and the funds allocated by NATO for investment in the ANSF in 2010 and 2011 topped \$20 billion, which was equivalent to total investment made from 2002-09.²⁴

The Afghans obviously believe that they need to have a strong military force to be able to have stability in the country. The 2009 surge was unable to control the insurgency. On the contrary, the insurgency has been much more organised and coordinated in the last five years. Although, it would not be incorrect to state that the surge did attract international attention towards the build-up of the ANSF and accelerated infrastructure development. The Afghan defence planners feel that the Afghan National Army has become increasingly disciplined and there has been an effort to have an ethnically balanced army.²⁵ But, there is an increasing number of Tajiks in the ANA (Table 1). The ethnic division is a serious concern as lack of ethnic affiliation leads to attrition.

22. “A New Chapter in NATO-Afghanistan Relations from 2015”, NATO, January/February 2015, http://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2015_02/20150203_150203-Background-Afghanistan_en.pdf. Accessed on August 1, 2015.

23. Barry, n.14, pp.125-126.

24. Ibid., p.126.

25. Radha Kumar, “Afghanistan 2014: Weathering Transition”, *A Delhi Policy Group*, 2014, p.9.

Table 1: ANA Ethnicity: Tajik Impact, February 2014

	Pashtun	Tajik	Hazara	Uzbek	Others
Officer	41.4%	39.6%	8.0%	4.5%	6.5%
Officer Delta	-2.6%	14.6%	-2.0%	-3.5%	-6.5%
NCO	38.3%	31.8%	12.5%	9.9%	7.5%
Soldier	38.8%	30.9%	10.1%	12.5%	7.8%
Total Force	39.0%	32.4%	10.7%	10.4%	7.5%
Delta	-5.0%	7.4%	0.7%	2.4%	-5.5%
ANA Ethnic Breakout Goal	44%	25%	10%	8%	13%

Source: Department of Defence, Report on Progress Towards Security and Stability in Afghanistan, April 2014, p.38, as cited in Anthony H. Cordesman, "Security Transition: in Afghanistan : 2014-2016," Sub Report from Testimony to the House Armed Services Committee," July 30, 2014, *Centre for Strategic and International Studies*, p. 127, http://csis.org/files/publication/140708_Security_Transition_Afghanistan.pdf. Accessed on December 21, 2014.

Developments in the ANSF were accelerated to be able to meet the deadline of 2014. The recruitment was pushed and it steadily increased the size and strength of the ANSF. Although the ANSF is beginning to demonstrate some capability to provide security without US and NATO assistance and has undertaken a few operations independently, it still has a long way to go in terms of building up capability, including military capability and motivation which has remained a challenge since the beginning of the Afghan War. A report by the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) very aptly stated the challenges of the transition from the ISAF to the ANSF:

The development of the ANSF presents much broader problems, however, in that it shows more than 40%, half of the force, consists of police with little real paramilitary, much less intense war-fighting capability. There have also been discussions of major cuts in the force – down to levels approaching 250,000 men for fiscal reasons—before the ANSF has had to deal with the insurgent threat on its own for even one campaign season. Moreover, even the Army is relatively highly equipped and its real world mobility and maneuver capability away from fixed based and support facilities is limited.²⁶

26. Anthony H. Cordesman, "The Challenges of Afghan Transition : 2014-2016", *CSIS*, Revised June 30, 2014, http://csis.org/files/publication/140630_Transition_challenges_afghanistan.pdf. Accessed on July 30, 2014.

According to the Chief of Staff of the Afghan National Army, Gen Sher Mohammad Karimi:

The present army is suitable and well-trained for internal security and war-fighting alongside the police. But, the army also has to be trained as a deterrent for foreign aggression, not just a domestic guard.²⁷

Afghan Army officials have identified the following gaps that are required to be addressed urgently, as brought out in a report by the Delhi Policy Group:²⁸

- Lack of an air force. The army only has MI17 helicopters for evacuation of wounded and emergencies.
- The tracks and trails the army uses are not paved, so they are easy to mine.
- Lack of engineers for road clearing.
- Old aircraft: the US bought C21s for transportation but they were old aircraft with no spare parts. The US also provided four C130s. The models were old and used but repairable. C27s supplied to the ANSF were rejected because they were not functional.
- Long waiting times for officers to be picked up and delivered to their unit base, due to lack of aircraft.
- Inadequate budget: the army has repeatedly asked the government to get at least one or two aircraft from Central Asia. More money is needed also for firepower and engineering equipment like mine detectors and jammers. In the 2017-2024 period, an estimated US\$ 70 billion gap is expected in the defense budget alone.
- Technical equipment and training: the army needs more technical improvement.
- There is only one tank battalion in the entire army.

The key challenges the ANSF faces are the following:

The most critical challenge for the ANSF is responding to the changed politico-military situation and adjusting to the new political-military dynamics. With the political and military

27. Kumar, n.25, p.10.

28. Ibid., pp.10-11.

transition, certainly, the ANSF would feel a big difference in the command and control. The challenge for the ANSF is to adjust to these changes, and still perform militarily in dealing with the insurgents. Due to the transition, there is lack of ministerial and logistical capacity. The capacity of the Interior Ministry and Ministry of Defence needs to be strengthened for the ANSF to function better and be better equipped.

Second, the issue of the capability of the ANSF certainly needs more focus. The ANA needs to strengthen the full range of combat support, logistics and administration within the system. Personnel management, with particular regard to identifying and developing sufficient numbers of commanders and leaders remains a key weakness of the ANSF.²⁹ The ANA still cannot fight on its own and it would not be incorrect to state that it struggles to hold the line on a critical front in the war, and its ability to protect civilians from the Taliban is questionable. Brig Gen Ghulam Farouq Parwani, deputy commander of the 125th Corps and a 30-year veteran of Afghanistan's many wars said:

The ANP (Afghan National Police) has limited capability, so our forces are busy with checkpoints,.....The police lacks organisation, structure, and because it is recruited locally, sometimes, it has men available, sometimes not. If the ANP becomes capable and does its job, the ANA can get back to fighting.³⁰

Logistics is probably the most critical gap that needs to be addressed in the overall ANSF capability. The ANSF's capability to maintain its vehicles and aircraft is the most essential factor to be able to sustain itself and remain a mobile effective force. The commanding general of the ISAF has highlighted ANSF logistics as one of the top areas requiring significant improvement over the next few years.³¹

Third, the major challenge hindering the capability build-up of the ANSF is the quality of the personnel. The ANA is challenged

29. Barry, n.14, p.128.

30. Julian Borger, "Can Afghan Troops Hold off the Taliban after NATO Withdraws?", *The Guardian*, January 1, 2012.

31. "Independent Assessment of the Afghan National Security Forces", *CAN Analysis Solutions*, 2014, p. 151, www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA597482. Accessed on January 20, 2015.

with a high rate of illiteracy that affects the overall Afghan society. The US government has reportedly spent \$200 million on a literacy programme for the ANSF over the past five years but still half of the force cannot read or write.³² John F. Sopko, the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) said, "Literacy of the Afghan Security Forces is of critical importance,.....We have spent \$200 million on this—yet we don't know even know how many Afghan security forces are literate or how well the program worked. That's deeply disturbing."³³

According to a report, between November 2009 when the programme began, and until October 2013, only 73,700 ANSF soldiers passed the literacy test.³⁴ Without being able to read or write, it is tough to train the ANSF and also, attaining a certain level of professionalism is not possible. Illiteracy is the issue which the Afghan society needs to address and efforts to make the forces literate will not have too much of an impact, given the high attrition rate in the ANSF. This factor certainly, holds back the professionalism and the overall capability of the Afghan forces to learn, and train, in high technology.

Fourth, the ANSF has limited numbers of personnel with specialty skills, such as police task force, intelligence analysis, forensic analysts, pilots, and aircraft mechanics.³⁵ The deficit in specialty skills is due to the limited recruiting pool, given the low level of education in the country. Now to resolve this issue, obviously the timeframe required is much longer. Another factor is that the ANSF has limited capacity to train personnel for these specialty functions. While it will be able to train them in general police and military skills, the skills for specialty training are not achievable in the short term.

The fifth challenge for the ANSF is the force strength. The ANSF suffers a very high attrition rate. The attrition is mainly due to two

32. Josh Regin, "After \$200 Million, Afghan Soldiers Still Can't Read", <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2014/01/28/after-200-million-afghan-soldiers-still-can-t-read.html>. Accessed on April 12, 2015.

33. Ibid.

34. Ibid.

35. "Independent Assessment of the Afghan National Security Forces", *CNA Analysis Solutions*, 2014, p. 157, www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA597482. Accessed on January 20, 2015.

reasons; firstly, the ALP is an easy target for the insurgents and any operation invariably leads to massive police casualties.³⁶ These losses are particularly high among the ANP and ALP ranks due to their association with the insurgents. The Afghan social structure obviously has multiple interlinkages and, thus, the ethnic connect is strong enough to drive the engagement of the forces with the insurgents. Secondly, there are other causes of attrition such as sustained risk, soldier care/quality of life and leave issues.

The sixth challenge is corruption, which is perhaps the most destabilising factor that the Afghan system is facing today in terms of state building. But, in a war-torn nation, where lack of job opportunities and deep insecurity persist, corruption is a natural outcome. Afghanistan is currently ranked 175 out of 177 on Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index (Transparency International 2013).³⁷ There is widespread proliferation of unofficial check points taking bribes. Also, bribes, linkages to influential power brokers and ethnic affiliations affect the postings of the ANSF personnel. Soldiers or policemen who do not have these linkages could be posted to the most violent regions for a long time.³⁸ This factor increases the existing ethnic tensions and rivalries in the ANSF, hindering their growth of its professionalism and, eventually, capability to deal with the insurgency.

The report of the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) states: "The ANP presents additional problems because it is not supported by an effective justice system as most of the country, courts are also corrupt, the legal system is slow and unresponsive, detention methods lead to abuses, and detention facilities are poor or lacking."³⁹

The last, and the most important challenge is the question of funding of the ANSF. The Chicago Communiqué stated that the targeted future size of the ANSF is 228,500, with an estimated

36. n.15..

37. Ibid.

38. Ibid.

39. Anthony H. Cordesman, "Security Transition : in Afghanistan : 2014-2016 " Sub Report from Testimony to the House Armed Services Committee, July 30, 2014, *Centre for Strategic and International Studies*, p 122, http://csis.org/files/publication/140708_Security_Transition_Afghanistan.pdf. Accessed on December 21, 2014.

annual cost of \$4.1 billion.⁴⁰ The current force size is 352,000, and it is assumed that the force reduction to the number agreed in Chicago would be 'condition-based', decided by the Afghanistan government. It was decided at the Chicago Summit that the Afghan government would give the initial contribution towards the security cost of \$500 million in 2015 and, eventually, would take up the entire cost by 2024. This implies that the international funding for the ANSF would start at over \$3.6 billion per year and would remain at the level of billions of dollars for the coming years till the Afghan government becomes capable of funding the ANSF.⁴¹ For example, in case the Afghan government's contribution grows by say 26 per cent per year (which would enable it to grow from \$500 million in 2015 to \$4.1 billion in 2024, as required), the international contribution (primarily from the US) would be still as high as \$2.8 billion in 2019 and close to \$2.5 billion in 2020.⁴² The international support for the ANSF will be required not only in the form of money but also logistics, equipment, etc. The challenge for the ANSF is to receive sustained assistance from the international community till it becomes self-sufficient. Even if the targeted strength of the ANSF is altered, the problem of financing would remain (may be the numbers would alter).

The outline for the security transition has been set up, but it brings out multiple challenges. Building any military and police force requires significant resources, large numbers of personnel for training and substantive equipment for training and force build-up. In Afghanistan, the problems of the build-up of the security force are much more complicated due to many other factors. The nation continues to suffer from the fallouts of the decades of conflicts. The national institutions have been destroyed and remain extremely weak or, for that matter, even non-functional, in the state machinery. The security system was destroyed and had to be set up from scratch. Years of war allowed the non-state actors and militias to flourish and

40. William A. Byrd, "Who Will Pay for Afghan Security Forces?" *Foreign Policy*, June 12, 2014.

41. *Ibid.*

42. *Ibid.*

infiltrate into the state power structure, making it extremely difficult to adopt any change. Various ethnic and political groups compete for economic advantage (legal or illegal), jobs, positions and their share in the non-poppy agriculture, and the poppy trade, which still remains the prime source of income for many ethnic groups in Afghanistan. The security situation in Afghanistan is rather complex and a diverse set of non-state actors need to be countered. Also, due to the flourishing poppy trade in Afghanistan, there has been development of a wide infrastructure which has been posing a serious challenge to the law and order in the country.

AL QAEDA TO ISLAMIC STATE: A LESSON FAILED

AERSH DANISH

As a group, Al Qaeda has gone through tremendous changes throughout its history. From a group fighting for Afghan self-determination to becoming the embodiment of international terrorism, Al Qaeda has redefined the idea of terrorism. Terrorism as a phenomenon has also evolved over the years from being a revolutionary movement to becoming a socio-political tool in which fear is generated and used towards political and ideological gains. It is imperative to note that modern-day terrorism is no longer a form of social protest and, instead, it attempts to restructure the global order based on an ideological background – which in the case of Al Qaeda is to establish a pan-Islamist world.

AL QAEDA: FROM AN ORGANISATION TO A BRAND

The 9/11 attacks provided Al Qaeda with overnight global recognition, and the terrorist organisation used its new-found fame to propagate its idea of a pan-Islamist rule in the world using terror as a tool to garner attention. This approach emerged from the feeling that the West was a direct threat to Islam and the American interventions, resulting in regime changes in the Islamic states, were used as evidence to support the claims. Using the global platform, Al Qaeda was able to reach out to smaller militant groups fighting on regional

Aersh Danish is a Research Associate at the Centre for Air Power Studies, New Delhi.

issues using religion as a tool, and also provide these otherwise local outfits a chance to link with a larger global cause. This helped Al Qaeda to create a worldwide network of terrorist organisations. In fact, with the growing position of Al Qaeda, the group's name became synonymous with the *jihadi* ideology. This ideology, that Islamist rule should be established all over the world, governed by the ultra-orthodox interpretation of the *Sharia*, *Al Hadith* and *Koran*, became the governing principle and the primary objective for the smaller, regional terrorist outfits. And it has to be noted that the Islamic State (IS), which is now posing a major threat to international security, also grew in this very environment.

The rise of Al Qaeda inspired the growth of an ideology-based movement which would span the entire globe. According to Rohan Gunaratna, a renowned scholar on terrorism, Al Qaeda has now developed more into an ideology in the contemporary world rather than an organisation.¹ Since 9/11, it has become a movement inspiring other regional movements, which have also organised themselves into well defined outfits and even adopted the name of Al Qaeda. This is seen in the case of Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI). These are not all official affiliates of Al Qaeda, but local groups that have been inspired by the cause that Al Qaeda fights for and have, therefore, pledged their support and allegiance to Al Qaeda.

The use of the label "Al Qaeda" by other organisations is like the concept of branding as is commonly seen in the corporate sector. The name today is synonymous with the idea of global Islamist terrorism. Such a naming technique serves as an easy way for the smaller terrorist groups to gain credibility, providing them with an instant way to be a part of something large, and especially much larger than they are in reality. Hence, local groups such as those operating in Chechnya and fighting for separation from the state, could now have a larger agenda to back their regional ideologies. These groups also use Al Qaeda as a platform to express their local issues at an international level. On the other hand, such branding also allows Al Qaeda to remain as an overarching figure providing the ideology, while allowing the

1. Rohan Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror* (New Delhi: Lotus Collection, 2011), p.54.

other groups to operate under that ideology, giving it enough space to claim responsibility for attacks carried out by the regional groups to reflect on its own operational legacy, while distancing itself from any activity that could potentially have ill effects on the same. Thus, Al Qaeda has its own reasons for supporting the smaller groups by providing them with moral support, resources and training.

AL QAEDA, GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR AND THE ISLAMIC STATE

When studying the phenomenon of international terrorism, one must note that ideology alone cannot create or sustain a movement of this stature. In the development of Al Qaeda and the Islamic State (IS), the prevailing social, economic and political conditions have played a big role. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan pushed the Americans to utilise the underlying Mujahideen movement to create a force to fight the invasion. The political chaos that prevailed in Afghanistan during that period fostered the creation and development of Al Qaeda, much of which was supported by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) itself. Ironically, more than a decade later, the US initiated the Global War on Terror (GWOT) as a response to the 9/11 attacks to counter the same Al Qaeda and its affiliates. The GWOT has since come to represent the most comprehensive attempt to combat terrorism in the 21st century.

In some ways, the GWOT has been a success because there has been a steady decline in the activity of Al Qaeda post 2003 and especially since 2009.² But the social impacts of the GWOT have not been so favourable. The war left the state of Afghanistan crippled and completely destroyed. Iraq was also attacked on the pretext of possessing weapons of mass destruction, and pushed into social, economic and political chaos. Both countries saw complete regime change after the war, with the Taliban being uprooted from Afghanistan and Saddam Hussein being deposed in Iraq. While a democratic apparatus replaced the governments, one cannot deny that the war created an environment of statelessness that

2. Data gathered from the Global Terrorism Database, University of Maryland, see http://apps.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?expanded=yes&casualties_type=&casualties_max=&success=yes&perpetrator=20029&ob=GTDID&od=desc&page=1&count=100#results-table. Accessed on July 10, 2015.

predominated the regions when the war was ongoing and before the new democratic governments were established.

This political vacuum was utilised by Al Qaeda to gather recruits from the families that were torn apart by the war. This approach was not so successful in Afghanistan, but succeeded well in Iraq. This is because the local populace of Afghanistan were themselves against the atrocities of the Taliban and were keener on the US intervention. This was not so in the case of Iraq and, hence, the population did not accept the US intervention there. The capture of Saddam Hussein and the delegitimisation of Hussein's Ba'ath Party left many people without jobs. The reason being that under Hussein's rule it was mandatory for professionals to be a part of the party to be eligible for perks and promotions. Thus, its delegitimisation led to rampant unemployment as everyone involved with the Ba'ath Party was removed from their positions and banned from future employment in the public sector as per the Coalition Provisional Authority Order Number 1.³ Further, the new government under Noori al Maliki was looked upon as being indifferent because it had a pro-Shia tilt and failed to address the needs of the Sunni population, who were denied any kind of help from state authorities, including the security forces and the police. Lack of social set-ups resulted in dissatisfaction among the Sunni population and forced them into creating their own groups to support themselves, and, thus, vigilante groups were created to help maintain law and order.⁴

Meanwhile, the Arab Spring that had enveloped the region of West Asia and Maghreb by 2010, further fuelled the social and political unrest in Iraq. Al Qaeda had already decided to exploit the social unrest in Syria to its advantage. The civil war that was going on to remove President Bashar al Assad provided Al Qaeda with the chance to manoeuvre the situation to its advantage. Large numbers of youngsters were dissatisfied with the governance and this section of the society could be easily misled into joining the terrorist groups.

3. "Coalition Provisional Authority Order Number 1 - De-Ba'athification of Iraqi Society", *Coalition Provisional Authority*, May 16, 2003, see http://www.iraqcoalition.org/regulations/20030516_CPAORD_1_De-Ba_athification_of_Iraqi_Society_.pdf. Accessed on August 18, 2015.
4. Najim Abed Al-Jabouri and Sterling Jensen, "The Iraqi and AQI Roles in the Sunni Awakening", *Prism* (Washington DC: Institute for National Strategic Studies, 2010), vol.2, no.1, p. 10.

Iraq under Noori al Maliki's rule and Syria under President Bashar al Assad's regime saw the society getting dissatisfied with the existing socio-political scenario. As the movement started getting violent, it provided Al Qaeda an opportunity to exploit the situation and the group used its Sunni ideological leanings to draw the disgruntled Sunni population towards itself.

Al Qaeda's operations in Iraq were carried out by its affiliate Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) under orders from Al Qaeda's new chief Ayman al Zawahiri. However, with the increasing role of the AQI in the Syrian crisis, the group decided to change its name to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) to demonstrate its growing influence beyond Iraq and also to act outside the "tag" of Al Qaeda. With increasing involvement, the ISIS, which was still under the control of Al Qaeda, began to act more independently. This was because the ISIS had direct influence in the field and, hence, could garner greater support from the local populace unlike the leaders of the Al Qaeda core who were issuing orders from safe havens in Afghanistan. The defiance of ISIS was reflected in the manner in which it was taking up feuds with the other affiliates of Al Qaeda such as the Jabhat al Nusrat (the Al Nusrat Front), which operated in Syria. The reason for the feud was that the ISIS was primarily responsible for coordinating the activities of Al Qaeda in Iraq while the Al Nusrat Front was responsible for the same in Syria. However, with its growing strength, the ISIS started interfering in Syria as well. On June 15, 2013, ISIS leader Abu Bakr al Baghdadi defied a direct order from Zawahiri directing the AQI to stop its fight in Syria.⁵ This incident is regarded as the point where the ISIS officially split from the Al Qaeda to evolve as an independent terrorist group.

However, the signs that Al Qaeda might not be in total control of its network had started emerging even before the above mentioned incident. For most of the small-scale operations and functioning, the regional groups were allowed to make their own decisions. However, for the other activities, like large scale attacks, they would have to consult the central core before carrying out the operations.

5. Thomas Joscelyn, "Islamic State of Iraq Leader Defies Zawahiri in Alleged Audio Message", *The Long War Journal*, June 15, 2013, see http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2013/06/islamic_state_of_ira_3.php. Accessed on August 18, 2015.

This mechanism of operation was directly reflected in a memo asking regional groups to seek the permission of the central core before carrying out any attack. This memo was issued by the senior Al Qaeda leadership in Pakistan some time in July-October 2010.⁶

The memo became a major discussion point among the academia and security experts, as it was taken as a sign that the central core had lost its control over the network. The rise of AQI and its conversion to the ISIS posed a major concern primarily because of the brutality with which the group was operating. This aspect became a concern not just for the security forces that had to tackle the situation but also for Al Qaeda's central core, which feared that such brutality could turn people away from the cause and, thus, the movement would lose its legitimacy. The central core of Al Qaeda, namely, the then deputy Zawahiri even went on to chastise the group for its brutal techniques.⁷ Many scholars saw this as a major indicator of the fact that the core and the affiliates were not working exactly in tandem.

The split of the ISIS from Al Qaeda became a major subject of study because this was a first time since the inception of Al Qaeda that the core was facing a challenge to its authority. The emergence of another terrorist group, and especially one capable of competing with Al Qaeda has since added another dimension to the study of international terrorism. The global ambitions of the ISIS were further reflected when it changed its name to just Islamic State (IS). For the first time, since the creation of Al Qaeda, there has been another group, which has challenged its position as the global leader controlling the vast web of terrorism.

A LESSON FAILED

The IS is seen as a completely new face of terrorism primarily because of the way it differs in its functioning from Al Qaeda – and in many ways, it is different. The sheer nature of brutality with which IS operates, its use of the various tools of the media and the fact that it has a definite geography under its political control makes it different from any other terrorist group of today. However, despite these

6. T. Y. McCormick, "Al Qaeda Core: A Short History", *Foreign Policy*, see http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2014/03/17/al_qaeda_core_a_short_history. Accessed on June 16, 2015.

7. Ibid.

differences, there are striking resemblances if one has to compare the birth and development of the IS and Al Qaeda. As stated earlier, Al Qaeda was born out of the American intervention during the Soviets' invasion of Afghanistan. While the US has faced severe criticism over what it did in Afghanistan, one has to understand that much of this criticism has been retrospective. It would have been very difficult for the US to predict the trajectory that the Mujahideen cause would have taken after the Soviet withdrawal. But the rise of Al Qaeda has since clearly reflected on how it used the socio-political turmoil in various regions to build itself, as was seen in its network growing across South Asia, North and East Africa and Chechnya.

The backdrop of socio-political turmoil was also seen in the case of the rise of the IS, as was the presence of an intervention by a foreign power. As explained in this paper, the prevailing conditions in Iraq were essential for the creation of the IS, but they alone could not be blamed for its birth. The region of West Asia has been consistently engulfed in political crisis which in itself could have been a breeding ground for extremism. The de-Ba'athification of Iraq further aggravated the crisis. Just as Al Qaeda's leaders knew the region well, the IS also flourished under people who were well versed in the geography, culture and local society. As Al Qaeda used its familiarity of the region to unite the various Mujahideen factions, IS leaders used their knowledge to encroach upon Al Qaeda's network in their region. This erosion of groups has been a major concern for Al Qaeda. The first major marker of this was the switching of the Egyptian group Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis (Defenders of Jerusalem) who announced their allegiance to Baghdadi on November 10, 2014.⁸ As the first major shift of allegiance, this can also be seen as a direct attack on Al Qaeda Chief Zawahiri himself, who hails from Egypt and who, along with Bin Laden had laid the foundation of the *jihadi* movement in Egypt. Thus, any defection from that region is a direct attack on the man himself, as much as it is on the group.

8. Bruce Riedel, "Baghdadi vs. Zawahiri: Battle for Global Jihad", *Al Monitor*, November 24, 2014, see <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2014/11/battle-global-jihad-bin-laden-legacy.html>. Accessed on August 18, 2015.

Several groups in Palestine and Chechnya have also reportedly pledged their allegiances to the IS. The influence of the IS only seems to be increasing, and has even reached South Asia, the home turf of Al Qaeda. In Pakistan, a splinter group of the Taliban called Jundallah has announced its loyalty to the IS.⁹ The propaganda of the IS has already appeared in Karachi and Kashmir.¹⁰ The most extreme Pakistani anti-Shiite sectarian group, the Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, has reportedly been in touch with the IS through its cells in Saudi Arabia.¹¹ If the Lashkar-e-Jhangvi joins the IS, it would be a big coup in Pakistan for Baghdadi, especially because Pakistan and Afghanistan comprise the home turf for Al Qaeda. All these factors pose a direct threat to Al Qaeda and may trigger a turf war between the two groups.

At this moment, it is very difficult to predict the path that international terrorism is going to take. It is undoubtedly at a crossroads where the older dominant ideology of Al Qaeda is being reshaped by the emerging IS, leading to the metamorphosis of the idea of global terrorism. That being said, one must also note that the rise of the IS was only possible because of the pre-set conditions that were created by Al Qaeda. Al Qaeda was responsible for bringing Islamist ideologies into the global arena of terror. It successfully exploited the socio-political situations in conflict prone regions to grow in size. It was only through these ventures that the IS was able to find a strong foothold and grow.

This also reflects on the failure of counter-terrorism policies. While plenty of research has been done to understand the roots of terrorism and for formulation of proper counter-terrorism strategies, there are lacunae when it comes to research concerning the evaluation of those counter-terrorism strategies. Terrorism as a phenomenon has been extensively studied, and it is time that counter-terrorism strategies are studied in a systematic and scientific manner. For example, a study by the World Bank in 2012, randomly assigned 500 Afghan villages to receive a development aid programme either in 2007 or after 2011.¹² The aid programme had significant positive effects on the

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid.

11. Ibid.

12. Andrew Beath, Fotini Christia and Ruben Enikolopov, "Winning Hearts and Minds Through Development? Evidence from a Field Experiment in Afghanistan," Policy Research Working Paper, *World Bank*, July 2012.

economic outcomes, the villagers' attitudes toward the government and the villagers' perceptions of security. The observations made by the World Bank showed that the aid programme also reduced the number of security incidents, though that effect was not maintained after the programme ended and was observed only in villages that were relatively secure before the programme began. This study was helpful in establishing whether economic aid can help deter the development of radicalisation in society, with a comparison with villages that did not receive the aid. Conflict prone societies have a tendency to radicalise and this has been effectively seen in the manner in which Al Qaeda grew. However, the causes behind this radicalisation are often left untouched in hard-core military strategies, which is a perspective that requires immediate reconsideration. This has been clearly seen in the case of the Islamic State which grew out of the chaos in Iraq. Thus, a new perspective on countering terrorism is essential to help maintain global peace and stability and to tackle the extremism and threats emerging out of it.

POST-EARTHQUAKE NEPAL AND THE CONSTITUTION: AN OPPORTUNITY MISSED FOR AN INCLUSIVE AND FAIR CONSTITUTION?

UDAY DESHWAL

The earthquake in Nepal (April 2015) has left close to 9,000 people dead. Over 600,000 houses have been completely destroyed or partially damaged. Consequently, approximately eight million people have been affected in some shape or form. Nature has continued disrupting the recovery process in Nepal, and there hasn't been much respite as a large part of the affected population still doesn't have a roof over their head to shelter them from the monsoon season that has claimed further lives owing to landslides in the affected hilly regions.

It was, thus, possible to think about the devastation caused by the earthquake as an opportunity for improving and stabilising the political landscape in Nepal (which would surely aid the rebuilding process). Disasters have been known in the past to enable political accommodation; a related and recent manifestation of this was the case of the tsunami-enabled peace in Aceh, Indonesia, where the widespread and acute disaster (reportedly, 150,000+ people lost their

Uday Deshwal is a part of the Research Faculty at the Centre for Air Power Studies, New Delhi.

lives and half a million or more were displaced in Aceh) caused by the 2004 tsunami led to the Free Aceh Movement, which had been fighting the state for almost three decades, signing a peace agreement in August 2005.

BACKGROUND

The conditions for violence were present throughout Nepal's history and the main reasons why something similar to the 'people's war' did not occur until 1996 was because (i) the state, during the various political configurations, exercised monopoly over coercive power. Ted Gurr has observed that in cases of intense politicisation of discontent, as long as the political regime exercises monopoly over coercive control and institutional support, the discontent will not result in violence; (ii) there was a lack of a 'dissident organisation'—Gurr suggests that the weakening of the state and the development of a dissident organisation are imperative to explaining how violence actualises; and, (iii) there was a lack of a unified voice in the rural areas—Skocpol suggests that in spite of widespread grievances, the lack of a collectively perceived grievance prevents unified action.¹ So, in the case of Nepal, the weakening of the democratic system and the state, along with the rise of the Maoist organisation and its role in utilising and unifying the grieving rural voices into a unified force, may be observed as the primary drivers for the Maoist insurgency, with the inequality-related grievances forming the foundation which provided the Maoists with an opportunity to launch such a movement in 1996.

The Maoist insurgency in Nepal, which lasted from 1996-2006, is one of only 18 percent of civil wars over the past 150 years that have ended in a successful peace accord, rather than an absolute military victory. Even in terms of the time period during which the decade-long conflict took place, its growth and success emerged in stark contrast to the global phenomenon of the "world's third wave of democracy" sweeping post-Cold War free market reforms and spread of liberal democratic values.² The idiosyncrasy of the Nepali context was compounded during the 2008 Constituent Assembly

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1. Yurendra Basnett, "From Politicisation of Grievances to Political Violence: An Analysis of the Maoist Movement in Nepal", *LSE Working Paper Series*, 2009, pp.1-33.
 2. Oliver Housden, "Nepal's Elusive Peace", *The RUSI Journal*, 155:2, 2010, pp.70-77.

(CA) elections as they were majorly dominated by the far-leftist parties and surprisingly won by the Maoists. Finally, despite the multiple problems, Nepal has taken numerous positive steps towards democratic and post-conflict recovery. The 2008 and subsequent CA elections in Nepal have been contested by candidates from various ethnic and caste minority backgrounds, resulting in the most egalitarian and representative ruling establishment in the country's history.

DEVELOPMENTS IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE INSURGENCY

After a decade (1996-2006) of Maoist-led insurgency in the Himalayan nation which reportedly resulted in the loss of 17,000-18,000 lives, the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Accord (CPA) on January 6, 2007, was meant to have put Nepal on the final lap of its own peace and state-building process. Unfortunately, the last seven to eight years have failed to produce any remarkable progress on that front and Nepal continues to suffer from a dysfunctional political order. The biggest impediment had been the repeated failure of the elected CA to accomplish the Constitution-making process, with continuous missing of set deadlines and their endless extensions. Various scholars and observers have suggested that such a chronic failure can be appropriated to the fact that many of the important and potentially contentious issues such as defining the state governing system/form of governance (presidential or Westminster), implementing the federal structures (boundaries, names of states, etc.), providing inclusive mechanisms and proportional representation systems (i.e., whether or not there should be freedom to form political parties), right to self-determination (question of preferential rights on natural resources, the economic sector, and prior rights on politics being given to the oppressed communities, *janajatis*, indigenous groups and Madhesis), as well as maintaining judicial autonomy, were not agreed upon in the CA.³

As this author has previously argued, although the seven-point agreement of November 1, 2011, provided a glimmer of hope for completing the task of writing the Constitution and implementing the provisions of the CPA, the perennial, serious differences that existed

3. Uddhab Pyakurel and Indra Adhikari, *State of Conflict and Democratic Movement in Nepal* (New Delhi: Vij Books India, 2013)

and have continued to exist between the signatories of the agreement (i.e. the major political forces of the country) continued to pose serious doubts about the implementation. Apart from completing the task of Constitution-writing, there was a great deal of unfinished business from the ten years of civil war. Among such issues, the one that has been regrettably and repeatedly ignored was that of local elections. The democratisation process, that was ushered in primarily as a result of the 1990 *Jan Andolan-I*, has been failing ever since as it has been focussed on power, position, and money at the centre, and has only carried forward the almost eternal legacy of centralisation in Nepal and not provided any substantial change in that regard (which is also why this was one of the main drivers responsible for the onset of the insurgency). Sadly, this process of centralisation of power in the corridors of Kathmandu has festered even in the post-conflict era and, consequently, in most of the country, there are today no political leaders with sufficient legitimacy to lead and coordinate relief efforts at the village and district levels – and it was in the mountain villages north of Kathmandu that the most affected victims of the earthquake, in many cases, had to wait a long time for help and succour to finally reach them. There have been no elections at the local level since a state of emergency was declared in 1998, leaving a majority of such districts, towns and villages in the hands of ill-equipped appointed committees.⁴

ISSUE OF DRAFTING THE CONSTITUTION: DEVELOPMENTS POST THE EARTHQUAKE

Understandably, the popular opinion had been mounting against the government and all the parties of the Nepalese political establishment. In this context, the political actors could have viewed the discussed political issues not as a diversion to the process of reconstruction and redevelopment but as being central to it. In fact, the political class – whose credibility has been low – should have used the seemingly reduced social polarisation and the sense of national solidarity to manoeuvre through the sticky issues that have been plaguing the post-

4. Uday Deshwal, "How Nepal Politicians can use Earthquake to Bring Stability", *DailyO*, June 26, 2015, <http://www.dailyo.in/politics/earthquake-nepal-ram-baran-yadav-kathmandu-communist-party-cpa/story/1/4622.html>. Accessed on August 2, 2015.

conflict state building process in Nepal.⁵ In a positive sign, leaders of the ruling coalition of the National Congress (NC), Communist Party of Nepal – Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML), the Madhes-based parties, and the opposition Unified Communist Party of Nepal – Marxist (UCPN-M) held talks in which they discussed the need for greater political unity, leading to the signing of the 16-point deal between the parties on June 8.

While the political actors utilised the opportunity by tabling and endorsing a new draft Constitution on July 7, and opened it up for public consultations on July 9, it seemed that they had once again failed in a fair redressal of the existing issues of ethnic, racial, and gender discrimination, among others, as the new draft of the Constitution did not address the issue of federalism, with the actors agreeing to postpone the discussion on demarcation of provinces till later.⁶ This expectedly led to fresh protests in the Madhes-dominated areas of the Tarai plains in southern and southeastern Nepal. Additionally, certain provisions and clauses laid out in the new draft had greatly watered down women's rights vis-à-vis the issue of passing down of equal citizenship to their children.⁷

However, heeding the outrage from the various interest groups of the above mentioned peeved sections of the Himalayan state, the Nepalese parties have had to scale back their hurried attempts of trying to push through a charter with a regressive and conservative agenda. As a result, another breakthrough agreement was signed by the Nepalese parties after midnight on August 8, which resulted in a sixth draft Constitution. The new agreement addressed the previous issues of federalism (that had been plaguing the issue of Constitution drafting since 2008) where the task of delineating the state borders was put off till later, as per the previous draft Constitution. The new Constitution has resolved this issue as negotiations have resulted in provisions for dividing Nepal into six provinces, with every province

5. Ibid.

6. Nikhil Narayan and Sanhita Ambast, "Nepal's 'Fast-Tracked' Constitutional Process Trades Rights for Speed", *The Wire*, August 1, 2015, <http://thewire.in/2015/08/01/nepals-fast-tracked-constitutional-process-trades-rights-for-speed-7673/>. Accessed on August 2, 2015.

7. Saif Khalid, "Nepal Pushes to Finalise Constitution Despite Concerns", *Al Jazeera*, July 31, 2015, <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2015/07/nepal-pushes-finalise-constitution-concerns-150730221615366.html>. Accessed on August 2, 2015.

sharing a border with India to ensure uniformity with respect to access to markets. The new agreement also overturned (at least on paper) the previous draft Constitution's (the one that was tabled in July) provisions regarding the granting of citizenship to children. The previous Constitution required both parents to be Nepali in order for their child to be eligible for citizenship, but the new draft has seen some change of language by altering the phrase to "father or mother."⁸

The new provisions have led to further deadly protests in the mid-western regions that began on August 10 over the proposed plan of dividing the particular region into two provinces. Clashes in the town of Surkhet led to the death of two protestors as a result of retaliatory action by the police. The protests spread across the country as the CPN-Maoist (breakaway faction of the UCPN-M)-led alliance, certain Madhesi parties and ethnic groups called for a strike against the restructuring plans made by the major political parties, which they say "discriminate against historically marginalised communities."⁹

Although the political brass has reviewed and altered their original stand on these two major issues of federalism and women's rights over citizenship, doubts and concerns persist over some other pertinent issues with the recent draft Constitution. These include the restrictions on rights to free speech, expression, information and press freedom (a particular Article in the new draft Constitution allowed the state to 'regulate' the media,¹⁰ as well as the rights to freedom of association and assembly and other fundamental rights like media control, the provisions of which are "broad and vague and exceed what is permitted under international human rights standards," and the related "guarantees for securing judicial independence are weak and inadequate." Several economic and social rights seem to have been insufficiently defined, and fail to ensure

8. AFP, "Nepal Parties Sign Breakthrough Deal on New Constitution", *Live mint*, August 9, 2015, <http://www.livemint.com/Politics/1ZogPojjPrflNonYkrWjUM/Nepal-parties-sign-breakthrough-deal-on-new-constitution.html>. Accessed on August 9, 2015.

9. PTI, "80 Held in Nepal as General Strike Against Draft Constitution Affects Normal Life", *Economic Times*, August 17, 2015, <http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/international/world-news/80-held-in-nepal-as-general-strike-against-draft-constitution-affects-normal-life/articleshow/48512425.cms>. Accessed on August 17, 2015.

10. Anurag Acharya, "Federalism, Republicanism and Secularism", *Nepali Times*, July 31-August 6, 2015, #769, <http://nepalitimes.com/regular-columns/by-the-way/new-constitution-should-adopt-inclusive-democracy-with-federalism-republicanism-secularism,538>. Accessed on August 6, 2015.

protection as per the international human rights law.¹¹ Certain other such provisions have been added to the recent draft Constitution that further limit the right to health, right to food, and the rights of senior citizens, the homeless, and the Dalits.¹²

With regards to a greater inclusion of the traditionally marginalised groups (regional, religious, ethnic, and caste), the recent drafts are reported to have replaced the provision of a “proportional representation” (as guaranteed by the previous interim Constitution) with “inclusive participation”. This has been understood as “ensured participation without any promised representation”, i.e., the marginalised groups will continue to be at a disadvantage as they will find themselves exposed to competition.¹³

Additionally and regrettably, the Nepalese political parties have also reached a consensus on removing the word “secularism” from the new Constitution, overturning the decision to alter the Himalayan kingdom’s century-old identity of a “Hindu” kingdom, taken in 2007. However, if the Constituent Assembly is to be believed, it has merely done what millions of Nepalese have suggested during the 15-day process through July, of gathering public feedback on the new Constitution. According to the Constituent Assembly, “a majority of people wanted ‘secularism’ to be replaced by ‘Hindu’ or ‘religious freedom’. This issue of exclusion of the word “secularism” found unanimous support from all the major parties (the NC, CPN-UML, UCPN-M, and the Madhes parties), with UCPN-M chairman, Prachanda, claiming that “the word has irked people... It has hurt the sentiments of millions. We must respect the verdict of the people.”¹⁴ Here it must be observed that a 15-day process of public reviewing of the new Constitution, at a time when a large number of people were still homeless and had more pressing concerns of trying to get their lives back on track post the havoc

11. Narayan and Ambast, n.6.

12. Acharya, n.10.

13. Vishnu Sharma, “The New Nepal Constitution: A Losers Document?”, *The Citizen*, August 9, 2015, <http://www.thecitizen.in/NewsDetail.aspx?Id=4699&The%2FNew%2FNepal%2FConstitution%3A%2FA%2FLosers%2FDocument%3F>. Accessed on August 10, 2015.

14. IANS, “‘Secularism’ To Go From Nepal Constitution”, *The Hindu*, July 27, 2015, <http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/secularism-to-go-from-nepal-constitution/article7470390.ece>. Accessed on August 2, 2015.

caused by the earthquake, could not have possibly resulted in a fair and completely inclusive system of a comprehensive review. Thus, informed speculation can be made on how such a hurried process became more a tool of the political class to push through the agenda of a conservative and majoritarian Constitution. However, having said that, a contradictory trend seems to be emerging in Nepal where traditional pro-Hindu groups like the Rashtriya Prajatantra Party-Nepal are finding support from Muslim leaders, including Amjad Ali (chairman of the Rapti Muslim Society), Anarkali Miya (CPN-UML CA member), Udbudhin Fru (chairman of the Muslim Mukti Morcha, which is affiliated to the UCPN-M), Babu Khan Pathan (chairman of the Rastrabadi Muslim Manch Nepalgunj), among others, who, in fear of Christianity's alleged growing influence, are claiming that they are more "secure under a Hindu state than under a secular Constitution..."¹⁵ This raises serious concerns about the law-makers of Nepal being themselves not fully appreciative of the principle of secularism in democracy¹⁶, thus, setting a dangerously regressive precedent.

Further, the issue of religious freedom is another manifestation of the political parties' push for conservative provisions in the Constitution. While the new draft states that, "each person will be free to profess, practise, and preserve his/her religions according to his/her faith...", the draft criminalises religious conversions by specifically stating that "no person shall act or make others act in a manner which is contrary to public health, decency and morality, or behave or act or make others act to disturb the public law and order situation, or convert a person of one religion to another religion, or disturb the religion of other people. Such an act shall be punishable by law."¹⁷ Such a provision is in violation of Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, according to which every human being has the freedom to change his/her religion or belief.¹⁸

15. PTI, "Now, Muslims in Nepal also Demand a Hindu State", *DNA*, August 13, 2015, <http://www.dnaindia.com/world/report-now-muslims-in-nepal-also-demand-a-hindu-state-2113747>. Accessed on August 13, 2015.

16. Acharya, n.12.

17. Sharma, n.13.

18. "The Universal Declaration of Human Rights", *United Nations*, December 10, 1948, <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/history.shtml>. Accessed on August 14, 2015.

WHAT NEXT?

As was the case at the end of the 1990 Jan Andolan Movement, the political parties, instead of adopting an inclusive democratic character based on the tenets of republicanism and secularism, have only wrongly utilised the post-earthquake opportunity to push through a charter with a considerably conservative agenda, under the guise of having to “make compromises”. The promises of inclusive democracy that were made to the marginalised groups 25 years ago, have remained blatantly unfulfilled. Such an act of perfidy had led to socio-economic disillusionment which contributed to the onset of the Maoist-led insurgency in 1996.

In this hour of acute need for redevelopment of the state, there is still a great opportunity to finally let go of all the political pettiness before the top leaders of the major political parties formally sign the deal and finalise the Constitution, and thereby work towards the path of rebuilding with a holistically inclusive approach. Or, the political parties can continue with another iteration of the same loop where they don't address the core issues. Thus, Nepal, in the aftermath of a terrible natural travesty, finds itself yet again at a similar crossroads, where it should give priority to addressing the various issues in the Constitution-writing process, so that it can be followed up by the holding of general and local elections in the coming year or so. Failure to do so and reluctance to learn from the mistakes of the past will only cause further damage to Nepal and the process of redevelopment of the state.

CHINA'S FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS SRI LANKA: IMPLICATIONS FOR INDIA

SHAHELI DAS

The meteoric rise of China (中国) in the international sphere is one of the key developments in international relations in the 21st century. Interestingly, the leadership of the People's Republic of China (PRC) has linked the country's domestic goals with its foreign policy objectives. As former PRC Premier Wen Jianbao had popularly stated, "What China needs for its development first and foremost is an international environment of long-term stability and a stable surrounding environment."¹

Thus, the desire for a peaceful periphery, which forms an essential prerequisite for its domestic development, has dominated China's foreign policy agenda since 1978. Of the several regions around the globe where China's rise has made its presence felt, the region of South Asia, is of paramount importance. It has been a zone of active diplomatic competition owing to its strategic location as well as its geographical access to warm waters and numerous resources. Of the eight countries that constitute South Asia, namely, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, the Maldives, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal,

Shaheli Das is a Research Associate at the Centre for Air Power Studies, New Delhi.

1. D S Rajan, "China and South Asia: An Indian Perspective" in D S Rajan, ed., *Indian Perspectives on China* (New Delhi : KW Publishers, 2013), p. 32.

China's tottering relationship with Sri Lanka has been a matter of much discussion in the recent times.

The change of guard in China, Sri Lanka and India in the recent past has brought about a reconfiguration of power relations in the region and has led China to introspect its foreign policy strategy. The mainstay of this paper is to contemplate China's foreign policy towards Sri Lanka and its implications for India.

Although China has made deep inroads into Sri Lanka – an island nation which is identified as an important constituent of the South Asian regional framework – very little scholarly work is available on the subject. However, with the election of President Maithrapala Sirisena to office (January 2015) and his strategy of scaling back bilateral relations with China, the fervour to discuss the strategic and geo-political importance of Sri Lanka and its bilateral relations with Beijing, has gained greater momentum than ever before.

Much has been discussed in the public domain about Sri Lanka's surprising rebalancing strategy. However, this paper seeks answers to the following questions: what is the rationale behind President Sirisena's rebalancing act? Does India stand a chance to replace China as Sri Lanka's closest alliance partner in the region? What is likely to be China's reaction to correct Sri Lanka's tilt in the forthcoming years?

SRI LANKA'S IMPORTANCE TO CHINA

Despite its small size, Sri Lanka's geo-strategic importance is the source of its appeal to the major powers of the world. Strategically located in the Indian Ocean, close to the busiest sea lanes of the world, through which more than 70 percent of the global trade and energy resources transits, ties of warmth and friendship with this island nation are sought by international actors such as China, Japan, the USA and India.

To China, Sri Lanka is an important constituent of its 21st century Maritime Silk Road (MSR) which would connect the Fujian province to Europe. It is believed that the MSR would transit through the Indian Ocean region via India, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Nairobi and would finally terminate in Venice.² It is a crucial strategic project for

2. Atul Aneja, "China Uses Water Power to Deepen Sri Lanka Ties", *The Hindu*, December 7, 2014, <http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/world/china-uses-water-power-to-deepen-sri-lanka-ties/article6670075.ece>. Accessed on June 19, 2015.

Beijing in the Indian Ocean as it would significantly amplify China's presence in the shipping routes of South Asia. Further, Sri Lanka has been identified as the gateway port to India's western coast and further west to Iran, a vital source of import of oil for China. The Greenfield port of Hambantota, which was constructed with 85 percent loan assistance from China, is strategically located on the Indian Ocean to meet the objectives of the MSR.³ Thus, given the centrality of the MSR project in Xi's foreign policy agenda, Sri Lanka holds crucial importance for China, more than ever before.

SINO-SRI LANKAN BILATERAL RELATIONS

Despite the lack of significant historical linkages with Sri Lanka, China's sustained desire to forge a comprehensive strategic, political and economic relationship with it has broken new grounds in the bilateral bond. In view of the above, China has tactfully used its economic clout, rising global status and India's lack of foresight to its advantage.⁴

Sri Lanka recognised China in 1950; however, it was with the agreement on the first Rubber-Rice Pact (1952) that the relationship became founded on the element of unity. Thereafter, there was no looking back, as the bilateral bond took an upward trajectory. Formal diplomatic relations between the two countries were instituted in February 1957.⁵ Interestingly, their present bilateral relations are guided by the broad framework of a "China-Sri Lanka All Cooperation Partnership of Sincere Mutual Support and Ever Lasting Friendship," proclaimed in 2006.

The relationship was elevated to a "Strategic Cooperative Partnership of Sincere Mutual Support and Ever Lasting Friendship" in May 2013, during President Rajapaksa's sojourn to China.⁶

3. Jack Goodman, "Sri Lanka's Growing Links With China", *The Diplomat*, March 6, 2014, <http://thediplomat.com/2014/03/sri-lankas-growing-links-with-china/>. Accessed on June 21, 2015.

4. Sreeradha Datta, "Bangladesh's Relations with China and India: A Comparative Study", *Strategic Analysis*, vol. 32, no. 5, 2008, pp. 755-772.

5. "'China's Experience' Benefiting Sri Lanka's Growth", *CCTV English*, September 15, 2013, <http://english.cntv.cn/program/newshour/20130915/102197.shtml>. Accessed on June 22, 2015.

6. Dr Wang Weihua, "China-Sri Lanka Friendly Relationship: Historical Tradition, Realistic Dynamics and Bright Future", <http://www.defseminar.lk/media-centre/pres/Dr%20Wang%20Weihua%20.doc.pdf>. Accessed on June 21, 2015.

Thereafter, the strategic cooperative partnership has made pragmatic progress, in several sectors. High-level visits between the two countries have been a frequent affair. Essentially, their bilateral bond is based on the values of mutual trust, friendship, sovereignty, equality and, most importantly, mutual benefit.

CHINA'S POLICY TOWARDS SRI LANKA

Over a period of time, China has acquired a meaningful presence in the commercial, cultural and political sectors in Sri Lanka, not to mention its increasing clout in the Sri Lankan defence establishment. The significance of this development gains greater expression in the background of China's uncompromising endeavour to obtain global acceptance of its preeminence as a formidable power in the region.⁷

In line with its usual practice of exploiting commercial and trade routes first, Beijing's policy towards Sri Lanka has been no different. Till 2004, China's investment was estimated at US\$250 million. Financial assistance witnessed a surge in 2004 in the aftermath of the disaster caused by the tsunami, to the tune of US\$300 million.⁸ In the post-civil war phase (2009 onwards), Sri Lanka became financially reliant on China. The island nation received as much as \$4 billion worth of aid, grants and loans.⁹ As much as US\$6.5 billion was invested in the infrastructure sector alone. At this point of time, China offered financial assistance in terms of foreign credits and loans to the tune of 50 percent and 40 percent in 2009 and 2010 respectively.¹⁰

At present, China is the second largest source of imports for Sri Lanka, after India. Despite the impending Free Trade Agreement (FTA) which is highly symbolic of the Sino-Sri Lankan trust and bonhomie, the trade deficit that Sri Lanka suffers from in its commercial affiliation with China can hardly be ignored. The trade

7. Jayadev Ranade, "Indian Influence Over Sri Lanka Shrinks While Chinese Influence Expands", *DBSJAYARAJ.COM*, July 2, 2012, <http://dbsjeyaraj.com/dbsj/archives/7639>. Accessed on June 24, 2015.

8. Jayadev Ranade, *China Unveiled: Insights into Chinese Strategic Thinking* (New Delhi: KW Publishers, 2013), p. 193.

9. Dinouk Colombage, "Sri Lanka's Surging Cash Reliance on China", *Al Jazeera*, August 26, 2014, <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2014/08/sri-lanka-economy-reliance-china-infrastructure-20148256345589851.html>. Accessed on June 25, 2015.

10. Ranade, n.8, p. 193.

deficit between these two Asian countries was \$2.4 billion in 2012.¹¹ As of 2015, bilateral trade between them stands at US\$3.1 billion, of which goods and services worth \$2.9 billion are imported by Sri Lanka and products worth \$200 million are exported to China from the country.¹²

Eminent scholar Jayadev Ranade has aptly put forth that Sri Lanka, despite being overburdened by external debt, has been keen to obtain loans from foreign countries to accomplish its projects. In this context, it is important to mention that loans offered by China are neither grants-in-aid nor at preferential rates, but they offer a grace period of 4-5 years for repayment.¹³

Further, while on the subject of commercial ties, aid and assistance, it is important to mention that China has been the chief contributor to infrastructure projects in Sri Lanka. The Hambantota port, Norochcholai coal power project, Katunayake-Colombo expressway, Maththala airport, the 661-room Shangrila Hotel, Colombo South Harbour expansion project and Centre for Performing Arts in Colombo, are some examples of Chinese developmental assistance to Sri Lanka.¹⁴ However, it must be emphasised, without doubt, that such contributions to infrastructure development have wider strategic implications.

Chinese Foreign Policy During the Rajapaksa Administration

China's interaction with Sri Lanka had reached its zenith during the Rajapaksa era (2000-15). China had stood by Colombo during its turbulent years, after the long-drawn civil war ended in 2009. At this point of time, Colombo was confronted by fierce criticism from various quarters across the globe, owing to the human rights atrocities that had ravaged the country during the civil war years.

11. Jack Goodman, "Sri Lanka's Growing Links With China", *The Diplomat*, March 6, 2014, <http://thediplomat.com/2014/03/sri-lankas-growing-links-with-china/>. Accessed on June 21, 2015.

12. "Sri Lanka and China FTA go Ahead to Rebalance Ties with Beijing", *The Sunday Times*, March 22, 2015, <http://www.sundaytimes.lk/150322/business-times/sri-lanka-and-china-fta-go-ahead-to-re-balance-ties-with-beijing-140528.html>. Accessed on June 28, 2015.

13. Ranade, n.8, p. 194.

14. N Manoharan, "China and its Peripheries: Beijing and India-Sri Lanka Relations", *IPCS Issue Brief*, May 2013, <http://www.ipcs.org/issue-brief/china/china-and-its-peripheries-beijing-and-india-sri-lanka-relations-217.html>. Accessed on June 22, 2015.

The Rajapaksa clan had finally overpowered the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) militants in 2009 and found it the opportune moment to embark on the process of nation building. However, the civil war had given a blow to the country's economy, which suffered a huge lag.

At this juncture, the leadership in Sri Lanka, looked for diversification of its foreign policy alliances and sought increasing engagement with Pakistan, China and other powers. On the one hand, this alarmed the Indian government and, on the other, the political goodwill between China and Sri Lanka transcended to the economic realm. The goodwill shared between the two countries was to the extent that Chinese projects found easy approval in the country.

An interesting similarity could be deciphered in the manner in which Chinese companies operated in Sri Lanka and Africa. The opaqueness in the procedure of offering tenders by the Chinese companies was similar in both cases, whereby the Chinese suddenly emerged as single bidders for the respective contracts.

The Chinese had cultivated a personal equation with Rajapaksa and were able to take advantage of his personalised style of governance. In return, he favoured the Chinese by furthering their strategic agenda, in South Asia as well as in the Indian Ocean.¹⁵ This was a step forward towards the realisation of President Xi Jinping's "Chinese Dream". The Chinese objective was to develop port and infrastructure projects in Sri Lanka to remain in close proximity, and seek strategic access, to the seas of peninsular India.

Thus, assistance in terms of financial aid and infrastructure development was a way to earn the goodwill of the Sri Lankan leadership as well as an attempt to manipulate the ports as instruments of its future power projection in the region.

In its quest to fulfill its objectives, China developed a close rapport with the former president, ignoring allegations of abuse of power and corruption. However, Rajapaksa's strategy of sidelining senior leaders like Maithripala Sirisena backfired and later became the core issue in the 2015 presidential elections of Sri Lanka.¹⁶

15. Col. R. Hariharan, "Why China is Worried by the Regime Change in Sri Lanka", *Daily Online*, March 3, 2015, <http://www.dailyo.in/politics/why-china-is-worried-by-the-regime-change-in-sri-lanka/story/1/2367.html>. Accessed on June 3, 2015.

16. *Ibid.*

China's Foreign Policy under the Sirisena Regime

At present, Sri Lanka is at the threshold of transformation, in terms of both its domestic politics and foreign political alignments. The new government is confronted with several daunting challenges such as reforming the economy, bringing about ethnic reconciliation, reorienting the foreign policy approach and strengthening parliamentary democracy.¹⁷

Despite Rajapaksa's reiteration in his election manifesto, "Mahinda Chinthanaya", of his adherence to the policy of non-alignment, the foreign policy of Sri Lanka had swung away from India and the West, and became dangerously reliant on China.¹⁸ There had been a persistent trend of waxing in the Sino-Sri Lankan bonhomie and waning in the Indo-Sri Lankan relationship. However, Sri Lanka's indifference towards India was founded on multiple of factors, such as India's lack of interest in contributing to the nation's infrastructure development projects, hostile strategies embraced by the West and pressure wielded by the United Nations Human Rights Council, all of which had driven Sri Lanka towards Beijing.¹⁹

However, the Sirisena Administration has shown no such indecisiveness in reorienting Rajapaksa's pro-China policy. In fact, Sirisena has adhered to a delicate balancing strategy and has pledged an even-handed approach towards India, China, Pakistan, the USA and the European Union. An initial move toward this end was making India the destination for his first state visit and suspending the Colombo port city project and other mega projects funded by China.

Further, mention must be made of the civil nuclear agreement signed between India and Sri Lanka in February 2015. Quite clearly, the agreement was a "demonstration of mutual trust" – a sign of a closer strategic partnership. These moves display Sri Lanka's renewed efforts to project a new dimension of its alliance with India.

In view of Sri Lanka's refurbished foreign policy approach, China seems to have adopted a more conciliatory stand by formally

17. Razeen Sally, "Sri Lanka Chooses Changes", *East Asia Forum*, January 28, 2015, <http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2015/01/28/sri-lanka-chooses-changes/>. Accessed on June 1, 2015.

18. Peshan Gunaratna and J Berkshire Miller, "Sri Lanka : Balancing Ties Between China and the West", *The Diplomat*, May 26, 2015, <http://thediplomat.com/2015/05/sri-lanka-balancing-ties-between-china-and-the-west/>. Accessed on June 25, 2015.

19. *Ibid.*

backing a trilateral partnership among India, Sri Lanka and itself. Thus, in terms of the short-term perspective, China's aim at present is to forge close ties with the island nation once again, lest it loses the strategic benefits that it had reaped under the leadership of the erstwhile president of Sri Lanka. When viewed from the prism of its long-term perspective, China would be wary of the Sirisena Administration's endeavour to amend its skewed relationship with India and, consequently, correct its increasing inclination towards China.²⁰

An assessment from the Chinese lens would suggest that Beijing has made sustained efforts to mitigate the likelihood of any impairment in the bilateral relationship subsequent to the leadership transition in Colombo.²¹

China desires continued access to the port facility in Sri Lanka for its naval vessels, as had happened in late 2014. However, the present Sri Lankan foreign policy approach suggests that such arrangements would no longer be feasible as it would amount to the country earning disrepute with its other alliance partners, namely, India, the US and Japan.

WHAT IS THE RATIONALE BEHIND PRESIDENT SIRISENA'S REBALANCING ACT?

The assumption of office by President Maithripala Sirisena had come as a blow to Chinese interests in the island nation. Uncertainties crept into the Chinese strategic thinking when the Sri Lankan government stated that it would review the Chinese-backed \$1.4 billion flagship Colombo port city project, on grounds of transparency and for environmental reasons.²²

This, and other such measures pursued by the newly elected government in Sri Lanka had made headlines in China as well as other nations with major power status. But the question that remains unaddressed is the reason behind President Sirisena's strategy to reorient his foreign policy approach.

20. Hariharan, n.15.

21. Gunaratna and Miller, n.18.

22. Gabriel Dominguez, "Sri Lanka's New Leader to Visit China After Scaling Back Ties", *DW News*, March 25, 2015, <http://www.dw.com/en/sri-lankas-new-leader-to-visit-china-after-scaling-back-ties/a-18340803>. Accessed on June 14, 2015.

A central theme in President Sirisena's election agenda was restoration of the country's sovereignty by reducing its dependence on a single global power. In accordance with the fulfillment of this assurance, President Sirisena, after his electoral victory, sought to give equal leverage to other powers interested in forging a bilateral and strategic relationship with the country. Also the choice of India as the first destination of his state visit manifests the fulfillment of such an assurance.

The other reason is the difference in priorities of the two succeeding presidential candidates. It is a well known fact today that Rajapaksa had obtained unlimited funds from China through uncontrolled borrowings, for the purpose of development as well as to fend off war crime charges. This has led to the formation of a negative perception of the alliance with China amongst the local population.²³ Further, it is claimed that the leaders of the new government do not subscribe to this aspect of the Sino-Sri Lankan relations favourably.

Apart from the newly elected government's desire to forge close ties with India, its "neighbour and relative", the recalibration of its foreign policy tactics is due considerably to the domestic dynamics. On the one hand, China is identified with the unpopular Rajapaksa Administration and, on the other, Chinese investment in Sri Lanka is viewed as "crony capitalism".²⁴

This does not mean that Sri Lanka does not recognise the importance of its bilateral relationship with China any longer. Sirisena seeks to find a pragmatic solution to the deterioration of relations, considering China's importance as the second largest economy of the world and the largest economy in the Asia-Pacific region. Most definitely, it would be part of the Sri Lankan endeavour to retain China as an important partner to develop the country's infrastructure given the new regional funding schemes initiated by China. The US\$40 billion Silk Road Fund and the US\$100 billion Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank are cases in point.

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid.

DOES INDIA STAND A CHANCE TO REPLACE CHINA AS SRI LANKA'S CLOSEST ALLIANCE PARTNER IN THE REGION?

India has for long been concerned about China making inroads into Sri Lanka, which it considers as its backyard. Over time, China has emerged as the largest arms supplier to the Sri Lankan Army. At a crucial point in the country's history, the Chinese military aid had altered the balance of power situation in favour of the army, obliterating the LTTE as a whole. This led to the army becoming heavily reliant on Chinese arms. Thus, the increasing clout of China in the defence, infrastructure and telecom sectors had led India to become extremely wary of Chinese intentions in the country.

India's apprehension was further intensified by the pro-China tilt of the Rajapaksa Administration. To add to it, there were other factors such as: one, Sri Lanka's consent to China docking its submarines at the Colombo port in the months of September and November 2014; two, Beijing's strategy of the Maritime Silk Road; and three, the perception of the String of Pearls, all of which, contributed to such sentiments.

The change of guard in Sri Lanka has been hailed as a boost for Colombo's India policy and a major blow to its bilateral relations with China. However, it is too early to celebrate the event. President Sirisena's assurance of recalibrating his predecessor's pro-China policy towards one of diversifying the sources of investment into Sri Lanka must be given due credit only when "words meet with deeds".

For the present moment, it seems unlikely that India stands a chance to replace China as Sri Lanka's closest alliance partner in the region. This is because Sri Lanka's bilateral relations with China are based on deep-rooted structural necessities. For several decades, Sri Lanka had shared a sense of anxiety of living next to a bigger neighbour. Thus, geographical proximity, asymmetric economies, the island nation's feeling of insecurity, and the complacency of the Indian leaders have been the defining factors of the Indo-Sri Lankan relationship.

It is but natural that a small country in its quest to protect its sovereignty and autonomy against a larger neighbour would develop relations with the other big powers in the region, to counter-balance them against each other. Such is the case with Sri Lanka. Prior to its

engagement with China, Colombo had forged ties with Iran, the USA and Pakistan for the same reason. Thus, with the Indian economic growth trajectory set to rise, Sri Lanka's inclination towards China is likely to increase.

The Sirisena government has reiterated its stance of reviewing the deals signed by the Rajapaksa regime with China to infuse a element of transparency. However, the enduring interest of Colombo suggests that Sino-Sri Lankan friendship would only strengthen in the years ahead. It would be a mistake on India's part to expect Sri Lanka to repudiate the Chinese investments and projects. At best, Sri Lanka could 'partially curtail' its import of arms and military ties with China.

Further, Sri Lanka, which till recently represented the image of being a 'modern colony of China' would, in all likelihood, not prefer to be an Indian satellite state. To begin with, reconciliation between the Tamil minorities and his pro-Sinhalese allies is a daunting task before President Sirisena. The Sri Lankan and Sinhala nationalism are completely different from that of India. Therefore, the only manner in which Colombo could be made to come under India's shadow is through coercion. However, it needs to be noted that there is no need on India's part to subdue Sri Lanka and coerce it to bandwagon as a satellite state of India.

CHINA'S SOFT POWER STRATEGY

Political and economic relations apart, China has also put into play soft power strategies to make inroads into Sri Lanka. Evidence to this end is the China Radio International which has received a licence to operate as a 24-hour FM Radio channel in the country. It has an hour-long programme in Sinhala which is broadcast directly from China. The popular news channel of China, CCTV, has opted to telecast Chinese programmes with sub-titles in Sinhala.²⁵

China has made constant efforts to send its journalists to Colombo. Significant efforts have also been made to promote people-to-people contacts. To this end, scholarships have been offered to Sri Lankan students to study in China. In 2011, an agreement was signed to establish a Confucius Centre in the country.

25. Ranade, n.8, p. 197.

China has appropriately utilised the condition of the government's war against the LTTE to its advantage, to advance defence ties with the armed forces of Sri Lanka. It has offered sustained efforts in terms of supply and maintenance of aircraft, artillery guns, tanks and radars. Officers from the Sri Lankan armed forces have been travelling to China to undertake training in Chinese military institutions for many years now. Thus, China's sustained endeavour to harness its soft power towards Sri Lanka has further strengthened the foundation of this relationship.

WHAT IS LIKELY TO BE CHINA'S REACTION TO CORRECT SRI LANKA'S TILT IN THE FORTHCOMING YEARS?

In order to gain an edge over its competitor in the region i.e. India, China has spent years in cultivating relations of goodwill with the leaders of Sri Lanka. At present, Prime Minister Modi's "deft diplomacy", and President Sirisena's endeavour to tilt the country's foreign policy towards India have put China on high alert.

In such a situation, China would project its financial superiority over India in terms of its ability to offer Colombo financial aid and infrastructural assistance, necessary for the country's national rejuvenation. As evidence to this end, China may flaunt India's position of seeking financial assistance from the China led Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. This would project Beijing as a more reliable partner to mitigate the much unwanted infrastructure gaps.

India, at this point of time, must evolve measures to ensure that its national interest, foreign policy objectives as well as preeminence in the region do not get compromised. Incidents such as harassment of Indian fishermen must be strictly discouraged, as they challenge the perception of India's ability to safeguard its interests in the domestic and international spheres. India must reiterate the rich historical linkages that the neighbours share and institute efforts to grow into the largest source of direct foreign investment, export market and tourism in Sri Lanka.

CONCLUSION

Amid brewing tensions of a potential recalibration of the Sino-Sri Lankan relationship, there is much cause of apprehension for the

regional players about the future geo-political scenario of South Asia. This is especially the case with India. India is wary of China's increasing military and economic footprint in the Indian Ocean, in general, and in its backyard, in particular. With Sri Lanka being a lynchpin in China's Silk Road initiative – a strategy backed by the \$40 billion Silk Road fund – India is apprehensive of being encircled on all sides. Such a strategy would, in due course, undermine India's rising power profile in the region.

Quite clearly, the change of guard in Colombo has led China to introspect its foreign policy approach towards the country. Statements by President Sirisena during his electoral campaign, such as Sri Lanka would “become a colony, and we would become slaves” if the Rajapaksa-China rapprochement continued, have alarmed China.²⁶

However, contrary to the vision of the Indian foreign policy analysts, who view the present state of affairs as an opportunity to reset India's relationship with Sri Lanka, one must not underestimate the strength of the Chinese economic power. Contesting Chinese dominance in the region, in terms of both power parity and economic strength, remains a challenge. To this end, a healthy bilateral dialogue, an element of mutual trust and the act of meeting words with deeds are essential steps. One can only hope that the deft diplomacy of both President Sirisena and Prime Minister Modi would commence a new phase of amicable bilateral ties between the two countries in the years ahead.

26. Ellen Barry, “New President in Sri Lanka Puts China's Plans in Check”, *The New York Times*, January 9, 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/10/world/asia/new-president-in-sri-lanka-puts-chinas-plans-in-check.html?_r=0. Accessed on June 16, 2015.

ASSESSING THE CHALLENGES OF DETERRING CHINA

SWATI ARUN

China's understanding of the world and international relations has put several observers on caution. A while ago, many scholars shared the opinion that China perhaps is a 'different' power—one that only wants peace and harmony to advance economically. However, now, as the subtlety of China's peaceful development theory fades, one can see through the facade and begin to measure the challenge it poses.

China became the force of geo-political struggle ever since the liberalisation of its economy in 1980s. If the US at that time had been able envision the future wherein China would want to challenge the US, posing a threat to its primacy, the present scenario would have been different. However true, this can be debated as a notion of strategic thought available only in retrospect. For the US, preventing China from isolation and decades of poverty was an altruistic as well as an act of self-interest. The US' ambition to integrate and help develop the world's economy and reap the benefit of this was both in its own interest and that of the world economy. It expanded the market for better competition, investments and resource allocation. Also, it is argued, the US did not know that "fundamental transformations"¹ were capable of taking place in that environment

Swati Arun is an Associate Fellow at the Centre for Air Power Studies, New Delhi.

1. Ashley Tellis, Public Lecture on "US Rebalance to Asia", *NIAS, ISSSP*, January 15, 2014, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6LeD9_LyqYQ. Accessed on June 25, 2015.

where the US was leagues ahead of China. But today, as we see that China's rise is far from peaceful (owing to its activities in the South China Sea and East China Sea, where it has violated the International Code of Conduct), it is bold and audacious, and constantly creating turbulence while hoping to push the US out of the Asia-Pacific (or only until Okinawa!). The assertion seen in China's foreign policy over the last few years is an outgrowth of an unmatched economic development in the region, with the territory and population to support it. The ambition that drives China into assertion is simple: regional hegemony. To understand this further, China is a landlocked country with only its eastern side open to the sea. Incidentally, China's east coast is the industrial and wealth centre of the country and most of China's territorial disputes are island and water resource-centric. An environment wherein China is faced with challenges to achieve its 'national interests' would call for offensive/defensive actions. On the one hand, where China is using hard power to "achieve what is rightfully China's", the regional countries have moved far from bandwagoning and into resisting for their own national interests. Presently, the region stands at a point where there is one rising power against several smaller, relatively weaker powers, and the US. The imbalance appears to be largely tilting in favour of the 'allies' and 'partners' rather than the lone power – China.

The media showcased the US allies and China's neighbours joining the China led Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) as rejection of the US efforts at maintaining economic dependence—a sign of unwillingness to support the US, construing it as bandwagoning. However, efforts to strengthen air and naval power² undertaken by the Philippines, Malaysia and Vietnam are telling of the seriousness of the probable conflict. The US is geographically absent from the region and unreachable, therefore, least prone to the ultimate risk to 'survival'. Hence, the US military presence in the region is essentially a boon for the allies as it works as a deterrent against China going about its business—occupying disputed territory and strong arming neighbours. Are the neighbours really putting their faith in China? Probably not

2. Any future conflict in the region will be that of supremacy on the high seas, supported by air power.

as per the recent advancements seen in the region. From Japan to Vietnam, all prominent contenders in the disputes have increased their military budgets and expedited military acquisitions.

MILITARY MODERNISATION IN EAST AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

On December 23, 2014, Philippines' President Benigno Aquino enacted the 2015 General Appropriations Act, approving governmental expenditure of \$ US 59 billion. Subsequently, RAdm Caesar Taccad, head of the Philippines Navy's weapon systems, announced procurement of three guided missile fast attack craft, two guided missile stealth frigates, and two anti-submarine helicopters.³ After the Chinese incursion in the South China Sea, the region took to an urgent need of modernisation. On January 9, 2015, the Department of National Defence was allocated Pesos 144.5 billion (\$US 3.3 billion) in funding for the purchase of two anti-submarine helicopters from Augusta Westland. The Philippines also signed a contract with the US Navy for the purchase of two used C-130 Hercules military transport aircraft, bringing the total number of mission-ready C-130s to five.⁴ These acquisitions will be crucial in enhancing the quick deployment of forces and maritime security. The US also requested access to eight military bases in the Philippines to rotate troops, aircraft and ships, to counter China's rapid military build-up in the South China Sea, including bases in Subic and Clark, from which the Philippines had ejected the US in 1992.⁵

Malaysia's Prime Minister Najib Razak announced an increase in the defence budget to \$5.4 billion in 2015 (an increase of 10 percent) with an increase in defence procurement and research to \$US 1 billion. This increase was also a result of China's assertion in the Philippines Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), and to deter any future threats by China.

3. Carl Thayer, "The Philippines, Malaysia, and Vietnam Race to South China Sea Defense Modernization", *The Diplomat*, January 23, 2015, <http://thediplomat.com/2015/01/the-philippines-malaysia-and-vietnam-race-to-south-china-sea-defense-modernization/>. Accessed on June 25, 2015.

4. Ibid.

5. John J. Xenakis, "World View: Russia and Vietnam Agree to Mutual Defense Cooperation Pact to Counter China", *Breitbart*, May 2, 2015, <http://www.breitbart.com/national-security/2015/05/02/world-view-russia-and-vietnam-agree-to-mutual-defense-cooperation-pact-to-counter-china/>. Accessed on May 7, 2015.

Vietnam displayed aggressive retaliation to the belligerence of China's placement of oil rig HD-981 in Block 143 inside Vietnam's EEZ on May 2, 2014. The event started an intense round of diplomacy in December 2014: defence dialogues, and high-level delegations to and from the regional actors and the US, the UK, India and Russia, trying to work out a specific plan of action for future cooperation. Vietnam acquired the HQ 184 Hai Phong, the third of six Project 636.1 advanced Kilo-class submarines from Russia,⁶ while the fourth and fifth, the HQ 185 Da Nang and HQ 186 Khanh Hoa, are expected to arrive this year.⁷ Even as the US partially lifted the arms embargo from Vietnam, it vowed to help enhance maritime security.

Japan revealed a record defence budget of US \$ 42 billion passed by the Cabinet in January, 2015. In April 2015, at the 2+2 meet US Secretary of State John Kerry, US Defence Secretary Ash Carter, Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida and Japanese Defence Minister Gen Nakatani arrived at a decision that Japan should play a greater, more important role in maintaining peace and stability in the region.⁸ Japan that was allowed only homeland security, now moves on to 'proactively' contributing in the defence of the Asia-Pacific with the US. It also announced that it would help the other Southeast Asian countries in Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) capacity building. In this agreement, the US-Japan relations reached a new level of joint research and technology development, testing, etc, giving Japan a way to participate in big projects like the F-35 joint strike fighter, a programme defined by multiple partner nations that produce parts of the plane used around the globe.⁹ Subsequently, the US Defence Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) announced on May 5, 2015, that the US State Department had approved a possible

6. "Vietnam's Russian Restocking: Subs, Ships, Sukhois, and More", *Defense Industry Daily*, December 11, 2014, <http://www.defenseindustrydaily.com/vietnam-reportedly-set-to-buy-russian-kilo-class-subs-05396/>. Accessed on June 27, 2015.

7. Anh Son, "Vietnam's 5th Russian-Built Submarine Launched", *Thanh Nien News*, December 30, 2014, <http://www.thanhniennews.com/politics/vietnams-5th-russianbuilt-submarine-launched-36946.html>. Accessed on June 27, 2015.

8. Aaron Mehta, Paul Kallender Umezu, "With New Rules, Japan Emerges in Pacific", *DefenseNews*, May 3, 2015, <http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense/policy-budget/budget/2015/05/03/japan-us-guidelines-military-isr-cyber-industry/26691819/>. Accessed on June 27, 2015.

9. Ibid.

\$3 billion sale of 17 V-22 Osprey military transport aircraft and associated equipment to Japan.¹⁰

There have been serious efforts by the US and Japan to bring South Korea into the strategic group to strengthen security ties and maintain stability in the region to which South Korea is also a party. But South Korea is being cautious in deciding on agreements such as the Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement.

So far, China has succeeded in occupying the Scarborough Shoals Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of the Philippines and creating an artificial island in the Spratly Islands in the South China Sea – a strategic construction of an airstrip suitable for military purposes.¹¹ This can be counted as a major achievement by China against the US and its allies. Furthermore, the conjecture that the People’s Liberation Army (PLA), is loyal only to the Party, and not to the government, is not correct. In 2013, prior to Chinese Premier Li Keqiang’s visit to India, Chinese troops reportedly crossed into the remote territory controlled by India. Again, during the first visit to India by Chinese President Xi Jinping, the PLA kicked off the border dispute at the Chumar sector of eastern Ladakh, triggering a standoff.¹² The Chinese side pleaded ignorance and assured rollback of the troops that had intruded into the Indian territory. However, revival of a dispute in such a brash manner is capable of ruining an important visit by the highest authority of a country to another country in the hope of vital agreements, and can also be seen as an immature move. On the other hand, it also projects a certain reputation of the PLA – that it does not take orders from the government. But the current president of the PRC is the general secretary of the Communist Party of China, and the chairman of the Central Military Commission, so pleading ignorance of an act by the PLA is unacceptable and highly risky as

10. Fraz-Stefan Gady, “Meet Japan’s Newest Aircraft for Defending the Senkaku Islands”, *The Diplomat*, May 6, 2015, <http://thediplomat.com/2015/05/meet-japans-newest-aircraft-for-defending-the-senkaku-islands/>. Accessed on June 27, 2015.

11. David Brunnstrom, “Images Show Rapid Chinese Progress on New South China Sea Airstrip”, *Reuters*, April 17, 2015, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/04/17/us-southchinasea-china-runway-idUSKBN0N723Y20150417>. Accessed on June 27, 2015.

12. “Chinese Incursion in Ladakh: A little Toothache Can Paralyze Entire Body, Modi Tells Xi Jinping”, *The Times of India*, September 20, 2014, <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Chinese-incursion-in-Ladakh-A-little-toothache-can-paralyze-entire-body-Modi-tells-Xi-Jinping/articleshow/42940337.cms>. Accessed on June 27, 2015.

it reflects lack of command and leadership by the leader. And if it is true, then the region has much more to worry about if the PLA has the capacity to launch military actions without due directions from the government.

UNAVOIDABLE INFLUENCE OF THE SYSTEM

The system, as it turns out, does not give an advantage to anyone. It might seem that realism only benefits the powerful. This is far from the truth because the powerful are always looking to maintain that power, which is also very easily threatened by the advent of another nation. In the present case, the US is probably sweating the most over China's rise. A rise which is not comparable to its own but is substantial compared to the regional standards. It has also made the US come in closer contact with its allies.

Structural realism states that countries need to ensure their long-term security and survival. A smaller, less capable country does so by forging alliances with a greater power. A greater power either tries to bring in alliances or maintain dominance through armed conflict. It is difficult, however, to ensure the security of a (greater) rising power without it becoming a regional hegemon.

Even though China has created an environment for itself wherein neighbours do not threaten it and do not interfere with its development, it has failed in acquiring any 'friends' or forging any alliance in the region. On the one hand, there is the superpower, with allies and, on the other, a rising power, standing alone. It might seem like an easy win but where maintenance of peace is so crucial, and the cost of war high, to avoid an uncertain conflict is the problem.

A nation with a view for itself in the future, China is behaving like an upcoming 'power' would. The analysis of China's belligerence can be misread as 'going after economic necessity'. Technically, it is true that China would need resources available at sea to fuel its economy. But the underlying idea of maintaining predominance should not escape the mind. It is utmost necessary for China to control its waters, but how far it thinks its boundary lies is itself an indication of the future it wants. Claiming the whole of the South China Sea and East China Sea is telling of its strategy towards the region – if it controls the waters, it controls the region. In order to do so, China will need to

face the region –united or individually. But if China can make the cost of war so high for the (small) neighbours to reject an armed conflict, the battle is half won, with the stakes still being greater for the US in the region. China might also have to come to terms with the regional dynamics where the US is the lesser evil of the two, more desired, tested and capable. But the claim and assertion itself should suggest an unseen game lying ahead, where China knows the moves, and the rest are playing defensively.

DETECTING CHINA

The US, like Great Britain, is an air and sea power, while China is a land power like Imperial Germany of the 19th century. Europe in the 19th century was multipolar as Asia is today and both had territorial disputes which led to war with capable neighbours, reluctant to let 'one' dictate to the 'others'. But there was no 'supervisor' in the 19th century. Great Britain was only an offshore balancer, trying to keep the balance by tipping the scale by its assistance to one side. The US, however, is not an offshore balancer, it is the provider of security – removing the possibility of future competition. Its superpower status relies on its allies and the rest following its commands. When China started modernising, it needed assistance to grow, which was willingly provided by the US. Now, the contention is between the US accommodating China in its ambitions or stifling them. China itself benefits greatly through the US led system. But now, perhaps, it is ready for its own sphere of influence outside of the US' jurisdiction.

Deterring China will only be successful if the conflict is viewed as not in its interest and possibly outweighing the benefits (high cost of war, low yield). As for the US, maintenance of status quo is in its favour. But if the US and its allies want to deter China from engaging in conflict, it is of utmost importance to assess the value of the objective China is pursuing. If the objective is really non-negotiable—a threat to its survival—it is unlikely that China would step back. However, if it is expansionist in nature, the US needs to communicate its intentions clearly. For example, if the US wants China to not encroach upon the Philippines or Japan, it needs to send a strong signal that it is willing to take crippling actions. Deterrence would fail if China regards it as a bluff when the US is serious. The 'rebalance to Asia' strategy was

for the same effect, to project (hostile) intentions towards China but it failed as it did not deter China from occupying the Scarborough Shoals, creating an artificial island in the South China Sea, or announcing an Air Defence Identification Zone (AIDZ). The US' insincerity in managing the conflicts of its allies might lead China to not take any warning in the future seriously. As a result, the US now will have to be more cautious in dealing with China.

The Ukraine crisis too did not do well for preserving the US' reputation. The nature of action taken against Russia was found timid and non-threatening by China. But an alternative interpretation could be that as the US has taken enough blows to its reputation, it is unlikely to forgive China one more time, thus, would go the extra mile to maintain its primacy (both real and symbolic). On the other hand, if China fails to understand the signal and considers it to be symbolic and a bluff, it would result in a volatile situation. If the US is caught bluffing again, it would damage its reputation irreparably, and create an abrasive, uncontrollable China. At present, it is crucial for the US to convince China of its intention and willingness engage in armed conflict, if need be. The alliance in the region is going through a stage where the nations are actively participating in the decisions of the US, but if China is not convinced of the gravity of the situation, it will not be deterred.¹³

CONCLUSION

President Xi Jinping appears to have changed the course of China's thought from peaceful development to defensive (or offensive, in some cases) achievement of interest (territory). He is looked upon as the strongest leader after Jiang Zemin, and is surpassing all predictions of his actions. While China is building a military airfield on the disputed islands in the South China Sea, declaring Air Defence Identification Zones (ADZs), sending submarines through the Persian Gulf, creating a powerful new arsenal of cyber weapons, and reengineering its long range ballistic missiles to carry multiple warheads,¹⁴ the rest of the region is also rearming itself for

13. Swati Arun, "Deterring China", *InFocus*, Centre for Air Power Studies, June 4, 2015, http://capsindia.org/files/documents/CAPS_Infocus_SWA_01.pdf. Accessed on June 10, 2015.

14. "China Re-Engineers Ballistic Missiles To Make Them Powerful", report, *The Indian Express*, May 18, 2015.

the unpredictable fate of the region. This has set the precedence of escalation as now the US is under greater pressure to deploy the missile defence system.

China has assumed a role for itself in the international system which it thinks is crucial for it to gain and maintain great power status. As per the historical analysis, China was the 'middle kingdom' and it would like to be reinstated as such. It was when China started to weed out its contentions with the neighbours that the world became aware of the threat it personifies. But China has maintained a balanced approach – tempting the neighbours through economic benefits while trying to assert its way in the region.

Simply put, China has been throwing money to solve its problems, both foreign and domestic. Although this trick has gained it a lot of influence and profit internationally, fear of its uncontrollable and unparalleled capabilities has not escaped the attention of the neighbours and stakeholders. The region is gearing up for a potential conflict and is much more keen on American supremacy while trying to unite the countries on the basis of a common enemy. China's aggressive actions, thereby, comprise a potential threat to its own grand strategy.

The economic efforts welcomed by the region and the world at large do not necessarily mean that there is fear of China's wrath, or bandwagoning against it. It is merely an attempt to help attain a stable balance in power without an armed conflict. This issue which is in essence understood to be between the superpower and the rising power can best be addressed with the US maintaining high level diplomatic ties with China and the rest of the countries. The US would also be required to provide, besides security assurance, trade and business opportunities – it has been indicated by several scholars that the US needs to revitalise its economy. The US is being cautious, as economic dependency does hamper the strategic moves of containment, isolation, or armed conflict. Because business interests are important (though not as important as sovereignty), countries are behaving passively while maintaining military modernisation. The US and its allies have taken a responsible stance in not letting the conflict escalate – not to forget that China's 'economic prowess' is as

much dependent on these countries as theirs is on China. It will not be a zero-sum game.

The way the nations have gathered around the US for reassurance and support in coping with China is sufficient proof to understand the dynamics of the region. However, what will be more interesting is to see how far the US would let Japan enter the proactive stage of military allocation, and how long the US-China conflict can stay on the sidelines. Even if a conflict occurs and either party manages to win, the region will not achieve the stability that it has enjoyed till now.

China would not have announced its claim on the South China Sea or attacked the Philippines, if it was not sure of victory or some sort of surrender by the smaller nation. It assumed that, when the pros and cons are compared, economic reliance and benefits attained through partnerships with China would trump the costs involved in resistance and war. As Manila has resorted to the latter (resistance), entente has found its place in the region, and the possibility of China maintaining legitimate power seems slim.

INDIA-CHINA MILITARY SPACE COOPERATION: EVOLVING BEYOND JOINT STATEMENT TO ENGAGEMENT

KIRAN KRISHNAN NAIR

There are no permanent friends, no permanent enemies, only permanent interests.

— Lord Henry John Temple Palmerstone,
House of Commons, March 1, 1848

BACKGROUND

Going against the tide is a difficult proposition. Especially when the tide rides on a groundswell of emotions of the recent past. India fought a war with China in 1962 that damaged it in many more ways than one. The emotions and the angst run deep and yet as a nation we can ill-afford to remain hostage to the emotions of the past. Realpolitik demands we rise beyond the debacles of the recent past. After all, a century ago, in 1841-42, the Sikh-Dogra Army of Maharaja Ranjit Singh had sacked western China. Prior to that, in 1788 the Gorkhas of Rana Bahadur Shah had sacked eastern China. The point is not to review history but to indicate that both China and India are ancient civilisations that have had their share of victories and defeats.

Wing Commander **K. K. Nair** is a Research Fellow at the Centre for Air Power Studies, New Delhi.

The Chinese moved ahead and it would bode well for us also to do so. Both India and China are ancient civilisations that have suffered recurrent bouts of victory and defeat and yet bounced back. As we move further into the new millennium, there are certain unique strengths that make both parties equally formidable. It makes enormous sense to strengthen and solidify these strengths by cooperation rather than waste them in conflict. Numerous reports ranging from McKinsey to Global Policy predict a shift of the world's economic centre of gravity to Asia, particularly India and China, by around 2025. Rather than being held hostage to the emotional baggage of the past, if one looks to the future, it becomes clear that India has an opportunity to gain its rightful place in the comity of nations. It may not play second fiddle to China also. For instance, the debilitating effects of China's one-child policy would then become apparent, whereas in the case of India, the demographic dividend of having a young rising population of over 53 percent would make the future promising. The promise of the imminent future demands cooperation in futuristic areas and space is one such arena. This paper argues for a build-up on the May 2015 joint statement of the Indian prime minister and Chinese premier on bilateral cooperation. It seeks to convert words into action by initially opening out to India-China civil space cooperation and then dispensing with the emotional baggage of the 1962 War, for increased India-China military space cooperation. In the prevailing context, outer space cooperation is the new game changer that can enable both India and China to leapfrog differences, mitigate challenges and solidify strengths.

INDIA AND CHINA: EXPLORING THE POSSIBILITY OF MOVING BEYOND CONFLICT TO COOPERATION

Cooperation is the building block of peaceful coexistence. A sound military capability is equally so. Strength respects strength and blended with good intentions, opens the way to gainful and purposeful cooperation. It enables a transition to greater strength and well-being. Enabling this transition is the joint statement between the India and China during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to

China on May 15, 2015.¹ The joint statement is quite elaborate, with 41 points, revealing the amount of effort that must have gone into creating it. However, a few months post-declaration, it has rescinded into the background and doesn't receive the kind of attention it merits. There is now very little debate and discussion on the issue. During the visit, the hilarious "Eleven Jinping"² (Xi Jinping) *faux-pax* made enormous news and this frivolous affair ensured that there was little attention on the substance of the visit. Notwithstanding the humour, the fact remains that the visit has enormous potential to translate into substantial mutual gain for both countries. Over 40 areas of cooperation and mutual gain that have been agreed to stand to benefit both parties. What is path-breaking is the extraordinary emphasis on outer space cooperation. Amongst the six new avenues of cooperation listed out, two areas relate to space: one deals with cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space and the other to reinforcing the space cooperation mechanism of the year 2014. Quite apparently, with regards to outer space, the intentions are in place, only the means and methods need to be worked out.

On the other hand, military cooperation has also been treated afresh. Rather than keeping the militaries aloof and allowing animosities to fester, both sides have embarked on increased interaction and military ties to build mutual trust and confidence. A number of visits and exchanges have accordingly been planned that signify a warming of relations and more, importantly, intent to cooperate. Further, the intent is apparent considering the joint statement:³

The leaders agreed that the simultaneous reemergence of India and China as two major powers in the region and the world offers a momentous opportunity for realisation of the Asian Century. They noted that India-China bilateral relations are poised to play

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1. Refer to report of Prime Minister's Office, Government of India, "Joint Statement Between India and China During Indian Prime Minister's Visit to China", *Press Information Bureau*, May 15, 2015, <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=121755>. Accessed on June 3, 2015.
 2. *BBC News*, "Eleven Jinping: Indian TV Fires Anchor Over Bloopers", September 19, 2014, "DD Anchor calls Chinese President 'Eleven' Jinping, Sacked", *The Times of India*, September 19, 2014.
 3. Refer to para-3 of Joint Statement, n.1.

a defining role in the 21st Century in Asia and indeed, globally. The leaders agreed that the process of the two countries pursuing their respective national developmental goals and security interests must unfold in a mutually supportive manner with both sides showing mutual respect and sensitivity to each other's concerns, interests and aspirations. This constructive model of relationship between the two largest developing countries, the biggest emerging economies and two major poles in the global architecture provides a new basis for pursuing state-to-state relations to strengthen the international system.

The intent quite clearly is to move beyond the inhibiting parameters of conflict to cooperation for mutual gain. With the intent in place, it would be in order to explore the means and methods to arrive at the goal. The proposed means and methods explored herein are limited to the narrow context of space cooperation and are by no means exhaustive. They are illustrative, at best, of the enormous potential inherent in the endeavour.

THE RATIONALE FOR INDIA-CHINA SPACE COOPERATION

Before exploring the means and methods, it would be in order to explore the rationale for outer space cooperation between India and China. What is it that makes space cooperation between India and China unique? To understand the same, it would augur well to look at the Chinese adage, "*Cats make friends with cats and not rats*". The adage is well known and has equivalent versions across the Indian subcontinent also. It more or less sums up the rationale for cooperation amongst space-faring nations. It indicates operating on an equal footing for mutual gain rather than one-sided charity. An exchange of capabilities amongst equals enables mutual benefit and ensures long-term cooperation. China, on its part, claims that it views its space programmes through the kaleidoscope of opportunities ranging from military and social uses to diplomatic initiatives to further its interests in the Asia-Pacific region. The whole purpose of China's Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organisation (APSCO) is to strengthen its relations in the region and to reassure nations on its benign rise. It seeks

cooperation, firstly, for its own benefit; secondly, for a certain amount of mutual benefit; and, lastly, to extend its benevolence to nations it considers friendly.

The opportunities are not lost to countries in the Asia-Pacific. For instance, Pakistan in particular sees ample opportunity and is foremost in attempting to make the best of the opportunity. Although Pakistan has nothing more than a fledgling space programme, with no indigenous launch capacity, no worthwhile satellite manufacture capability nor the attendant ground infrastructure and almost nil space industry, it seeks to leapfrog almost entirely on existing and forthcoming Chinese space capabilities. To cite a case in point, with regards to the Chinese Space Station, Maj Gen Ahmad Bilal, chairman of Pakistan's Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO), told China's *Global Times* that his country will become the first in the world to send its astronauts to China's Tiangong-2 space station.⁴ However, latching on for a free ride on someone else's efforts is not cooperation in the true sense. To the obvious question of mutual benefit in the above case, there would be no clear answers. Pakistan stands to gain in case the first foreigner on the Chinese Space Station (CSS) is from Pakistan. Again, the benefits to Pakistan are limited to a free joy-ride and some amount of national prestige. No substantial gain is conceivable in view of the wide gap between the Chinese and Pakistani space programmes. The Chinese reaction to Pakistan's enthusiastic response is not known. At least, it has not been made public till date. However, it is apparent that what China gains, at least in terms of space capabilities, would be nil, or at best, little.

India, for that matter, presents an entirely different case. India is an established space-faring nation with the entire complement of launch, space systems and allied ground infrastructure. It has globally acknowledged credentials. For instance, as of May 2015, it has launched 45 foreign satellites belonging to over 19 countries⁵.

4. Staff Reporter, "Pakistan Wants Role in China's Space Station Programme" *Want China Times*, June 19, 2011; Saibal Dasgupta, "Pakistan Seeks Free Space Ride From China for Its Astronaut", *Times News Network*, September 21, 2013.

5. Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre, "India to Launch Six More Satellites by Year End" VSSC, ISRO, Government of India, April 20, 2015, http://www.vssc.gov.in/VSSC_V4/index.php/archived-articles/1631-gadgets-ndtv-com-apr-30-2015. Accessed on May 23, 2015.

Another 28 foreign satellites would be launched within the next two years. These include nine micro-satellites of the global leader, the US, which had in the past imposed sanctions against India. China, on the other hand, is in no position to boast of a similar achievement in launches though it may boast of formidable military space capabilities. Mutual gain is what space-faring nations look for, and India, herein presents an entirely different case. There is substantial scope for mutual benefit since technological and economic resources are sought to be shared in such efforts. A variety of technology and cost-sharing models could be worked upon. For instance, significant gains could be made in platform technology for India's space crew modules, whilst others could gain substantially from India's competencies in launch, medicine, software, etc. After all, India's Mangalyaan successfully entered the Mars orbit in its first attempt while China's mission splashed back into the ocean and the US made it only after losing quite a few Mariner Mars missions. The point is not to deride the capabilities of other nations, but to indicate that cooperation provides the options to mitigate weaknesses and plug gaps in deficient capabilities. The rationale for cooperation is now stronger than ever before.

THE OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES IN INDIA-CHINA SPACE COOPERATION

A partnership amongst space-faring nations makes both technological and economic sense in ample measure. Instead of expending resources singly and experiencing cycles of failures and success, it makes sense (common and monetary) for parties to cooperate. Towards this end, the May 2015 joint statement of the Indian prime minister and Chinese premier is a clear signal to advance unhesitatingly. Both leaders noted that there is a historic imperative for India and China to enrich their bilateral relations and build closer developmental partnerships. Towards this end, the peaceful use of outer space was clearly articulated as a new area of cooperation with an emphasis on reinforcing cooperation in the field of satellite remote sensing, space-based meteorology, space science, lunar and deep space exploration, satellite navigation, space components, piggy-back launching services, education and training. The paper work apparently is in

place with the signing of the 2015-20 Space Cooperation Outline between the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) of the Republic of India and China National Space Administration of the People's Republic of China (PRC). However, a lot needs to be done to give wings to aspirations on both sides.⁶

The challenges are enormous, and the most obvious challenge would be identifying the appropriate areas of cooperation between China's space programme that is entirely military in its genesis, its organisation, its character and its goals, as opposed to the Indian space programme that is entirely civil in all aspects. Regardless of the military or civil orientation of either partner, the areas of cooperation have been clearly spelt out to be peaceful uses which fits eminently with India's national policy of peaceful use. While China stands to gain enormously from India's civil expertise of over four decades in agriculture, telemedicine, hydrology, and education, etc, India could also gainfully use the opportunity to gain competencies in its proposed crew module, life-sciences and a variety of other traditional areas. India could also gain substantially from China's experience on the peaceful use of outer space for its military forces. China's space programme has been patently military in nature and it has peacefully employed space for its military modernisation and national security. There seems to be no reason to not look at the means and methods employed by China for the peaceful use of outer space.

EVOLVING TO MILITARY SPACE COOPERATION

National security is no longer an isolated endeavour and now forms part of the overall development of a nation. It is also no longer the exclusive preserve of the military. The times have changed as have the circumstances and it would augur well for India to get over its usual reticence and look at how China has employed 'peaceful use' of space for national security purposes. Apart from civil development, space capabilities also enhance national security, and it makes more sense to optimally exploit these. It would, hence, be essential to go beyond the surface and explore the meaning and implications of

6. Refer to report of Prime Minister's Office, Government of India, "Joint Statement between India and China during Indian Prime Minister's Visit to China", *Press Information Bureau*, May 15, 2015, <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=121755>. Accessed on May 16, 2015.

the peaceful use of outer space. Generally speaking, peaceful use and military use are apparently antithetical. But, legally speaking, a different interpretation is in vogue. The term peaceful use has not been defined in international space law. This leaves it open to interpretation, opening the way to two prominent schools of thought. The first is the school of thought primarily promoted by the United States that non-aggressive uses of space like satellites used for communication, navigation, Earth observation, etc., are peaceful regardless of whether they are used for military or civilian purposes. A contrary school of thought also exists that interprets peaceful in its narrowest terms and considers military use as being non-peaceful. The academic debate on whether military use of satellites for communication, navigation, etc., amounts to peaceful use remains unsettled. However, no operational doubts prevail. Global trends clearly indicate a widespread and growing acceptance of the US position that "peaceful use" is the equivalent of non-aggressive use rather than non-military use. As a matter of fact, ever since the first spacecraft, the Sputnik, was launched in 1957, satellites have been put to peaceful use by militaries across the world. Put briefly, going by custom and established practice ever since the opening of the space age, the use of satellites for military purposes comprises peaceful use.

It is the above use that the Indian military seeks. It has been seeking space competencies for force enhancement: to enhance conventional capabilities with space competencies like communication, navigation, observation, etc so as to optimally utilise its modern platforms like long range aircraft, ships, etc. The crux of all military modernisation is the synergy of air and space capabilities for "*informalisation*" as the Chinese term it. Space application systems like satellites for communication enable aircraft, Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV), ships and other platforms to communicate efficiently over various types of terrain well beyond national boundaries. The recent provisioning of a dedicated military satellite for the Indian Navy was part of the same quest. Similarly, observation satellites enable observation without infringing political boundaries or the air space of other countries, and navigation satellites enable precise, quick and efficient delivery of men and material to the exact point of interest. In a nutshell, this enables a bigger bang for the buck. The same

equipment/platform gives greater output, is more optimally utilised and all-in-all enables greater accountability of the taxpayers money.

The above is the trend across the world and there is no reason for India to not learn from the Chinese. The opportunity is of use not just for ISRO, but also for the armed forces, especially in view of the fact that the same joint statement of the Indian and Chinese premiers extols the need for enhanced military ties to build mutual trust and confidence. The other means expressed in the paper are of training in counter-terrorism and exchange visits by ships, both of which are temporary measures that do little apart from ceremonials. The more lasting and purposeful cooperation would be transfer of civil space uses from India to China and China's transfer of knowhow on how militaries can use space for peaceful purposes. The gain from ceremonials is not known to stand the test of time, but cooperation in space projects that have typically huge gestation periods of up to five years and an operational life that is equal or even more, are more long lasting and cost-effective. The gain is also mutual and eminently serves either nation.

CONCLUSION

The national leadership of India and China have inked their intention. It is up to the interested parties to take it forward. Quite apparently, the Indian military needs to grab the opportunity and explore the means of modernisation from an unconventional quarter. There is little harm in looking at another's experiment and drawing lessons. The Chinese have evolved space capabilities over four decades. They took a different path, which again brought them to their destination. Going by Robert Frost, the road less travelled makes all the difference, and there is no harm in checking whether the Chinese got it right.

CHINA'S MILITARY AVIATION INDUSTRY

RAVINDER SINGH CHHATWAL

INTRODUCTION

In 2013, China became the world's fifth largest arms exporter, overtaking the UK, according to the Swedish think-tank, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).¹ This was the first time China had been included in the top five arms exporters of the world. SIPRI's 2015 Annual Report stated that China had overtaken Germany as the world's third largest arms exporter. China's military industries have come a long way since 1949 when the Communists took over power in China. At that time, the country had hardly any industries and relied on Russia to provide it with military hardware.

Soon after the Communists came to power, they started developing their industry on the socialist pattern, of giving priority to heavy industry and emphasising import substitution of capital goods. In the initial years, China allocated adequate resources for the strategic industries and made impressive progress in the production of advanced weapons like nuclear bombs, missiles, fighter aircraft, tanks and submarines. The Soviet Union provided the initial thrust

Group Captain **Ravinder Chhatwal** (Retd) is a Senior Fellow at the Centre for Air Power Studies, New Delhi.

1. "18 Mar. 2013: China Replaces UK as World's Fifth Largest Arms Exporter, says SIPRI", *Stockholm International Peace Research Institute*, 2013, http://www.sipri.org/media/pressreleases/2013/A_Tlaunch. Accessed on October 10, 2014.

in the 1950s to China's defence industry with the development of a large number of ordnance factories. After the Korean War, the Soviets also set up factories for manufacturing aircraft, tanks, ships and submarines. The relationship with the Soviets, however, started deteriorating in the late 1950s due to divergence of ideological and national interests. The break-up with the Soviet Union was a setback to China's defence industry. To make matters worse, the defence industry received a further blow due to the vicissitudes of Mao's "Great Leap Forward" from 1958 to 1962 and the "Cultural Revolution" in the 1970s. It was only after Deng Xiaoping started his four modernisations campaign in 1979 that the defence industry received an impetus in China's strategic priorities.² Since then, the Chinese military industry has made great progress in providing advanced weapons for its armed forces.

China's aviation industry is controlled by two major companies: Aviation Industries Corporation of China (AVIC) and Commercial Aircraft Corporation of China (COMAC). AVIC is a large company with about 600,000 employees, and manufactures military aircraft, civilian aircraft, helicopters, air-to-air missiles and some types of anti-ship missiles. COMAC is the only major aviation company not under AVIC. COMAC was set up in 2008 as an independent company to develop China's first commercial civil airline aircraft, the C-919. It is a much smaller company than AVIC and employs just 6,000 workers.³ This article covers the development of China's military aircraft industry and the lessons for India.

DEVELOPMENT OF CHINA'S AIRCRAFT INDUSTRY

The Chinese aviation industry had been a beneficiary of Soviet largesse in the 1950s. In 1949, when the Communists took over power, China was a backward society, with very few industries. In the era from 1950 to 1960, the Soviets provided China with seven aviation factories: Nanchang and Shenyang for airframes; Zuzhou and Shenyang for aero-engines and component plants; Xian Aircraft Accessory Factory; Xinping Aviation Electronic Plant for

2. Deng's four modernisations included agriculture, industry, science and technology and national defence.

3. Mikhail Barabanov, Vasiliy Kashin and Konstantin Makienko, *Shooting Star: China's Military Machine in the 21st Century* (Minneapolis, USA: East View Press, 2012), p. 6.

wheel brakes; and Baoji Aviation Instrument Factory. These seven plants formed the foundation of China's aviation industry.⁴ They produced a number of Soviet aircraft, the MiG-17/J-5, MiG-19/J-6, MiG21/J-7, Il-28/H-5, TU-16/H-6. The Sino-Soviet split of 1962 was a dampener but by that time, the Chinese had mastered the art of reverse engineering and copying Soviet designs. While the Chinese were good at copying Soviet aircraft, they failed to design any new aircraft other than the J-8 which was derived from the MiG-21, and later on, the JH-7 and J-10 (the J-10 was developed with assistance from Israel). In the 1970s, Sino-US relations improved and this led to the West and Israel opening up to China.

In 1989, after the Tiananmen Square incidents, the Western countries imposed an embargo on military technologies for China. Israel continued to provide China with military aviation technology in the 1990s till finally the US pressurised it to stop transfer of military technology. In the late 1990s, Israel was forced by the USA to cancel the sale of the Phalcon Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) to China. The loss of Western technologies brought Russia back as the frontrunner for providing advanced technology to China. After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, cash strapped Russia willingly provided SU-27/SU-30MKK fighters and other advanced weapons to China but the Chinese illegally started producing copies of the SU-27 and branded them as their own J-11 fighters. Despite some hiccups in the Sino-Russian military deals, Russia continues to be the only source for advanced weapons and military equipment for China.

China's growing domestic capability has made rapid advances since the 1990s when China was mostly producing copies of obsolete Soviet era aircraft. Today, China's aviation industry is producing two indigenous fourth generation fighters, the J-10 and J-11B. China's AWACS/ AEW (Airborne Early Warning) aircraft, the KJ-2000, and KJ-200 are also operational, with indigenous radars. The two most prominent projects which are currently under development are the fifth generation stealth fighters, the J-20 and J-31. The J-31 is a smaller

4. Phillip C. Saunders and Joshua K. Wiseman, "Buy, Build, or Steal: China's Quest for Advanced Military Aviation Technologies", *Institute for National Strategic Studies China Studies Perspectives*, No. 4 (Washington DC: National Defence University Press, December 2011).

aircraft and is likely to be deployed for carrier operations with the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN). Not much information is available about the J-20's and J-31's performance but how advanced they are compared to Western and Russian stealth fighters, will have to be seen.

DEVELOPMENT OF AERO-ENGINES

Aero-engines have been one of the weak areas holding back the growth of the Chinese aircraft industry. It is for this reason that China views aero-engine Research and Development (R&D) as a key priority and plans to invest large sums in this sector. All work related to aero-engines has been consolidated under a single subsidiary, AVIC Aero-Engines.

China is involved in working on a large number of advanced engines, from small engines for Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) to powerful turbofans for the heavy lift military transport aircraft, the Y-20, which is under development and first flew in January 2013. Development of aero-engines is critical for China to be self-sufficient in military hardware and for growth in arms exports. China is trying to find indigenous replacements for the major types of engines imported from Russia like the AL31F/FN (for the SU-27/SU-30/J-11/J-10), RD-93 (for the JF-17 exported to Pakistan), and the D-30KP2 (for the H-6K bombers, IL-76 and Y-20). The J-20 and J-31 will also be equipped with Russian engines. China is trying to procure Russia's most advanced aero-engine, the Saturn 117S for the J-20 and J-31. The Saturn 117S has super cruise capability and is installed in the SU-35 and PAKFA/FGFA (Fourth Generation Fighter Aircraft). Once China replaces these Russian engines with its own indigenous ones, it will be free of Russian controls on its export market and the way will be clear for it to become a major military power and arms exporter in the world.

Initially, China was only involved in licensed production of Soviet era and some Western engines but now it has started mass production of two indigenous turbofan engines, the Kunlun for the J-8II and the J-7 class of fighters; and Taihang WS-10 series of high bypass engines for the J-10, J-11B/BS and J-16 fighters. The Taihang WS-10 is the first high performance turbofan engine with an afterburner developed by China. Work on the Taihang engine was started in the 1980s and its

core is based on the CFM-56 engine—this engine powers the Airbus A-320 also. The engine is produced by CFM International, a joint venture company of GE Aviation of the USA and Snecma of France. It has also been reported that China is making progress in developing its most powerful turbofan engine, the WS-20, which will power the Y-20 heavy transport aircraft.⁵ The core of the WS-20 is also based on the CFM-56 engine.

EVALUATING CHINA'S MILITARY AVIATION INDUSTRY: LESSONS FOR INDIA

China's single-minded pursuit of national interests to build a strong aircraft industry holds important lessons for India. China's heavy investment in R&D and technical education has enabled it to absorb advanced aviation technology. The entry of private defence contractors has made the Chinese military industry more competitive. Compared to China, the Indian aviation industry had a headstart when Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) was established in 1940 as a private limited company by Walchand Hirachand. After independence in 1947, the government took over the company and since then it has been a defence PSU (Public Sector Unit). HAL built the first fighter aircraft in India, the HF-24 Marut, under the design team leadership of German engineer Kurt Tank of World War II Focke Wulf fame. The HF-24 entered service with the Indian Air Force (IAF) in 1967 and was phased out in 1985. Unfortunately, HAL did not continue design work on other military aircraft after the HF-24 till the Tejas project in 1983. In all these years, HAL was involved in licensed production of the MiG-21 and other fighter aircraft. India needs to develop design capability for military aircraft and invest in R&D to develop its aircraft industry. Instead of HAL having a monopoly on the aviation industry, India must encourage the private industry and promote technology transfers from foreign companies in this field.

The growth in China's indigenous capabilities has also given a boost to its arms exports. At the same time, China has considerably

5. Jeffrey Lin and P.W.Singer, "China's Most Powerful Engine Ever Takes to the Sky," *Popular Science*, February 20, 2015, <http://www.popsci.com/chinas-new-more-powerful-aircraft-engine-ws-20-takes-sky>. Accessed on August 4, 2015.

reduced its imports of arms. The rising capabilities of the domestic industry have reduced China's imports of arms from Russia by 57 percent in 2007.⁶ Since 2011, India has replaced China as the world's top arms importer. This is a dubious distinction from which India must get out by developing its indigenous industry, like China has done. China has also improved the quality of its arms export weapons, with better after sales service. In the period from 2002-07 to 2007-12, China's arms exports have risen by 162 percent according to SIPRI.⁷ The main buyer of China's arms is Pakistan. China has always had a strong nexus with Pakistan in its efforts to contain India. Export of arms provides China with greater scope to extend its influence and improve its image. There is a lesson in this for India. To be an influential regional power, India has to encourage domestic defence industry. India must open up the defence sector for private players and encourage Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in this sector. Private players need to be given clearance to export their products. The government's policy of increasing FDI in this sector is a step in the right direction.

In the past, China had procured most of its military hardware from the Soviet Union/Russia and copied it to make indigenous products. China still continues to carry out reverse engineering but now it has been able to develop indigenous aircraft, missiles and space satellites. China has spared no effort in acquiring foreign technology, either legally or illicitly, and, finally, after decades of hard work, it has reached a level of technological capability, which is, in some spheres, close to that of Russia and the Western countries.

The Chinese aircraft industry's rapid development has propelled the country as one of the leading manufacturers of military aviation hardware. The major weak area is development of powerful jet engines for fighter aircraft and large transport aircraft. Similarly, while the J-20 and J-31 have the aero-dynamic looks of stealth aircraft, they have limitations on the extent of their stealth capability. For example,

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6. Prof Keith Hayward, Royal Aeronautical Society, "The Chinese Aerospace Industry: A Background Paper", July 2013, <http://aerosociety.com/Assets/Docs/Publications/DiscussionPapers/ChineseAerospaceIndustryDiscussionPaper.pdf>. Accessed on August 10, 2015.
 7. "China Replaces Britain in World's Top Five Arms Exporters: Report", *Reuters*, March 17, 2013, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/03/17/us-china-arms-exports-idUSBRE92G0L120130317>. Accessed on July 2, 2015.

while the J-20 has front aspect stealth, it lacks rear aspect stealth due to its tail fins, canards and engine nozzles, which reflect radar signals.⁸ It is also not clear whether China has developed the other capabilities of radar absorbing materials for full stealth performance, advanced Active Electronically Scanned Array (AESA) radar, sensor fusion and high speed data links for a true fifth generation fighter. Without all these capabilities, China's J-20 and J-31 will just be an extension of fourth generation capabilities with the looks of a stealth fighter.

India plans to develop the fifth generation stealth aircraft, called the Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA). Preliminary work on the design of this futuristic fighter is almost over.⁹ The project is likely to be started in the next few months after completing the project definition and feasibility study and getting Cabinet approval. The project will require about Rs 4,000-5,000 crore (US\$ 633-791 million) for initial design and development. HAL had displayed a scale model of the AMCA at the Aero India show in Bengaluru in 2013. The AMCA will be a twin-engine, multi-role, single seat fighter, with internal weapons bay and indigenous stealth technologies like radar absorbent paint and composites which are under development.¹⁰ While the IAF may be sceptical about HAL's claims to develop the AMCA due to protracted delays in the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) project, this should not deter the planners from going ahead with this project. India cannot continue buying aircraft from abroad and we have to move ahead after the Tejas to maintain our design capability and other technologies developed for the Tejas. The AMCA project assumes even more significance in view of the joint Russian-Indian FGFA running into delays. This aircraft which was originally planned for induction in 2022 is now planned for induction in the IAF in 2024/2025.¹¹ The first prototype of the AMCA is planned for test flying in 2023-24. To keep costs and delivery timeframes in check, the feasibility of foreign cooperation should be considered. It has been

8. "J-20 Black Eagle", *Global Security*, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/china/j-20.htm>. Accessed on August 10, 2015.

9. Rajat Pandit, "Make-in-India: Plan to Develop Fifth Gen Fighter", *The Times of India*, January 8, 2015, p. 9.

10. "New Design For Indian Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft", *Aviation Week & Space Technology*, March 4, 2013, <http://aviationweek.com/awin/new-design-indian-advanced-medium-combat-aircraft>. Accessed on July 2, 2015.

11. Pandit, n. 9, p. 9.

reported that foreign aircraft manufacturers like Saab of Sweden, Dassault of France and EADS (European Aeronautic Defence and Space Company), have expressed interest in being consultants for the project but no selection has been done as yet.¹² India will have to find a suitable aero-engine for the AMCA since this is another area in which India has not made adequate headway. The indigenous Kaveri aero-engine project is still under development and unless it is produced to meet the AMCA standards, India will have to look for alternatives from abroad.

In the field of large military transport aircraft also, China is dependent on the Russian IL-76 class of aircraft. China is developing a new four-engine heavy transport aircraft, the Y-20, which was first flight tested in January 2013. With a payload of 66 tons the Y-20 falls in between the 80 ton class C-17 and the 40 ton class Il-76. The Ukrainian company Antonov is involved in the design of the Y-20. Initial production versions of the Y-20 will be powered by the Russian D-30KP2 engines; these will be replaced later with the indigenous WS-20 turbofan.¹³ The Y-20 is likely to be the basis for future aerial refuelling, AWACS, Electronic Warfare (EW) and Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) platforms. India also needs to step up its plans for manufacturing of transport aircraft as the IAF has a large requirement for these for the cargo, AWACS, tankers, ISR and Electronic Intelligence (ELINT) roles. In addition, there is the requirement for transport aircraft from India's growing civil aviation sector.

Another area in which the PLA Air Force (PLAAF) seems to be having problems is in the field of long range Surface-to-Air Missiles (SAMs). China has imported a large number of Russia's S-300 class of long range missiles and, in November 2014, it signed a contract with Russia for the supply of six battalions of their most advanced very long range S-400 air defence missiles. China's most advanced indigenously produced long range missiles are the 120 km range HQ-9. This missile went into production in the early 2000s and is similar to the S-300 class of missiles. China developed the HQ-9

12. n. 10.

13. Richard Fisher Jr, "China's Y-20 Enters Second Phase of Testing", *IHS Jane's Defence Weekly*, September 4, 2014, <http://www.janes.com/article/42708/china-s-y-20-enters-second-phase-of-testing>. Accessed on March 26, 2015.

missile with Russian help.¹⁴ The Chinese seem to be having problems in producing the HQ-9 in large numbers as only about 10 battalions have been produced for the PLA. The fact that China is buying long range SAMs from Russia indicates that the domestic missile industry has not been able to provide products of the right standard for the PLAAF.

The Chinese military aircraft industry, like any developing industry, has many deficiencies but these are being addressed and with China's strong commitment to developing its capabilities, are likely to be overcome in the coming years. The Chinese may not have been very adept at innovation and development of original aviation designs but they have been adept at copying, reverse engineering and spying to produce the military hardware they need. As Phillip C. Saunders and Joshua K. Wiseman have said, "China will likely rely more heavily on espionage" to obtain advanced technology which it is not able to procure or develop.¹⁵

India must learn from the development of China's military aircraft industry and make a strategic decision to step up its aviation industries to meet domestic needs. India must also shed its traditional aversion to arms export and aggressively enter the market to export weapons just like China has done.

14. Barabanov, et. al., n.3, p. 122.

15. Saunders and Wiseman, n.4, p. 49.

CYBER SECURITY CHALLENGES FOR INDIA: AN ASSESSMENT OF ITS PREPAREDNESS

E DILIPRAJ

India, a huge landmass located in the South Asian region, one of the most densely populated regions in the world, has contributed immensely to the betterment of world civilisation. It will not be an exaggeration to say that the country and its people will continue with contribute for advancement of this world in the foreseeable future too. However, keeping aside the contributions of the past, the question today is: what is the level of contribution that India could make to a world which will become more virtual than ever before, with highly intertwined networks connecting every corner of the globe, and almost all the activities of human beings heavily dependent on these complex networks. Clearly, the reference here is to the cyber world which is undoubtedly expanding at a fast pace across the globe, spreading its tentacles to every corner of the world.

India is no exception, as the country, with a growing younger generation is increasingly getting acquainted with the innovations of technology and, more importantly, the cyber world. Going by the statistics, India has the largest number of internet subscribers and mobile phone users in the South Asian region owing to the massive numbers of its population. Moreover, according to some sources, India

E Dilipraj is an Associate Fellow at the Centre for Air Power Studies, New Delhi.

has the third largest number of internet users in the world after China and the United States of America.¹ The dependence on computers and mobile phones for day-to-day activities by the general public, irrespective of age, educational qualification, financial and social status, is increasing each and every day. Alongside the advent of smart phones and mobile-based applications using the internet, its feasibility and access to such instruments of communication has further increased the usage and dependence on this high-end technology among the people. The dependence on mobile phones is so high across the world that it would not be an exaggeration to say that these are the most widely used gadgets. Also, on the business front, India is one of the leading exporters of Information Technology (IT) products and has a large IT industry worth billions of dollars in the country. The Information and Communication Technology (ICT) sector of India is considered as one of the crown jewels of the country as it contributes immensely to the economy, provides large scale employment, generates huge profits for IT-based companies and, more importantly, enables easy communication for the people. With millions of individuals employed in this sector, where the average age is not more than 35,² the sector has become one of the lifelines not only for the country's economy but also for the future generations of the country.

While the above mentioned aspects could be credited to the merits of the cyber environment for India and its development, the subsequent issues would evaluate the demerits of the same. Owing to the existence of widespread usage and dependence on cyber space in the country, India is one of the most targeted countries in the world for cyber attacks. The array of threats to India's cyber security includes data theft, malwares, hacking, web defacements, identity thefts, online financial frauds, email spoofing, social engineering scams, Denial of Service (DoS) and Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attacks, unauthorised access to critical infrastructures of the country, online surveillance and digital espionage. For instance, in 2013 alone, the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-IN) handled 71,780 incidents

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1. "Top 20 Countries with the Highest Number of Internet Users", <http://www.internetworldstats.com/top20.htm>. Accessed on February 11, 2015.
 2. Aradhana Aravindan, "Once the Preserve of the Youth, IT Staffing Enters Middle Age", *Reuters*, January 29, 2014, <http://in.reuters.com/article/2014/01/29/india-technology-ageing-idINDEEA0S02720140129>. Accessed on February 11, 2015.

caused by various cyber threats related to the country's cyber security.³ While many web defacements emanate from unfriendly countries like Pakistan, unauthorised intrusions into sensitive Indian networks are also emanating from countries like China, the USA and a few other countries. The fact that India was identified as the fifth most snooped country by the USA through its digital surveillance programme (revealed in mid-2013 by Edward Snowden) has brought to light the vulnerable condition of the country's cyber security framework and its related technologies. Various fatal malwares like Stuxnet, Duqu, Flame, etc which have the capability to impact the critical infrastructures of the country have also been indentified from different Indian networks. Moreover, the existing vulnerabilities in cyber space being exploited by violent non-state actors and various anti-social elements also pose a series of threats in this domain for the country.

At this critical juncture, it is clear that the cyber environment in India is not all that secure and, hence, the time has come to weigh its merits and demerits and its security in a balanced manner in order to understand the reality which might help in bringing awareness and realisation into the subject. A realistic assessment is, therefore, required to explore the loopholes and the ways to address them.

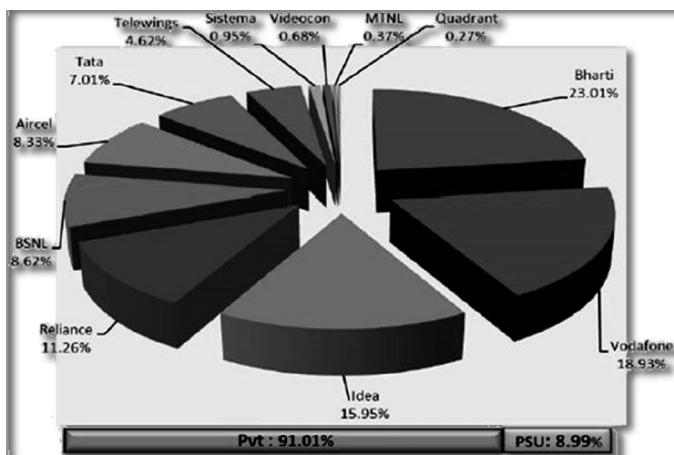
INDIA'S CYBER ENVIRONMENT

Although the history of computers in India dates back to the 1950s, it was the advent of the internet that made this smart machine attractive for a wider audience. The internet was introduced to India on August 15, 1995, in Delhi. Since then, the user base has grown rapidly and had reached a total of 85.74 million subscribers by December 31, 2014.⁴ After computers and the internet, the next big thing which garnered the attention of the masses in India in the wake of the millennium was the mobile phone. The number of mobile phone subscriptions, like that of internet users has increased tremendously and there were more than 943.97 million subscribers on December 31, 2014.⁵ Both government and private service providers have vast numbers

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3. "Annual Report 2013", Indian Computer Emergency Response Team, Ministry of Communication and Information Technology, Government of India, March 31, 2014.
 4. Press release on "Highlights on Telecom Subscription Data as on December 31, 2014", Telecom Regulatory Authority of India, Press Release No 11/2015, February 6, 2015.
 5. Ibid.

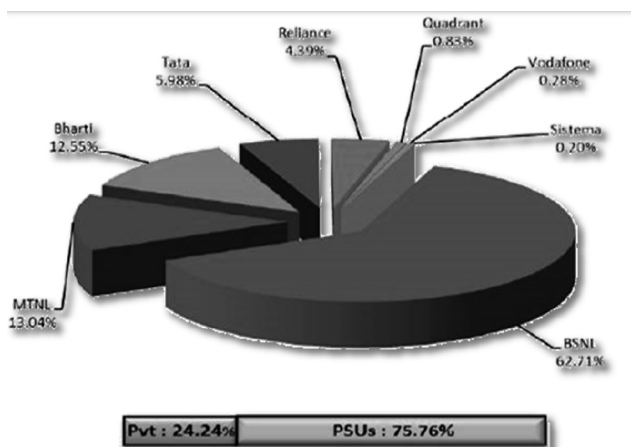
of customers in this domain. Bharti, in association with Airtel, is currently the leading mobile network service provider (see Fig. 1) and BSNL, the state owned company, is the largest service provider of wired telephone service in the country (see Fig. 2).

Fig. 1: Market Share of Mobile Phone Network Service Providers



Source: Press release on “Highlights on Telecom Subscription Data as on December 31, 2014”, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India, Press Release No 11/2015, February 6, 2015.

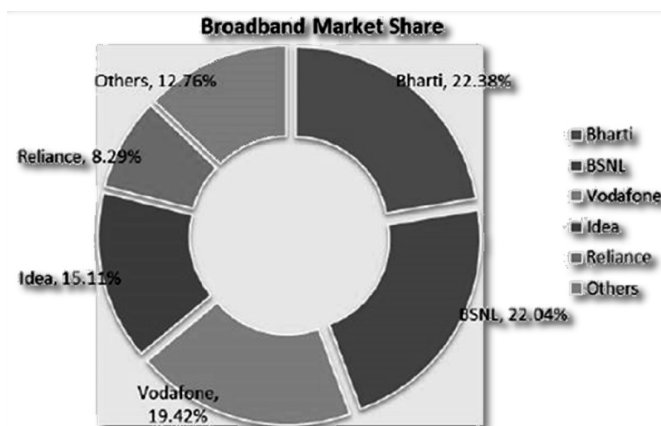
Fig. 2: Market Share of Wire Line Telephone Service Providers



Source: Press release on “Highlights on Telecom Subscription Data as on December 31, 2014”, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India, Press Release No 11/2015, February 6, 2015.

The evolution of mobile phones from being a mere mode of communication to smart phones has increased, which, in turn, has expanded the number of internet users in recent years. As a result, the internet market has multiplied rapidly, and both public and private companies are reaping profits from it. This has, however, not reduced the number of wired internet subscribers in the country. Fig. 3 is a graphical representation of the market share of broadband service providers, including both wired and wireless services, in India.

Fig. 3: Service Providers Market Share for Broadband (Wired + Wireless) Service



Source: Press release on "Highlights on Telecom Subscription Data as on December 31, 2014", Telecom Regulatory Authority of India, Press Release No 11/2015, February 6, 2015.

On the industrial front, the Indian IT industry is a huge contributor to the economy of the country, amounting to more than Rs 108 billion during the financial year 2013.⁶ The country houses some of the leading IT companies like Wipro, Tata Consultancy Services, Infosys, Cognizant Technology Solutions, etc which are the leaders in the IT industry in their own capacity. Every year, the country produces more than one million engineers, of whom more than 50 percent aim for the IT profession. However, the number of highly qualified IT experts in the country remains low and even that small number is yet to be identified and so is the proficiency, which continues to be neglected.

6. "IT and ITeS Industry in India", <http://www.ibef.org/industry/information-technology-india.aspx>. Accessed on February 13, 2015.

The country also offers e-government services which are growing in number from time to time. The recent launch of the “Digital India” project, which was unveiled on July 1, 2015, is one of the efforts by the government to make cyber technology more widely available to the people of the country and to ensure the reach of e-governance services to the appropriate audience. According to an official press release of the government related to the Digital India project, “Digital India has been envisioned as an ambitious umbrella programme to transform India into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy... All the existing and ongoing e-governance initiatives have been revamped to align them with the principles of Digital India.”⁷ Apart from the government’s e-services, almost all the banks in the country offer online banking as well as mobile banking services to their customers, which has, in a way, created a nomadic financial transaction culture in the country in recent years.

Governance of India’s Cyber Environment

The Information and Communication Technology sector of the country is governed by the highest level of the central government through the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology. The ministry functions under three departments, namely:

- Department of Telecommunication (DoT);
- Department of Electronics and Information Technology (DeitY);
and
- Department of Posts.

The DoT operates with the vision to provide secure, reliable, affordable and high quality converged telecommunication services anytime, anywhere for accelerated inclusive socio-economic development.⁸ The DeitY operates towards the mission to promote e-governance for empowering citizens, promoting the inclusive and sustainable growth of the electronics, IT and ITeS industries, which enhances India’s role in internet governance, adopting a multi-pronged approach that includes development of

7. “Prime Minister to Launch Digital India Week on the First of July”, *Press Information Bureau*, Ministry of Communication and Information Technology, Government of India, June 27, 2015.

8. <http://www.dot.gov.in/about-us/vision-mission>. Accessed on February 13, 2015.

human resources, promoting Research and Development (R&D) and innovation, enhancing efficiency through digital services and ensuring a secure cyber space.⁹ And the Department of Posts, as the name suggests, is the agency responsible for the transaction of physical correspondence across the country, which is irrelevant for the research subject here.

The Department of Telecommunication operates with various units under its administration and each unit has a unique task to fulfill in the telecommunication sector. The various units of the DoT are broadly divided into three categories namely: DoT Units, R&D Units and Public Sector Units. Table 1 lists out the various units under DoT.

Table 1: Various Units Under the Department of Telecommunication Under the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology.

DoT Units	R&D Units	Public Sector Units
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telecom Enforcement and Resource Monitoring Cell (TERM Cell) • Controller of Communication Accounts (CCA) units • Wireless Planning and Coordination Wing (WPC) • Telecom Engineering Centre • National Telecommunications Institute for Policy Research, Innovation & Training (NTIPRIT) • National Institute of Communication Finance (NICF) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT) • Telecom Centres of Excellence (TCOEs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) • Mahanagar Telecom Nigam Limited (MTNL) • Bharat Broadband Nigam Limited (BBNL) • Telecommunications Consultants India Limited (TCIL) • Indian Telephone Industries Limited (ITI)

Source: Department of Communication, Ministry of Communication and Information Technology, <http://www.dot.gov.in>. Accessed on February 15, 2015.

9. <http://deity.gov.in/content/vision-mission>. Accessed on February 13, 2015.

The DeitY has the responsibility of governing the electronics and information technology sector of the country. The department operates in various divisions by governing the following:

- Electronic System Design and Manufacturing.
- Information Technology/Information Technology enabled Services.
- E-Governance.
- Cyber Laws and E-Security.
- Infrastructure and Governance.
- Human Resource Development/ Knowledge Management.
- Research and Development.
- International Cooperation.

The department also manages the operations of the following organisations all of which function with unique responsibilities individually assigned to each one of them:

- National Informatics Centre (NIC).
- Standardisation Testing and Quality Certification Directorate (STQC).
- Controller of Certifying Authorities (CCA).
- Cyber Appellate Tribunal (CAT).
- Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (I-CERT).
- Semiconductor Integrated Circuits Layout Design Registry (SICLDR).
- Media Lab Asia.
- National Internet Exchange of India.
- .in Registry.
- Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC).
- National Informatics Centre Services Incorporated (NICSI).
- Education and Research Network (ERNET).
- National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology (NIELIT).
- Centre for Materials for Electronics Technology (C-MET).
- Society for Applied Microwave Electronics Engineering and Research (SAMEER).
- Software Technology Parks of India (STPI).

Apart from the various units, divisions and organisations under the two departments of the ministry, there are two other important organisations which play a very important role in the cyber environment of the country. These are: (i) National Technical Research Organisation (NTRO); and (ii) National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Centre (NCIIPC). NTRO is the technical intelligence agency operating under the leadership of the National Security Advisor (NSA) in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), and NCIIPC is the nodal agency under NTRO which works for the protection of the critical information infrastructures of the country. In addition to these civilian initiatives taken by the government, the Indian Army is also setting up a Cyber Command for the armed forces of the country in order to deal with the growing threat of cyber warfare and also to provide robust network security for the country's sensitive defence networks.

On the policy and legal fronts, India has made deep inroads in order to regulate, manage and ably secure its ICT environment. Some highlighting policies and legal mechanisms instituted by India in the ICT sector are as follows:

- With the entry of the private sector into the telecom industry in the country in the late 20th century, India framed its Telecom Regulatory Act, 1997, to regulate telecom services, including fixation/revision of tariffs for telecom services.
- Starting from day one, the ICT sector in India progressed at a fast pace. Therefore, in order to guide this growing sector, the Government of India formulated its first Information Technology Act, 2000, and amended certain aspects of the law through the IT (Amendment) Act, 2008. Thus, India was able to address the legal issues associated with this rapidly developing sector since its introduction.
- On October 15, 2012, the then NSA of the country Mr. Shiv Shankar Menon released a policy document titled "Recommendations of Joint Working Group on Engagement with Private Sector on Cyber Security" which was a feasibility study undertaken jointly by government and private sector participants for analysing and laying down a roadmap for the public sector to engage with the

- private sector of the country in the cyber realm.¹⁰
- The National Cyber Security Policy (NCSP), 2013, was released on July 2, 2013, with a vision to build a secure and resilient cyber space for citizens, businesses and government activities, and also to integrate the various events and developments taking place in the highly dynamic cyber arena of the country. This policy is an overview of the government's approach and strategy for protection of the cyber space in the country.¹¹
 - On July 19, 2013, the NCIIPC under NTROR released the "Guidelines for Securing the National Critical Information Infrastructures" (NCII) of the country. Having identified 14 critical information infrastructures like energy, transportation, banking/finance, telecommunication, defence, space, etc, the NCIIPC guidelines created a broad framework for securing these infrastructures all over the country.¹²
 - Also, in September 2013, India achieved another milestone in the field of cyber security by becoming an "authorising nation" for IT products from its previous status of being a mere "consumer nation". In less academic terms, it can be stated that all those IT products that are certified in India can be authorised to be used in the 26 member countries of the Common Criteria Recognition Arrangements (CCRA) without having them retested.¹³
 - The next big buzzword in the cyber community across the world is "Cloud Computing", which is gaining popularity day by day. In order to address this new development in the cyber domain, and also utilise and harness the benefits of this next level technology, the DeitY has started an ambitious and important initiative called "GI Cloud" or in colloquial terminology, "Meghraj". In order to bring out a strategic direction and to implement a roadmap for GI Cloud to gain leverage in the existing or new infrastructure, two reports have been prepared by a special task force and have received the approval of the minister of communication and

10. E. Dilipraj, "PPP – Opening of a New Avenue in India's Cyber Security", *CAPS Issue Brief*, 80/12, December 24, 2012.

11. E. Dilipraj, "India's Cyber Security 2013: A Review", *CAPS Issue Brief*, 97/14, January 27, 2014.

12. *Ibid.*

13. *Ibid.*

information technology. The two reports are: (i) GI Cloud Strategic Direction Paper; and (ii) GI Cloud Adoption and Implementation Roadmap. Both these reports were released in April 2013.¹⁴

- It is believed that in the future, smart machines, connected through the internet and cloud computing, and interconnected within them, would create an “Internet of Things” that would revolutionise the way the world interacts. This intertwined network of machines and human beings together would create a complex web of networks that would mostly be automatic in nature, with minimal human interference for its activities. This web of networks of interconnected machines is known as “Internet of Things (IoT)” and is touted to be the future of the world. Under such circumstances, as a first step to enter into the future where machines are allowed to take decisions based on their previous experience, India is in the process of drafting a policy to streamline the activities of the future era of IoT. In fact a “Draft Policy on Internet of Things” which was prepared in the first half of 2015 is already in the public domain, but is yet to get official approval from the ministry. Although this draft is basic in nature, it is a welcome initiative from the ministry.

Threats to India’s Cyber Environment

The above mentioned arrangements in terms of infrastructural, governmental, legal and policy level initiatives undertaken by the government of the country in streamlining and securing the country’s cyber environment could convince us to believe that India has a safe and secure cyber environment. However, it is an undeniable fact that in spite of all these arrangements, the country finds it difficult to prevent a host of threats prevailing in the cyber domain that constantly loom over its cyber environment. The cyber threat landscape of the country includes threats like data theft, malwares, hacking, web defacements, identity thefts, online financial frauds, e-mail spoofing, social engineering scams, DOS and DDOS attacks, unauthorised access to critical infrastructures of the country, online

14. “GI Cloud Initiative (Meghraj)”, Department of Electronics and Information Technology, Ministry of Communication and Information Technology, <http://deity.gov.in/content/gi-cloud-initiative-meghraj>. Accessed on February 20, 2015.

surveillance, digital espionage, cyber weapons like Stuxnet, Flame and Duqu, cyber warfare, cyber terrorism, etc. The unending list, as given in the earlier sections, is proof of the kind of vulnerabilities that our country's networks face in the virtual domain which, at times, have the potential to create chaos in the society and threaten the security and integrity of the nation. For instance, 130,338¹⁵ security incidents were handled by CERT-IN in the year 2014 which was a steep rise from the previous year, as the same agency had handled 71,780¹⁶ security incidents in 2013. This trend of increase in the number of cyber security incidents year after year is a constant reminder of India's vulnerability in the cyber environment.

In fact, all the cyber infrastructures of the country, ranging from critical information infrastructure to a small website are equally defenceless and persistently victimised by various cyber attacks of different levels by numerous internal as well as external perpetrators. The first recorded cyber attack on a critical information infrastructure of the country was way back in June 1998 when the server hosting the website owned by the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) was breached and the website was defaced. Apart from defacing the website, the attackers had also stolen five MB of e-mail and data from the computer database.¹⁷ Consequently, given the time and target, it was widely believed that the attack was conducted by Pakistani hackers backed by the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) for exhibiting anger and dissatisfaction towards India at its becoming a nuclear weapon powered state in May, 1998. However, the reality was that the attack was perpetuated by a group called 'milworm' which consisted of five teenagers who had contacts among themselves only through the internet as they belonged to different countries.

A point to be noted here is that the attackers managed to steal five MB of data. Although the size of stolen data might seem negligible comparing it to the current standards, any amount of data lost from a critical infrastructure like BARC can have damaging outcomes if

15. "Annual Report 2014", Indian Computer Emergency Response Team, Ministry of Communication and Information Technology, Government of India, February 27, 2015.

16. "Annual Report 2013", Indian Computer Emergency Response Team, Ministry of Communication and Information Technology, Government of India, March 31, 2014.

17. <http://ces.iisc.ernet.in/hpg/envis/doc98html/miscbarc69.html>. Accessed on February 22, 2015.

used against the country. For instance, data from the Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) systems located in a critical infrastructure might not exceed more than few MBs but it is this crucial data that would enable the enemy to create cyber weapons like Stuxnet, Duqu and Flame that have the potential to totally damage a country's operating ability. Indeed, the infamous Stuxnet cyber weapon which was responsible for damaging Iran's nuclear ambitions was also found in Indian networks. It was observed that out of the 10,000 Stuxnet infected Indian computers, 15 were located at critical infrastructure facilities that included the Gujarat and Haryana Electricity Boards and an Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) offshore oil rig. Fortunately, this cyber weapon did not activate itself in any of our networks as it was not customised for that purpose and, therefore, India escaped a fate similar to Iran's.

In addition to cyber threats to our critical infrastructures, the sensitive networks of our country are also vulnerable to cyber intrusions from rivals who persistently try to break into them for the purposes of intelligence gathering, stealing critical information, surveillance and espionage. For instance, in 2012, computers in the campus of India's Eastern Naval Command were infected with Chinese malwares. The virus which infected the systems through a USB drive, was accidentally inserted into one of the systems but this system was not connected to the internet. The infected USB drive collected all the data and when the same drive was inserted into another system which had internet access, the data was sent back to a particular Internet Protocol (IP) address located in China.¹⁸ The logical reasoning for this attack could be that since the Eastern Naval Command is home to India's indigenously built nuclear powered submarine *INS Arihant*, where it is under sea trials, it became an attractive target for the attack.

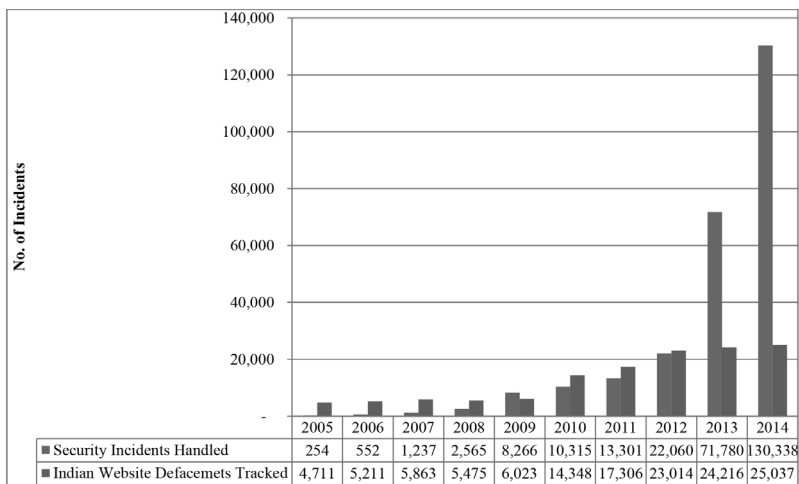
While these examples provide just glimpses of the kind of threats that our sensitive networks are vulnerable to, one can only imagine the level of threats to other open networks in our country, connected either through the internet or intranet. By now it is a well established fact that countries around the world conduct various surveillance and

18. "Indian Navy Investigates Cyber Attack on Military PCs", *BBC*, July 4, 2012, in <http://www.bbc.com/news/technology-18703508>. Accessed on July 7, 2014.

espionage programmes in the cyber world through the internet for information gathering and to acquire intelligence for their national benefit. Among all the countries, China and the US are the most notorious in terms of cyber espionage and online mass surveillance. The Chinese espionage attacks on critical and sensitive networks by their secret units like Unit 61398 and the US mass surveillance programmes like Prism, X-Keyscore, NSA Quantum, and NSA ANT are live examples of the level of threats in the cyber domain. In fact, it has been reported that India was the fifth most snooped country through the Prism programme of the US. The high levels of these covert threats to our country’s cyber security reveal the hard truth that the country is almost defenceless against such espionage and surveillance programmes; and it is also not clear whether we possess the technical capabilities to detect, and deal with, such espionage and surveillance operations that may be conducted in the future.

In addition to the above mentioned high profile threats, the number and variety of cyber attacks on individuals and organisations in the country are also increasing every single year. Annual reports of the years 2014-15 from the different cyber security agencies like CERT-IN stand proof of the same.

Fig. 4: Cyber Security Incidents Recorded by CERT-IN from 2005-14



Source: Data Compiled from Annual Reports of CERT-IN from 2005-2014

Based on the information presented in Fig. 4, it is clear that while there is a variety of cyber attacks carried out on individuals and organisations of our the country, the most often reported types of cyber attacks are phishing, network scanning/ probing, virus/ malicious code, website defacements, spam, website intrusion and malware propagation, etc. Needless to say that the number of incidents of each type of cyber attack is on an upward trend every year. This trend of increasing cyber incidents in the country clearly indicates not only the vulnerability of our country's cyber security, but also challenges the various cyber security initiatives undertaken at various levels by India. It should also be noted that there are thousands of other cyber security infringements, intrusions and attacks which have gone unreported to the security agencies but have created some sort of damage to the target.

BRIDGING THE GAP

At this juncture, taking an overview of the cyber security threat landscape of India, some of the questions that arise regarding the cyber security arrangements of the country are:

- Despite the various cyber security initiatives by the government at regular intervals, why is there an upward trend in the number of cyber security incidents in the country?
- What more can be done to check and reduce the vulnerabilities of our country's cyber space in order to make it more safe and secure?

The cyber world, firstly, unlike the real world is beyond any geographical barriers created by international borders; therefore, being a huge entity, threats can originate from any part of the world. Hence, it becomes difficult for one country to tackle all these threats as there are many legal issues involved. Second, the fact that global cyber space is still largely ungoverned space, increases the chances for cyber threats to spread easily in the networks across the world.

In addition, despite the presence of various agencies like CERT-IN, NTRO, NCIIPC, etc, in the country, it remains unclear whether India has the ability for early warning and detection of large scale cyber attacks as there has not been even a single case disclosed in

any public domain where these agencies have been able to detect an attack or warn our networks before the attack takes place. Ironically, in the cyber forensic phase, our country's abilities are technically limited not only due to the lack of advanced technologies but more because of the lack of expert human resource, and legal restrictions due to the non-availability of 'smoking gun evidence' for any cyber attack. According to the "National Cyber Security Policy", India needs around 500,000 cyber security experts at various levels and for various organisations to secure the cyber space of the country. But, there is no clarity regarding the current strength of cyber security experts available in the country. It is speculated that the country has only around 15 percent of the required strength. Finally, the lack of R&D in the field of cyber security is also a major factor contributing to the growing trend of cyber threats to the country's cyber space.

Therefore, in order for the country to secure its cyber space in the longer run, the following measures could be taken up:

- Immediate attention has to be given to human resource development which would increase the number of experts who can effectively manage the cyber security of the country. Conducting nation-wide talent hunts could be a method through which the government can identify and promote prospective talent.
- The country's R&D towards cyber security should be given utmost priority for more innovative technologies to develop. Successful R&D in cyber security can also help in reducing the number of cyber security incidents. Moreover, more focus is necessary towards early detection and cyber forensics.
- Although the country has a host of cyber related policy documents, it lacks in their implementation. Therefore, policies like the national cyber security policy should be implemented to the utmost level possible.
- Due to the existence of too many agencies with overlapping functions in the field of cyber security, coordination between these agencies becomes tumultuous as well as a confusing responsibility. Therefore, the proposed National Cyber Security Coordination Centre (NCSC) which has already been allotted Rs 800 crore, has to be set up as soon as possible to create and

disseminate duties and responsibilities for smooth functioning and better coordination among departments and officials.

- There are many departments in various ministries which look into the aspect of cyber security. In order to streamline this chaotic situation, a nation-wide cyber command and control structure should be formulated which can include both civil and defence agencies.
- It is a well known fact that our country's private sector has a pool of talent in the cyber domain. The private sector also possesses technological capability on a higher quotient than the public sector. Therefore, it is essential for the public sector to have partnerships with the private sector on cyber security. The 2013 roadmap for the public sector to engage with the private sector in cyber security has to be explored to as large an extent as possible.
- On the legal front, the country's IT laws have to be made more precise in nature and should be updated with the fast changing atmosphere in this domain.
- Since the cyber world involves every individual user, it becomes the responsibility of every user of this virtual space to be aware of the threats and issues in this domain. The government can also spread more awareness to the public on cyber security using public fora like social media which has a huge followings.

Addressing these issues might help India achieve a robust cyber security environment in the longer run. Cyber space, the man-made virtual world, lacks security. As the creators of this world, it becomes the sole responsibility of human civilisation to secure this domain for a safer world for future generations.

SOCIAL MEDIA: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

KRITI SINGH

The emergence of the 'social media' dimension of the 'media' has completely transformed the way we communicate now. It is a truism to say that the media has historically co-evolved with the public that uses it, as well as with the larger economy of inscription. The world's complex constellation of the media, in the view of Lisa Gitelman, should be conceived as the "socially realised structures of communication, where structures include both technological forms and their associated protocols, and where communication is a culture practice, a ritualised collocation of different people on the same mental map, sharing or engaged with, popular ontologies of representations."¹ Furthermore, these communication technologies shape the everyday communication behaviour of the masses, influence their lives and, simultaneously, the emergence of different types of society mushrooming from these online platforms has also become a part of social reality and society's own institutional framework. One such aspect of communication, known as the 'social media', which

Kriti Singh is a part of the Research Faculty at the Centre for Air Power Studies, New Delhi.

1. José Van Dijck, "Engineering Sociality in a Culture of Connectivity," *The Culture of Connectivity: A Critical History of Social Media* (Madison Avenue: Oxford University Press, 2013), p.5.

emerges from the new media, is the focus of this article. The objective of this paper is to elaborate on the opportunities and challenges emitting from the social media, and to understand their application from the defence point of view.

DEFINING SOCIAL MEDIA

Given the fact that the social media flourishes on the huge and wide spectrum of the media, it is a challenging job to craft one specific definition for it. The *Oxford Dictionary* defines the social media as, "Websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking."² According to the Professor of Marketing Andreas Kaplan and Professor Michael Haenlein from the prestigious business school ESCP Europe, the social media is, "A group of internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content."³ The term Web 2.0 has its genesis in the article titled "Fragmented Future" by Darcy DiNucci, back in the 1990s. The concept of Web 2.0 was further taken up by Timothy O'Reilly during the first Web 2.0 Conference, held in San Francisco in 2004.

In simple terms, Web 2.0 is the present state of the internet or online technologies, which is marked by greater user interactivity and collaboration, more pervasive network connectivity, and enhanced communication channels. One of the chief distinctions between the Web 1.0 or the traditional World Wide Web is greater collaboration among internet users, content providers and enterprises.⁴ The social media describes the current generation of digital, computerised or networked information and communication technologies. The social media are supported by Web 2.0 technologies, which allow users to interact, produce and share information via the Web 2.0 network or platform, spanning all connected devices.⁵ A few examples of social

2. *Oxford Dictionaries*, January 1, 2015, <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/social-media>. Accessed on February 21, 2015.

3. "Define Social Media," John F. Reed Library, <http://subjectguides.fortlewis.edu/content.php?pid=435944&sid=3604900>. Accessed on March 13, 2015.

4. Matthew Haughn, "Web 2.0," *TechTarget*, January 2, 2015, <http://whatis.techtarget.com/definition/Web-20-or-Web-2>. Accessed on February 25, 2015.

5. Vijay Reddy, "Using Social Media to Select a University," *Information Experience: Approaches to Theory and Practice* (Bingley: Emerald Group Publishing, 2014), p. 299.

media applications are Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, Google+, Pinterest, Tumblr, Instagram, Flickr, etc.

OPPORTUNITIES PROVIDED BY SOCIAL MEDIA

Instant Connecting, and Sharing: One of the distinctive feature of the social media by virtue of being part of the new media is the freedom which it provides to its users to connect and to share. The social media and its interactive components have enabled the ability to comment, respond, share, critique, change and add to information on a broad scale.⁶

Better Brand Recognition: Branding yourself means that you create the right kind of response you want people to have when they hear your name, see you online, or meet you in real life.⁷ Brand value and recognition is an integral part of any organisation, irrespective of its turnover or manpower. Any brand is a set of perceptions and images that represent a company, product or service. While many people refer to a brand as a logo, tag line or audio jingle, a brand is actually much larger. A brand is the essence or promise of what will be delivered or experienced.⁸ Every opportunity you have to syndicate your content and increase your visibility is valuable. Your social media networks are just new channels for your brand's voice and content.⁹ The social media give you that opportunity where you can not only "syndicate your content and increase your visibility" but also share the visibility of your organisation's work.

Force Mobiliser: One of the crucial functions of the media is to mobilise the public in order to mobilise/persuade/ convince them in a cause which is significant to the masses. Pre-independence, where the freedom fighters like Bal Gangahar Tilak, Annie Besant, Rabindra

6. Jason Pridmore, "New Media and Social Media: What's the Difference?" Academia.edu, April 1, 2013, https://www.academia.edu/1122278/New_media_and_social_media_-_whats_the_difference_v_2.0. Accessed on April 14, 2015.
7. Erik Deckers, Kyle Lacy, *Branding Yourself: How to Use Social Media to Invent or Reinvent Yourself* (Indiana: Pearson Education, Inc., 2012), Kindle edition.
8. "Brand Definition," Persuasive Brands, 2015, http://www.persuasivebrands.com/Topics_Brand_Definition.aspx. Accessed on April 20, 2015.
9. Jayson DeMers, "The Top 10 Benefits Of Social Media Marketing", *Forbes*. 2015. Accessed on <http://www.forbes.com/sites/jaysondemers/2014/08/11/the-top-10-benefits-of-social-media-marketing/>.

Nath Tagore used the power of the traditional media like newspapers and pamphlets to inspire the enslaved Indians to join the fight for the cause, today we can see how the social media had mobilised the masses to join the 2011-12 anti-corruption movement by activist Anna Hazare. Examples of the impact of the social media in mobilising the masses are innumerable, but the Arab Spring movement remains one of the flashpoints.

A Quick Medium for Internal Communication: The social media applications can be used as a quick and economical method for internal communication. Organisations also use social media applications to establish connectivity amongst various departments. Social tools are now being applied to enhance employee engagement, improve internal communication, promote team camaraderie, communicate on a global scale, and create internal touch points that were previously unavailable.¹⁰ A few examples of social media tools which can be used for internal communication purposes by organisations are Yammer, Skype, Digsby, etc.

Crowdsourcing: Jeff Howe and Mark Robinson, who coined the term “crowdsourcing” posit, “Simply defined, crowdsourcing represents the act of a company or institution taking on a function once performed by employees and outsourcing it to an undefined (generally large) network of people in the form of an open call. This can take the form of peer-production (when the job is performed collaboratively), but is also often undertaken by sole individuals. The crucial prerequisite is the use of the open call format and the large network of potential labourers.”¹¹ As the social media has a ‘large network’ with various kinds of human resources, it provides an excellent ground for crowdsourcing.

Building Long-Term Relationships with Users: With millions of social media-users interacting on common platforms, it gives an organisation an efficient, cost-effective and quick way to strike, build and maintain relationships with customers/ prospective customers/ opinion leaders, etc. It helps to foster trust and understanding about

10. Kurt Kaufer, “Five Social Media Tools for Internal Business Communication,” *EBoost Consulting*, 2015, <http://www.eboostconsulting.com/5tools>. Accessed on April 19, 2015.

11. James Smith, “Crowdsourcing,” *Crowdsourcing Guidance - Real World Application* (Emereo Publishing, 2013), p.5.

an organisation's working, objectives, and if used meticulously, can influence the users' perception about the organisation which can, to some extent, influence their decision-making.

Helping to Build Online Reputation: The practices of monitoring, addressing, or mitigating search engine results in pages or mentions in the social media are summarised as Online Reputation Management (ORM). 'Reputation' can be defined as a social evaluation of a group of entities towards a person, a group of people, or an organisation regarding certain criteria.¹² The social media helps an organisation/brand reach out to their customers, and communicates with them, playing a significant role in ORM.¹³

CHALLENGES POSED BY SOCIAL MEDIA

From Selective Known to Anonymous Unknown: Previously, social interaction like chats, interactions, personal pictures and videos were confined to only selected groups of people as these were shared only with a few. Social media platforms, to some extent, steal the 'sharing with selective individuals' choice from the users. A major change (and challenge) is that through the social media, the casual speech acts have turned into formalised inscriptions, which, once embedded in the larger economy of the wider public, take on a different value; utterances previously expressed off-handedly are now released into the public domain where they can have far-reaching and long lasting effects.¹⁴ For the users attached to important establishments, in general, and defence, in particular, these casual utterances on the social platforms are not only visible to selective known people attached to the user's known group of friends list, but also to the 'anonymous unknown,' people who can use these 'casual utterances' to their advantage.

Losing the Content Control: As we know, one of the key features of the social media has provided an ordinary social media user with the power to generate, tweak and, to an extent, distort, the existing

12. Andreas Meier and Donzel Laurent, *Fuzzy Methods For Customer Relationship Management And Marketing* (Pennsylvania, USA: IGI Global, 2012), p.145.

13. Murtaza Vahanvaty, "Social Media in Online Reputation Management," *Social Media Today*, 2013, <http://www.socialmediatoday.com/content/social-media-online-reputation-management>. Accessed on May 13, 2015.

14. Dijck, n.1, p.7.

message circulated by the organisation. Once a message is shared by an organisation online, the interpretations of the message and interpretations of those interpretations comprise another challenge in itself as this can mar, sideline or distort the true essence of the meaning circulated by the organisation or a person. Control over the content no longer lies with the organisation or person in charge, once it is shared on social platforms. It challenges and, to a large extent, limits the traditional control of an organisation or producer over the message and the information, not only in its distribution but also its interpretations.

Loss of Employee Productivity in Work Space: According to a study by Nucleus Research, companies that allow employees to use Facebook (FB) during the workday lose 1.5 percent productivity. With its wealth of applications, games and status updates, employees may find themselves compulsively checking FB throughout the day instead of performing work-related tasks. Allowing employees access to FB and other social networking sites for business-related activities may have some benefits, but the distractions available on the websites often outweigh the benefits.¹⁵

Cyber Bullying: Due to its complex nature, it is extremely difficult to universally define the term “cyber bullying” which is a trait similar to traditional bullying. A lot of research has been undertaken in the recent past to understand cyber bullying in depth. Till now, a majority of the research has identified four main characteristics, which are “aggressiveness, intention, repetitiveness, and the power imbalance.”

Creates Illusion: The social media gives an instant connect to our connections, but in this process, face-to-face interaction is the first casualty. It gives us a false sense of being connected, thus, creating an illusion that we are connected with our connections. It blurs the boundaries between the real relationships bonded in the actual world and the virtual relationships coming out of virtual world. In the view of network science expert Steven Strogatz PhD, a professor of applied mathematics at Cornell University, “The distinction between genuine

15. Stacy Zeiger, “The Disadvantages of Social Networking in the Workplace,” *Hearst Newspapers*, 2015, <http://smallbusiness.chron.com/disadvantages-social-networking-workplace-21064.html>. Accessed on May 13, 2015.

friends and acquaintances is becoming blurred. Users are spending time maintaining relationships with people they don't really care about."¹⁶

Privacy and Ethics: As a subset of the new media, the social media also faces the same dangers of privacy issues, leaving users more exposed to the virtual world which can have side effects in the real world in terms of privacy invasion. The social network sites pose a great challenge to the privacy of the user. Over one billion people have given Facebook consent to share their data for "troubleshooting, data analysis, research, and service improvement"¹⁷ Facebook users can adjust their privacy settings (e.g., sharing pictures publicly or with friends), but they must first accept Facebook's data sharing policies, which include research usage. The user faces an ultimatum: either accept the terms and conditions or do not join Facebook.¹⁸ This has also posed an ethical question and challenges the way the social network sites are collecting data for research purposes or sharing it with third parties.

APPLICATION OF SOCIAL MEDIA BY THE DEFENCE ORGANISATION FOR THE EXTERNAL PUBLIC

- At the organisation level, the social media demands expertise and organisational maturity to understand the various dimensions of the media and their impact. It should not be treated as an ad hoc job. It is advisable to get experts on board who not only understand the application part of it, but have conceptual clarity of the medium, its impact and various levels and its proper application.
- There is a need for the defence organisation to look at the 'media' beyond a topic of debate. There is need to understand the 'media'

16. Tim Jarvis, "Social Not-Working: The Perils of Too Much Communication," www.oprah.com, October 9, 2009. <http://www.oprah.com/relationships/Negative-Impact-of-Social-Networking-Websites-at-Work>. Accessed on May 10, 2015.

17. A. Vance, "Facebook: The Making of 1 Billion Users: Bloomberg BusinessWeek," *Businessweek.com*, October 2012, <http://www.businessweek.com/articles/2012-10-04/facebook-the-making-of-1-billion-users>. Accessed on May 10, 2015.

18. G. Dumas, D. G. Serfass, N. A. Brown and R. A. Sherman, *The Evolving Nature of Social Network Research: A Commentary to Gleibs* (2014). *Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy*, 14: pp. 374-378. doi: 10.1111/asap.12055. <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/asap.12055/full>. Accessed on May 10, 2015.

in totality, from the concept, components, impact and, then, application. The rush to just start with the application part is like handling a weapon without even understanding its parts and their application. You may be able to fire the bullet but chances are that not only are you going to miss the target but also not be able to reload it, and will shortly run out of ammunition. Understanding of social media beyond a tool of promotion is imperative.

- One has to keep in mind that no media strategy can give 100 percent success rate. It is fine to make mistakes because it gives a chance to improve. It tells us “what not to do in the future” while reworking on our media strategy. The social media may provide instant visibility but this doesn’t mean instant success.
- Flexibility in terms of adopting the changing media technologies, and their proper understanding are required. If terms like the “new media” are alien to you and you can’t differentiate between the ‘social media’ and the ‘new media’ and if the ‘social media’ only means posting on the Facebook wall or a tweet on Twitter, then you definitely need an expert to handle the social media for your organisation.
- The social media can also be used to bring more visibility to an organisation’s work. With regard to the defence organisation, highlighting the defence personnel’s work in peace-time and war-time and after natural calamities, is a matter of pride for the nation. However, one has to know where to draw the line. The honest efforts of the men in uniform should not be distorted into a Public Relations (PR) practice due to overzealousness on the part of the content manager or a shabby media strategy.

APPLICATION OF SOCIAL MEDIA BY DEFENCE PERSONNEL FOR PERSONAL USE

Given the disadvantages of the social media, there are some suggestions, which can be taken into consideration by the defence personnel while using the social media. Although use of the social media is debated a lot, it is important to bear in mind the abuses also:

- Whatever is shared as an update, be it on any social media platform, the user is making the message viral to all those known

and “unknown” people who are connected to the user directly or indirectly or, just by virtue of being social media users. Any information on matters related to the organisation (text, audio, videos) should not be shared on these platforms. A trivial piece of information may be of no relevance to the user, but can be the last piece of information required for “unwarranted” elements to complete a jigsaw puzzle.

- It is also not advisable to share the locations, frequent places of visits, etc. on the social media because by sharing these locations as a user, you might think there is no harm but for “unwarranted” elements, it becomes easier to profile your day-to-day activities, and places of your interest.
- The social media has one tempting button of “share” which needs to be used with “caution.” Any news items, or content designed like a news item should not be shared without verifying its authenticity. The authenticity can be checked through the search engine of news websites. There are numerous stories which go viral, and users continue to share these without confirming their authenticity. Lisa Respers France, senior producer for CNN Digital’s entertainment section advises, “Stop believing everything you see online. From Facebook privacy fakes to Twitter death hoaxes, think before you share that link. Every time you post a story, you legitimise it. Also check the dates of the story.... Here are my rules to you, if you are going to share something, ‘Stop, Drop and Roll’. ‘Stop’ before you hit that share button, ‘drop’ over Google and ‘roll’ around the information there.”¹⁹
- One needs to be extremely careful with a viral hoax floating on social media platforms, especially Facebook. Sometimes, these hoax news are pure, mischievous scaremongering, but some Facebook hoaxes are more malignant: bait to get people to click through to malware-ridden websites. In January 2015, Facebook decided to annotate suspicious stories with a warning, but maintains it is still a platform, not a publisher. Now the social

19. Lisa Respers France. “No! Don’t Share This Stuff Online!” *Edition.cnn.com*. January 20, 2015, <http://edition.cnn.com/videos/tech/2015/01/20/fake-stories-internet-psa-lisas-desk-orig-mg.cnn>. Accessed on April 20, 2015.

network is cracking down with changes to its news feed that will ensure that its users see fewer hoax and spam posts, while providing a warning of their potential falsity when they are seen.²⁰

- The social media has unquestionably altered the nature of private and public communication which one has to bear in mind while using social media tools and applications.²¹ Gagging and denial is not the answer. But to be careful with the information passing on these platforms will be the right step in this direction. Instead of sharing personal information where it is visible to all, it is better to inbox your message or shoot off an e-mail.
- In addition to this, building up a social media policy, which involves all stakeholders, is advisable. A practical and empathetic social media policy is required which can balance between the organisation's and personnel's sensitivities. Also one has to keep in mind that shunning it is not the answer, neither is gagging. Awareness about the lurking dangers on the social media platforms needs to be emphasised. Instead of making it the order of the day, it should be incorporated in the lifestyle of the defence personnel. Information related to defence personnel, their personal lives, families, posting details, unit details, troops location and movements, selfies giving away location landmarks or equipment, or details of inventory, telephone and mobile numbers should not be shared on social media platforms.

CONCLUSION

With correct usage of social networking, at both external and internal levels, a proper communication strategy, and understanding of the various dimensions of the media, the defence Services can not only take full advantage of social media tools but also align themselves on the same line and uniform objective and that too, at the same time. There is a need to understand that the media, in general, and the social media, in particular, need to be seen as more than tools for public

20. Stuart Dredge, "Facebook Promises Less Hoax Stories and Spam Posts in Users' News Feeds," *The Guardian*, January 21, 2015, Technology sec, <http://www.theguardian.com/technology/2015/jan/21/facebook-news-feed-hoaxes-spam>. Accessed on May 21, 2015.

21. Dijck, n.1, p.5.

relations activities or managing perceptions. The social media is a reality which one cannot escape from nor prevent others from using. Criticism of the media is the easiest thing to do but will not yield any productive result. The answer lies in understanding the social media, gauging its strengths, calculating the risks, and designing a proper strategy which goes beyond Public Relations (PR), and integrating it within the existing communication structure with thoughtfulness. The social media is not just a waste of time or resource, or a way to vent frustrations because you had a bad day – it connects and builds human relationships, and is an interesting, challenging and yet to be tapped media power, which is the present and the future.