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INDIA'S SECURITY CONCERN: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE (1947-2005)

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The realist school in international relations, as represented in the works of the classical realists like Thucydides, Machiavelli, Hobbes, and the more contemporary ones like Morgenthau and E.H. Carr, stand for a pattern of political thought where real politics is defined in terms of military power. Contemporary realism upholds, as its main signpost, the concept of national interest defined as power, where international relations must necessarily be power relations.[1]

The basic assumption of realism is that in an anarchical realm of international relations recourse to self-help to protect a state's national interest is the most pragmatic strategy to be followed by nation-states. Thucydides' analysis of the Peloponnesian war[2] Machiavelli's emphasis on international politics marked by a clash of interests,[3] and Hobbes' conception of an anarchical state of nature[4] - whereby power to ensure order must be vested in the state—place these scholars in the realist paradigm. A more contemporary realist, Morgenthau, argues for 'the most judicious and efficacious use of power to protect a state's national interest'.[5] According to Morgenthau:

> since international politics is a process in which national interests are accommodated or resolved on the basis of diplomacy or war … maintaining national interest and power through military strength should become the ultimate objective of nations seeking to survive in an anarchical world of realpolitik.[6]

Apart from realism, neo-realism has also been a prominent and influential approach in understanding international relations since the late 1950s. The founding father of neo-realism, Waltz, took issue with many of the tenets of classical realism and sought to modify that school. Acknowledging that man, state and the international system were all important in understanding international relations, Waltz tried to enrich realism conceptually by focusing on the international system as the unit of analysis, one which shapes and is also shaped by state behaviour. Thus for the neo-realists, power, unlike for the classical realists, was not an end in itself but rather the means to reach that end, i.e. security. Similarly, the international system, despite its

anarchical nature, was perceived by the neo-realists as rendering some degree of stability in international relations through the balance of power system.[7]

Throughout the Cold War, the term 'security' came to be defined by both Western intellectuals and practitioners of statecraft in terms of 'national' security and threatening 'others'.[8] Within this narrow perspective, the military-dominated notion of national security focused on the construction of identities 'under threat' (who or what identity is being threatened by whom or what) and on prescribing the ways and means of containing such threats to 'political order', both on land and at sea. Realist studies of security, as R.B.J. Walker has noted, tend to rest on particular theories of domestic politics and defend a particular vision of politics based on the state, sovereignty and military strength.[9]

Nonetheless, as Robert Gilpin writes 'the final arbitrator of things political is power'[10]. The absence of any international sovereign to provide order and arbitrate disputes forces the states to rely on themselves, the logic that Waltz refers to as self-help. This compels states to build up their own state power, worry about the power of other states, and define their interests in terms of power. Attempts to increase one's own power can threaten other states, which are forced to keep pace, thus reducing security all around the globe. Thus conventional International Relations (IR) has focused on a state-centric, power-orientated, and militaristic discourse of security. With its focus on power, politics, and anarchy as fixed, conventional IR reads the role of ideology narrowly, as manifested in the concepts of state, national interest, nation and nationalism.[11]

Unlike the conventional analyses of security, which begin with the assumption that insecurity is 'given' in IR; the critical constructivists claim that all insecurities are culturally produced.[12] They see insecurity and discourses on insecurity as 'representations of danger'.[13]

Underlying theories and concepts of balance of power politics among states are drawn primarily from the European and Western experience.[14] These theories are not representative of the experience elsewhere in the world, especially in South Asia, except indirectly through its linkages with the Western world. During the colonial era, India was an appendage of imperial Britain' global power politics in a European-dominated multipolar world that produced hard balancing.[15] During the bipolar world of the Cold War, the military balance between India and Pakistan—two states unequal in size, population, and resources—was sustained by the two superpowers through both hard and soft balancing.[16]

"National Security long has been the fundamental concern of every state in its individual and corporate existence, its use as a core concept in our national and international affairs became wide-spread only after World War II".[17] National Security today has become a common place expression but what the concept actually connotes in general or in particular is not yet specified. This is, probably, because of the reason that the concept is very complex and ambiguous.[18]

India's security policies are going through a profound transformation that has been wrought by fundamental changes in the internal and external environment of the Indian state. The end of the Cold War, marked by the collapse of the Soviet Union, transformed the global security environment. This sudden change generated a

catharsis in India's security perspectives and policies. During much of the Cold War, the Soviet Union was a pivotal actor that influenced India's formulation and conduct of its security policies.[19]

India's national security concerns are based on its location, history and complex domestic economic, social and political situations. Surrounded by nations with undemocratic governments, India views these countries as potential threats.

India had established security and military ties with the Soviet Union in the mid-1960s following wars with China in 1962 and Pakistan in 1965. The growing collaboration was highlighted in September 1971 by the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace and Friendship which was signed at the height of the East Pakistan secessionist movement.[20]

With Sino-American "rapprochement" also in progress at the same time, the treaty with the Soviet Union enabled India to resolve the "Bangladesh" issue by force in December 1971. India waged war with Pakistan without much fear of military intervention by Pakistan's then allies, China and the United States. However, even before 1991, India's security problems were not directly related to Cold War politics. The primary sources of Indian security fears were regional, not global, although these fears were compounded by great power intrusions into the region emanating from the politics of the Cold War. Rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union, and China and the Soviet Union, enabled Pakistan to obtain American and Chinese military assistance to counter Indian military capabilities. Meanwhile, India had turned increasingly to the Soviet Union for weapons to counter Pakistani arms procurement.[21]

During this period there were constant pressures on the part of both India and Pakistan to become nuclear weapons states. Pakistan's propulsion towards nuclear weapons arose mainly from strategic imperatives, namely, the threat from India. The nuclear energy rationalization put forward by Pakistan later was an afterthought. The Pakistani program may be viewed, therefore, as a "Security-to-Energy" driven phenomenon. India, on the other hand, perceived nuclear energy programs as critical for meeting anticipated shortfalls in the country's overall energy needs. Thereafter, various security rationalizations for nuclear weapons, such as the Chinese nuclear threat, tended to be spinoffs from the technological capability generated by the energy program. The Indian program, therefore, may be seen as an "Energy-to-Security" driven phenomenon.[22]

However, the important characteristic of the South Asian nuclear situation was the change in the direction of India's primary nuclear threat perceptions. As before, India still insists on maintaining its "nuclear option", i.e., it will neither acquire the bomb nor sign the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) for the present. But, India also proclaims the right to acquire nuclear weapons in the future if its security warranted such a move. Before the 1974 Indian atomic test, India's nuclear option policy was directed solely at China's perceived nuclear threat, but conditioned by Pakistan's expected reaction. But, as Pakistan proceeded headlong towards acquiring the bomb after the 1974 Indian test, there followed a decade of ambiguity and uncertainty in India about the direction from which it faced a nuclear threat. Was it China or was it Pakistan? By the early to mid 1980s, Indian analysts were convinced that Pakistan had

put together an effective nuclear weapons program. Thereafter, India's nuclear option policy was directed primarily at the Pakistani nuclear threat.

This change in the orientation and direction of India's perceived nuclear threats continues into the 1990s. It also marks a significant change in India's ability to control the nuclear situation in South Asia.

As India moved into the fifth decade of independence, it confronted a harsh political environment both at home and abroad. On the external front, the assumptions that shaped Indian foreign and security policies for decades were shaken to the core at the turn of the 1990s. The end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union – India's long-standing strategic partner – left New Delhi in a policy limbo that it had not faced since the mid 1960s. The unveiling of the American "unipolar moment" after the Gulf War exposed India to unprecedented constraints and severely curtailed its room from manoeuver in the new global order. New Delhi's ability to respond to the new external challenges was severely hampered by a domestic crisis of great magnitude.

The Changing Dynamics of India's Security Milieu

Whether gradual or sudden, substantial alterations have taken place in the India's security environment. The strategic relationships among India, Pakistan, and China at the regional level, and China, Russia (formerly USSR), and the United States at the global level, continue to define the security framework of India, although the nature of these relationships has shifted, and the intensity has declined.[23]

Certain specific post-Cold War global political, economic, and social trends--democratization, marketization, increasing concerns about human rights violations, regional integration – further define the evolving Indian strategic environment. These constant or changing regional and global interstate relationships directly or indirectly affect the three basic levels of India's security concerns: internal security, conventional military security, and nuclear security.

External Threats

China

China and India experienced their closest relations in the early 1950s. A brotherly spirit of cooperation and mutual support – captured by the Indian slogan of 'Hindi-cini, bhai bhai' – pervaded the entire China–India relations.[24]

But, the bilateral relationship chilled considerably when India objected to China's suppression of the Tibetan rebellion in 1959. The Dalai Lama's flight to India and his public welcome by Nehru piqued the Chinese side even more. A flurry of diplomatic accusations and several small clashes along the border from 1959–62 pointed to an eventual show-down. The brief but bitter war took place between 20 October and 22 November 1962 along a lengthy border stretching for some 2,000 kilometers from the Ladakh–Xinjiang–Tibet tri-junction in the west to the eastern wing of the Himalayan range.[25]

India considers recurring Sino-Indian border clashes a potential threat to its security.[26] Negotiations since the 1962 Sino-Indian border war have to resolve the

conflicting border claims, and each side improved its military and logistics capabilities in the disputed regions. Since the war, China has continued its occupation of the Aksai Chin area, through which it built a strategic highway linking Xizang and Xinjiang autonomous regions. China had a vital military interest in maintaining control over this region, whereas India's primary interest lay in Arunachal Pradesh, its state in the northeast bordering Xizang Autonomous Region. It is noteworthy, that in his reply to the debate in Lok Sabha on 1 April, 1975 then the Defence Minister Swaran Singh maintained that, "India faced a twin threat from China and Pakistan".[27]

In 1987, although India enjoyed air superiority, rough parity on the ground existed between the two military forces, which had a combined total of nearly 400,000 troops near the border. The Indian Army deployed eleven divisions in the region, backed up by paramilitary forces whereas the PLA had fifteen divisions available for operations on the border. After a 1986 border clash and India's conversion of Arunachal Pradesh from union territory to state, tensions between China and India escalated. Both sides moved to reinforce their capabilities in the area, but neither ruled out further negotiations of their dispute. Most observers believe that the mountainous terrain, high-altitude climate, and concomitant logistic difficulties made it unlikely that a protracted or large-scale conflict would erupt on the Sino-Indian border.

With the end of bipolarity following the demise of the Soviet Union, Non-aligned Movement became irrelevant and so did the position of India. At this juncture, New Delhi perhaps could have switched its alliance to the United States to adjust itself to the new world order. But adherence to Nehruvian policies, and commitment to socialism pushed India into tremendous isolation in international politics.[28] For the first time in twenty-five years, New Delhi was forced to gauge the strength of its erstwhile enemies China and Pakistan alone, without any superpower backing. This initiation was certainly a nervous experience. George Fernandes, the defence minister, speaking in the first week of May 1998, declared China to be the "potential threat No.1".[29]

A case in point is Defence Minister George Fernandes' assertion that the larger threat to India's security is posed by China, not Pakistan. Though the Ministry of Defence recognized this fact in private, the Army Chief-of-Staff tried to take the heat out of the matter by saying New Delhi has warm relations with Beijing and would like to improve upon them.[30]

Though relations between New Delhi and Beijing have been cordial in recent times, there remains plenty of mistrust between both countries. The fact is there never was parity in the Sino-Indian relationship. India still cannot see itself on equal terms with China after its crushing and humiliating defeat in 1962. The situation is further aggravated by the fact that China is still in control of 12,000 sq. miles of Indian territory taken from India before and during the brief war of 1962.[31]

Although diplomatic relations were restored in 1976 and successive governments continued to normalize relations with China throughout the 1980s, Chinese incursions into the eastern part of India soured relations once again and brought the two sides to the brink of a full-scale war in 1986. In response to this event, Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi sought to dramatically change India's China policy, leading to his December 1988 visit to Beijing. This put Indo-Chinese relations on a more positive

footing. A number of visits to both countries by high-ranking officials led to the signing of four agreements in November 1996, including a joint commitment to withdraw some military forces from their border.[32]

Relations between China and India steadily improved until the aftermath of the May 1998 Indian nuclear tests, often referred to as Pokhran II. Initially, China openly criticized the tests but did not support punishing India. Soon afterward, however, the *New York Times* published a leaked letter from Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee to U.S. President Bill Clinton in which the rationale for the nuclear tests was laid out. In his letter, Vajpayee all but directly blamed China for forcing India to establish a nuclear deterrent – in particular, he invoked the border dispute and Beijing's support for Pakistan.[33]

However, Indian intelligence has also fairly regularly maintained that China is partly responsible for the insurgency and separatist uprisings in India's troubled northeast. China has furthermore propped up the defence establishment of India's arch-enemy Pakistan by providing it with conventional weaponry, missiles, and nuclear technology. Though in recent years relations between both countries have appeared cordial on the surface, India perceives China as a regional bully who will hardly treat India as an equal partner. That China is an emerging world power is recognised even by the United States. Conspiracy theorists suspect that the United States will eventually appoint China as the Asian strongman. Such an eventuality would be catastrophic for India.[34]

Additionally, China has also threatened Indian security by aiding the development of the Pakistani missile programme.[35] Pakistan's military procurements from China have also contributed to the destabilisation. India and Pakistan have had four major conflicts : in 1947, 1965, 1971, and 1999. Pakistani forces used these Chinese arms in the conflicts of 1971 and 1999. In addition, military assets from China have been used by Pakistan in the low level exchanges of violence that claim an average of ten lives a day.[36]

India strongly believes that China continues to pose a threat to its security. This powerful resonance of threat is the essential part of India's current strategic thinking. In the Ministry of Defense's *National Security Report 1996-97*, the Indian government for the first time expressed explicit concerns over Pakistan's and China's development of nuclear and ballistic missile capabilities.[37]

During Indian Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh's visit to Beijing in mid-June 1999, Singh conceded to a key Chinese demand by declaring that India does not believe that China constitutes a threat.[38] By fulfilling this "prerequisite," as a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman put it, Sino-Indian relations could return to path of reconciliation.[39]

Despite a fundamental change in the tone of China-India relations, several sources of tension remained. These issues continued to breed distrust and hampered significant improvement in the bilateral relationship, also posed a threat to Indian security. For example, the two sides made little progress on the full demarcation of borders.[40]

Moreover, Chinese policymakers have pursued a policy of keeping India vulnerable in South Asia in an effort to block its rise as a potential rival or "peer

competitor".[41] The Chinese alliance with Pakistan is the lynchpin of this policy. China has long viewed Pakistan as the best means of containing India, by keeping strategic pressure along the latter's long western border and to keep India locked in as a regional power in South Asia. China has consistently and enthusiastically provided Pakistan with moral and material support, including massive military and economic aid and nuclear and missile technologies. Moreover, this relationship remained strong despite the Sino-Indian rapprochement of the late 1980s and 1990s.[42] Similarly, China has attempted to make inroads with other South Asian states such as Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and especially Burma (Myanmar). The growing Sino–Burmese defence relationship provides China with a strategic position relative to India. This position could be used to help secure access to Persian Gulf oil or, in the event of hostilities, provide a base of operations against India.[43] In addition, China has significantly increased its naval presence in the Indian Ocean.[44] India has responded with its so-called "Look East" policy, which attempts the same strategy toward China in East Asia by improving ties with Vietnam, Singapore, and Japan.[45] Thus, both India and China have engaged in external balancing behavior against the other.

Reports in early 2001 of new transfers of Chinese ballistic missile technology to Pakistan – notwithstanding Chinese pledges to eschew all such transfers – underscored Beijing's continued challenge to India's basic security interests.[46]

Beijing's entente cordiale with Pakistan continues to flourish, underpinned by nuclear and missile co-operation.[47] Chinese leaders regularly visit Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka to demonstrate a continuing determination to remain involved in South Asia and a desire to reassure China's friends in the region that improvement in Sino–Indian relations would not be at their cost. New Delhi keeps a close eye on the political and strategic relations between China and India's neighbours.[48]

During his June 2003 visit to China, Vajpayee declared that "healthy competition" would hereafter replace "divisive rivalry" as the leitmotif between the two. In a development that brought considerable satisfaction in New Delhi, a new Sino-Indian trade agreement seemed to imply tacit Chinese recognition of India's 1975 annexation of Sikkim. A week after the Vajpayee visit, however, Indian hopes for Chinese acceptance of the Sikkim incorporation looked less credible, since a statement on the Chinese foreign ministry website explicitly declared that Beijing did not recognize "India's illegal annexation" of Sikkim.[49]

Both India and China are also very sensitive to each other's ties with the United States, believing that an alignment between Washington and its rival would place it in a difficult strategic position.[50] As a result, if the U.S. begins leaning toward one of the two, the other has an incentive to undermine America's relations with that state. This is related to a more basic problem between India and China: both China and India are raising powers in Asia and "have been convinced of the historical destiny of their own nations to achieve great power status".[51]

Relations between China and India are fundamentally geopolitical. China, being the more powerful of the two, has sought to stymie India's rise in a variety of ways, including undermining India's quest for increased status in the international system. For example, Beijing historically has blocked India from joining the United Nations Security Council, the nuclear club, Asia-Pacific Economic Community (APEC), the

Group of Eight, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.[52] India has responded through its nuclear tests, asserting its claim to a permanent Security Council seat, seeking to improve relations with America, and strengthening its ties with its South Asian allies.

After having done maximum damage to India's national security through its military assistance to Pakistan, now China is opposing the efforts of the US and Western powers to make an exception for India in respect of civil nuclear energy cooperation. [53] Even as India, tries to develop its strategic relations with China, it has to take into account the basic hostile Chinese attitude towards India and has at least, at present, to differentiate that attitude from those of others who seem to value Indian partnership more than China does. While India has no interest in antagonizing China, in the balance of power system, a clear message has to be sent to China that its unfriendliness will have its consequences. Given this Chinese unfriendliness, it will be imprudent for India to reject the offer made by the four Western powers for access to civil nuclear energy.[54]

Pakistan

The Indo-Pakistan War of 1947

In 1947-48, Pakistan and India fought the first of their three wars involving the Muslim majority territory of Kashmir, which both claimed and whose Hindu maharajah opted for India at Partition. The conflict ended in stalemate and Kashmir remains disputed territory divided by a heavily defended Line of Control since 1948.

The Indo-Pakistan War of 1965

Other than ideology and Kashmir, the main source of friction between Pakistan and India in the 1960s was the distribution of the waters of the Indus River system. As the upper riparian power, India controlled the headworks of the pre-partition irrigation canals. After independence India had, in addition, constructed several multipurpose projects on the eastern tributaries of the Indus. Pakistan feared that India might repeat a 1948 incident that curtailed the water supply as a means of coercion. A compromise that appeared to meet the needs of both countries was reached during the 1950s; it was not until 1960 that a solution finally found favor with Ayub Khan and Jawaharlal Nehru.

The 1965 war began as a series of border flare-ups along undemarcated territory at the Rann of Kutch in the southeast in April and soon after along the cease-fire line in Kashmir.[55] The Rann of Kutch conflict was resolved by mutual consent and British sponsorship and arbitration, but the Kashmir conflict proved more dangerous and widespread. In the early spring of 1965, UN observers and India reported increased activity by infiltrators from Pakistan into Indian-held Kashmir. In mid-1965 Pakistan sent guerrilla forces into the Indian part of Kashmir in the hope of stirring up a rebellion that would either oust the Indians or at least force the issue back onto the international agenda. Pakistani forces did not find as much support among the Kashmiri population as they had hoped, and no uprising by Kashmiris against India took place. Fighting spread, and by August India had retaken Pakistani-held positions in the north while Pakistan attacked in the Chamb sector in southwestern Kashmir in

September. A process of escalation culminated in a full-scale Indian offensive toward Lahore on September 6. Fighting, frequently very bitter, continued until an UN-sponsored cease-fire took hold on September 23. Both sides had tacitly agreed not to let the war spread to the East Wing of Pakistan. Each country had limited objectives, and neither was economically capable of sustaining a long war because military supplies were cut to both countries by the United States and Britain.

The war was militarily inconclusive; each side held prisoners and some territory belonging to the other. Losses were relatively heavy-on the Pakistani side, twenty aircraft, 200 tanks, and 3,800 troops. Pakistan's army had been able to withstand Indian pressure, but a continuation of the fighting would only have led to further losses and ultimate defeat for Pakistan. Most Pakistanis, schooled in the belief of their own martial prowess, refused to accept the possibility of their country's military defeat by "Hindu India" and were, instead, quick to blame their failure to attain their military aims on what they considered to be the ineptitude of Ayub Khan and his government.

The Indo-Pakistan War of 1971

By 1971 the largely Punjabi army was in a politically untenable position in East Pakistan, which had voted overwhelmingly for an autonomist party. Once it became clear that a compromise between the civilian leaders of West Pakistan and East Pakistan was unattainable, Yahya Khan was forced to choose between the two sides, and his actions were seen by the Bengalis of the East Wing as favoring the interests of West Pakistan, which were hardly distinguishable from those of the armed forces. Yahya Khan decided to postpone indefinitely the convening of the new National Assembly, which would have been dominated by Bengalis. Within days, unrest spread throughout East Pakistan. Bengalis went on strike and stopped paying taxes. Bengali autonomists became separatists.

Army elements in East Pakistan were strengthened in the spring of 1971 and were used to suppress Bengali recalcitrance. The task was undertaken with ferocity; killing, rape, looting, and brutality were widespread and resulted in the flight of nearly 10 million refugees to India over six months.

The army was generally successful during the spring and summer of 1971 in restoring order in East Pakistan, but increasing Indian support of the antigovernment Bengali guerrillas known as the Mukti Bahini (Liberation Force) began to shift the balance. When Indian troops finally intervened directly in December, there was no hope of stopping them.

The third Indo-Pak war in 1971 was initiated by a preemptive strike by Pakistani aircraft against India, though Pakistan claimed that India had started a *de facto* war a few days before.[56] On December 3, Pakistani forces began hostilities in the west with attacks on Indian airfields. They had little success, and within twenty-four hours India had seized air superiority, launched attacks against West Pakistan, and blockaded the coast. Pakistani forces in East Pakistan surrendered to the Indian army on December 16, and India offered a cease-fire. In the face of superior force on all fronts, Pakistan had little choice but to accept the breakup of the country and the independence of Bengalis in Bangladesh (the former East Pakistan).

Operation Brass Tacks

In 1983–84 there were persistent reports that India would attack Pakistan's nuclear weapon production facilities and Pakistan threatened to retaliate with a similar attack on Indian facilities.[57] There were periods of considerable tension between Pakistan and India in later years. In November 1986, India launched its largest maneuver ever, Operation Brass Tacks, menacingly close to the Pakistan border. The Pakistan Army responded with threatening countermovements, and in early 1987 there was serious concern that war might break out. India accused Pakistan of aiding Sikh insurgents in India's state of Punjab. Pakistan denied this accusation, but some people thought that Operation Brass Tacks might have been a means to strike at alleged bases in Pakistan's Punjab Province. The India-Pakistan hot line was brought into use, and Zia skillfully seized the initiative by traveling to India to view a cricket game, using the opportunity to meet with Indian leaders to defuse the situation.

Siachen Glacier

Among the major disputes between the two countries, Siachen Glacier, which is located in a remote area of northern Kashmir where boundaries are ill defined, has led to fighting in recent years. The conflict over the 76-kilometer long Siachen Glacier is not a declared war but dates back to 1984 and is the longest-running between their armies. Both have lost hundreds of lives in that remote and uninhabited region, not to military action but to the harsh climate, dangerous altitude and treacherous terrain. The climate and terrain also make the monetary costs exorbitant.[58]

Indo-Pakistan relations, characterized by high levels of sustained hostility punctuated by intense ideological, religious and political rivalry, over more than five decades, continue to pose a threat to New Delhi.[59]

Given the high human and financial tolls, and because the territory is of little strategic value, India and Pakistan have held a series of negotiations to resolve the dispute, but in the absence of political will these have achieved little, though they came close in 1989 and 1992. At the fifth round of defence secretary-level talks in June 1989, an understanding was reached "to work toward a comprehensive settlement, based on redeployment of forces to reduce the chances of conflict, avoidance of the use of force and the determination of future positions on the ground so as to conform with the Simla Agreement and to ensure durable peace in the Siachen area". [60] However, this was not operationalised. At the sixth round in November 1992, agreement was almost reached which envisaged mutual withdrawal and redeployment to create "a zone of complete disengagement". This area would be delineated "without prejudice" to the known positions of either side. No new positions would be occupied in the designated zone nor would any activity, civilian or military be allowed there. But the proposed settlement fell victim again to mutual mistrust.[61]

The Nuclear Tests and After

The 1998 nuclear tests, some analysts argue, are a reflection of the short-term tit-for-tat interaction between the two countries, which was activated by Pakistan's test of a medium-range missile named Ghauri in February 1998 (which has a payload capacity of 700kg and can hit targets from a distance of 1,000 miles with error-free

accuracy).[62] The Pakistani test firing of the Ghauri was of greater significance. New Delhi roundly condemned the move as an unnecessary and aggressive act. Yet throughout the government and certainly within key sections of the defence community, the Pakistani test was clearly seen as reactive to India's own indigenous missile system, in particular, the deployment of the Prithvi short-range missile in 1997.[63] Moreover, Pakistan worked to develop longer range versions of the Shaheen and Ghauri.[64] That's why, in late 1998 the Indian Army chief, General V. P. Malik, claimed that conventional war remained a possibility after the tests.[65] When India tested the Agni-II in April 1999 and Pakistan followed by testing the Shaheen and Ghauri missiles.[66]

The Kargil war between India and Pakistan (May–July 1999) showed that existential nuclear deterrence was not a sound guarantee of war avoidance and that nuclear weapons would not bring stability to South Asia.[67] There are several reports that Pakistan threatened the use of nuclear weapons during the Kargil war.[68]

After Kargil, there is a greater danger of nuclear use in the subcontinent. In July 1999, a different government in Pakistan could have refused the immediate withdrawal of Pakistani forces from Kargil after the Clinton–Sharif meeting on 4 July 1999; or could have threatened the use of tactical nuclear weapons to stop the Indian counter-offensive to recover Kargil. The new Indian position that nuclear deterrence does not prevent 'limited wars' creates a very dangerous situation, considering that nuclear and missile races are well under way. If left unchecked, both races will inevitably raise the stakes in a future Kargil-like conflict.[69]

There is some amount of truth in the argument that it is the perception of an immediate threat coupled with sustained hostility between India and Pakistan that has shaped New Delhi's orientation towards Islamabad and vice versa.[70]

The links between Pakistan and China had been known for long. In the early 1990s, China was accused of supplying the Pakistanis with M11 missiles, and there had been frequent press speculation that China may well have helped the Pakistanis test a nuclear device, or shared with Islamabad data from China's own weaponisation programme.[71] Moreover, it is noteworthy that; because of its strategic vulnerability, Pakistan has not reciprocated India's 'no-first use' pledge and is more likely to delegate command authority to be able to cross the nuclear threshold first in a war with India.[72]

The attack on India's Parliament carries far greater weight as a result of September 11th. India's immediate accusation of Pakistan's involvement, and Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf's resulting ban on Islamic extremists has ensured the appearance of Pakistan's complicity. This suggestion of guilt carries a new weight in the wake of the terrorist attacks in the United States. The fact that the US used the explanation of self-defence to justify its military strikes on Afghanistan has created a precedent for India to follow. Based upon the US example, India claims to have the same right to attack Islamic extremists in Pakistani controlled areas of Kashmir in order to defend itself from future terrorist acts. The temptation to take decisive action was reinforced by the January 2002 attack on the American Centre, which has further implicated Islamic militants from Kashmir. This dilemma has put India in a difficult position, having to balance internal pressure for action with

external pressure for peace, essentially ignoring Washington's precedent.[73]

Essentially, notwithstanding US action in Afghanistan, India's ability to react to terrorism was severely limited. India must cater to the United States and world opinion if it hopes to integrate itself with other developed nations. Aggression will only result in increased advantages for Pakistan. However, according to Brahama Chellaney, "Continued American economic support for Pakistan is a serious threat to Indian security due to the strong evidence connecting US aid to Muslim extremists groups via Pakistan, some of whom are in or affiliated with Kashmir".[74]

Following the Kargil War, where Washington's intervention was quite marked in forcing Pakistan to withdraw its forces, was 9/11. This caused a palpable change in America's attitude to terrorism, and provided an opportunity for India to persuade it to drop its double-standards on the terrorist threat that India faced. A series of terrorist activities inside India forced the United States to accept the full implications of Pakistan's involvement in cross-border terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir. The stand-off between India and Pakistan following the terrorist attack on the Indian parliament on 13 December 2001 when both sides moved their troops to the border was largely defused by the United States confronting Pakistan about its support for Kashmiri militants. Although Vajpayee carefully termed this nascent US role as facilitation rather than mediation, this indicated a shift in India's long-held position on the role of third parties in its dispute with Pakistan over Jammu and Kashmir.[75]

The report, *Reforming the National Security System: Recommendations of the Group of Ministers*,[76] takes the first comprehensive look at all challenges to the national security of India, both internal and external. Its task was the identification of problems and possible solutions in the areas of intelligence, internal security, border management and defence.

In that report report, non-state actors, particularly terrorists, are identified as one of the main targets of future activity in enhancing the national security profile of India. China and Pakistan are mentioned as the main concerns in the report.

"Pakistan will continue to pose a threat to India's security in the future also. Its traditional hostility and single-minded aim of destabilising India, is not focused just on Kashmir but on a search for parity … As a result of Pakistan's political and economic instability, its military regime may act irrationally, particularly in view of its propensity to function through terrorist outfits … Pakistan believes that nuclear weapons can compensate for 'conventional military inferiority'; its leaders have not concealed their desire to use nuclear weapons against India".[77]

Moreover, the very nature of the Pakistani state presents a threat to India. In a survey of India's security problems written in 1983, U.S. Bajpai, a distinguished retired diplomat, offered not so much an analysis of the 'Pakistan factor' as an indictment of Pakistan's many shortcomings.[78] Pakistan's limited cultural and civilizational inheritance, its military dictatorship, its theocratic identity, its unworkable unitary system of government (as opposed to India's flexible federalism), the imposition of Urdu on an unwilling population, the alienation of Pakistan's rulers from their people, Islamabad's support of 'reactionary' regimes in West Asia (India identified its interests with the 'progressive' segments of Arab nationalism, such as Saddam's Iraq), its dependency on foreign aid, and the failure to develop a strong

economic base were Pakistan's embarrassment. This perspective has enjoyed a renaissance in the ten years after Pakistan began open support for the separatist and terrorist movements that emerged in Indian-administered Kashmir.[79]

Why should India fear such a state? Pakistan is a threat because it still makes the claim that Partition was imperfectly carried out, because some Pakistanis harbor revanchist notions towards India's Muslim population, and because it falsely accuses India of wanting to undo Pakistan itself. Thus, Pakistan still makes a claim on Kashmir, and has deeper designs against the integrity and unity of India itself.[80] Because Pakistan continues to adhere to the theory which brought it into existence – the notion that the subcontinent was divided between two nations, one Hindu, one Muslim – and because it purports to speak on behalf of Indian Muslims, Pakistan's very identity is 'a threat to India's integrity'. More recently, Pakistan has served as the base for Islamic 'jihadists' who not only seek the liberation of Kashmir, but the liberation of all of India's Muslims.[81]

Trans-border

Internal security problems at the trans-border level include domestic violence and proxy wars conducted by India's neighbors across national boundaries in support of Indian secessionist movements. India alleges that Kashmiri and Sikh insurgents operate out of Pakistan with Pakistani support. Before the Indian Peacekeeping Forces went into Sri Lanka, many Tamil insurgents in Sri Lanka allegedly operated from India.[82] Before the creation of Bangladesh in 1971, both China and Pakistan supported the Naga and Mizo separatist movements in Northeast India. Secessionist violence continues to rise and fall in Sindh in Pakistan, and Assam in India. India could fuel the neighboring Sindhi separatist movement, and Bangladesh could do the same with the Assamese and Mizo separatist movements. Burma could support separatist violence in Nagaland and Mizoram if it chose to do so. During the height of these tribal insurgencies in the 1960s and 1970s, Naga and Mizo guerillas moved freely across the uncontrolled Indo-Burmese frontiers and received small arms from across the Burmese-Chinese border. Insurgency in Tibet in the 1950s led to war between India and China in 1962. Despite improved relations between India and China today, repression or instability in Tibet generates domestic debate in India regarding its relations with China. India is directly or indirectly involved or concerned about all such "internal" security issues both within its own borders and those of its neighbors.[83]

Jammu and Kashmir

A United Nations resolution, adopted after the 1948 war between India and Pakistan over disputed Kashmir, allows the people of Kashmir to join either India or Pakistan. The United Nations had urged both countries to hold a plebiscite in Kashmir allowing people to choose which country they wanted to join following the removal of Pakistani military forces, but the plebiscite was never held. New Delhi regards Kashmir as an integral part of India while Islamabad insists that the dispute should be settled according to the terms of the resolution. Both countries reject total independence for Kashmir.

Jammu and Kashmir has been a target of externally sponsored religion-based terrorism for the last five decades. The aim is to divide people on the basis of sectarian affiliation and undermine the secular fabric and territorial integrity of India. Kashmiri militant groups have committed serious abuses, including the deliberate targeting of Kashmir Hindus by fundamentalists, terrorist groups and foreign mercenaries. The persecution by Muslim extremists of the Hindu minority and the systematic religion-based extremism of terrorist elements has resulted in the exodus of 250,000 members of the Hindu and other minorities from the Kashmir Valley to other parts of India. Fundamentalists and terrorists have also targeted and assassinated Muslim intellectuals and liberal Muslim leaders in Jammu and Kashmir. As a consequence, as many as 50,000 Muslims have also been compelled to flee the Valley to seek safety in other parts of India.

In addition to political killings and kidnappings of politicians and civilians, terrorists engaged in extortion and carried out acts of random terror that killed hundreds of Kashmiris. Terrorist acts by Kashmiri groups have also taken place outside Jammu and Kashmir. Many of the terrorists are not Indian citizens, but are of Afghan, Pakistani and other nationalities. Militants in Jammu and Kashmir continue to use kidnapings to sow terror, seek the release of detained comrades, and extort funds. According to the Government, terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir kidnapped 422 persons during 1997, of whom 181 were killed by their captors, 82 were released, and 158 remained unaccounted for. The July 1995 kidnapping of American, British, German, and Norwegian nationals by terrorists remains unresolved. The Norwegian captive was beheaded in August 1995. A captured terrorist stated that the remaining hostages - one American, two Britons, and a German--were murdered by their captors in December 1995. There has not been a verifiable contact with the hostages for more than 2 years. In Jammu and Kashmir, the judicial system barely functions due to threats by militants against judges, witnesses, and their family members, because of judicial tolerance of the Government's heavy-handed anti-militant actions, and the frequent refusal by security forces to obey court orders.

The critical links between Al-Qaeda, the Taliban and Pakistan-based terrorist groups such as Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) and the Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT), operating in Kashmir, as well as a tentative connection between acts of terror committed against India and the United States posing a constant threat to India's security.[84] This link in turn also highlighted the pivotal role played by Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) agency in coordinating, if not sustaining, the relationship between these three groups of terrorist entities.[85] More seriously, though, Pakistan is seen as an egregious and willful proliferator. The fear of radiological devices being channeled by the ISI directly or through the criminal mafia to terrorist and insurgent groups active within India has increased ever since the officially supported but secret network run by Dr A. Q. Khan selling nuclear materials and technologies in the black market came to light.[86] And also the alleged quest for chemical, biological, nuclear or radiological weapons by Al-Qaeda, raised concerns that the armed groups in Kashmir might also acquire such weapons.[87] According to Indian intelligence, the Al-Qaeda fighters included Uzbek, Arab, and Chechen jihadi militants, some of whom are probably now active in Kashmir.[88] Today the world's largest concentration of active international

jihadi militants is probably in or near Kashmir.[89]

Moreover, all of these various strains of confrontation are now increasingly focused in the "low-intensity" paramilitary campaign between contending groups in the disputed province of Kashmir, which has been dubbed the world's most likely "nuclear flashpoint".[90]

In recent years, an average of three hundred Indian citizens per month has been killed in paramilitary and terrorist attacks. Thousands of Indian security forces and army troops are fixed in this one province to keep order, with human rights abuses and repressive methods of control used against groups suspected of harboring Pakistani-supported terrorists. This constant background of guerrilla warfare, terrorism, and state repression also has a "strategic" state-to-state dimension: Pakistan has been involved in the training, equipping, and housing of anti-India Muslim guerrilla groups in its own section of Kashmir, and Pakistan routinely inserts these forces (under cover of mortar and artillery attacks) into India's territory.[91]

Sri Lanka – LTTE

As of August 1997 there were about 65,000 Tamil refugees from Sri Lanka living in 115 camps in India, including approximately 6,000 who fled the upsurge in fighting in Sri Lanka during 1996 and 338 suspected of militant activities, who are detained in special camps. An estimated 30,000-60,000 more Sri Lankan Tamils are not registered as refugees and are living outside the camps. The Government states that there are some 57,000 Sri Lankan Tamil refugees in camps in India and a few thousand more living outside the camps.[92] Actions by Sri Lanka, namely, intensification of its intelligence and security relations with the US, offering the latter a foothold at Trincomalee and broadcasting facilities to the Voice of America on the Western coast of the island, increased Indian concerns. Further, Sri Lanka's seeking assistance from Pakistan and Israel to counter Tamil terrorism, in response to India's support to Tamil aspirations, increased Indian worries.[93]

Napal – Maoist

India faces challenges on its eastern flank. Nepal's Maoist movement continues to ravage the country despite the involvement of the Nepali army. Borne out of the frustration of a disenfranchised population, it continues to displace government influence. Several truces have been broken, and the onslaughts of Maoist attacks on Nepali forces and on Katmandu continue at an unabated pace. The insurgency must be tackled with a multi-modal that includes military, social and economic means designed to parch the support for the Maoists. Maoist ties to anti-monarchy forces in Bhutan, and terrorist groups in India's Northeast provide regional enemies with a convenient way to meddle in India's security matters. Bangladesh's ongoing struggle, thirty years after a hard won independence, to establish a confident national identity blending Bangla nationalism and Islam will consume resources, affect its interactions with neighbors, and cause internal upheaval. The core problem in India – Bangladesh relations is Bangladesh's insecurity over its identity which manifests a paranoid suspicion of a larger and more powerful neighbor. Bangladesh often rivals Pakistan in its stubbornness, and its refusal to economically integrate with India despite mutual

benefits.[94]

Internal Threats

Meanwhile, India's internal security problems, to include violent secessionist movements and communal (mainly Hindu-Muslim) rioting, have become perennial since independence. Only the extent and intensity of these problems have varied. Until the early 1980s, the separatist movements were largely confined to the tribes of the northeast: Nagas, Mizos, Gharos, Khasis and others. Following long bouts of insurgency and counter-insurgency, carving out three mini-states from the state of Assam (Nagaland, Mizoram, and Meghalaya) mainly resolved these pressures. Violent separatist movements in the major states of Punjab, Assam and Kashmir commenced only after 1984. Hindu-Muslim rioting remained sporadic, occurring mainly in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, and Maharashtra.

Naxalism

In India today there are many Maoist parties and organizations that either predate the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) or emerged from factions when the CPI-ML split after the death of Charu Majumdar. Three of them, the CPI-ML (People's War), CPI-ML (Party Unity), and the Maoist Communist Center (MCC), are currently engaged in armed struggle. An inter-connected "Naxalite belt" stretches across central India, comprising Bihar, MP, Orissa, AP, Maharashtra and parts of Tamil Nadu.[95] Those parts which were connected to the neighbouring states came under the influence of Naxalism. Its members are called Naxalites after the eastern Indian town of Naxalbari, where their movement originated in 1967.

The 25 May 1967 peasant uprising at Naxalbari in Darjeeling district of West Bengal began under the leadership of revolutionary communists belonging to the Communist Party of India - Marxist [CPI (M)]. The uprising was brutally suppressed by the CPI(M)-led United Front government of West Bengal at the behest of the Congress government at the Center. In reaction, communist revolutionary ranks rebel against the leadership of the party. The rebellion soon assumes an all India dimension. Entire state units of CPI(M) in Uttar Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir and considerable sections in Bihar and Andhra Pradesh joined this rebellion. On 22 April 1969 they formed the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist).

Since 1980 clashes between police and Naxalite Maoist revolutionaries have taken place in northwestern Andhra Pradesh. In areas under their control, Naxalites dispense summary justice in "people's courts" which in some cases condemn to death suspected police informers, village headmen, and others deemed to be "class enemies" or "caste oppressors." The Naxalites extort money from business firms, and railway services in one area had to be canceled in July and August due to PWG destruction of stations, track and signaling equipment. Over the past few years, hundreds of policemen and suspected Naxalites have been killed, according to press reports and human rights organization. As of September police had killed 102 Naxalites in approximately 80 "encounters." Seventeen years of guerrilla-style conflict have led to serious human rights abuses by both sides. Human rights groups allege that "encounters" are usually faked by the police to cover up the torture and subsequent murder of Naxalite

suspects, sympathizers, or informers. These groups cite as evidence the refusal of police to hand over corpses of suspects killed in "encounters," which are often cremated before families can view the bodies. Andhra police have contributed to the establishment of an armed vigilante group known as the "Green Tigers," whose mission is to combat Naxalite groups in the state. The NHRC is investigating some 285 reported cases so-called "fake encounter deaths" allegedly committed by the Andhra police in connection with anti-Naxalite operations.

ULFA in Assam

Insurgency and increased ethnic violence have taken a heavy toll in Assam, and led to the installation of a "unified command" of civilian, military and paramilitary forces in the state. While there were numerous allegations of human rights violations directed against security forces, public attention has begun to focus on the actions of insurgents of the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) and the Bodo Security Force in Assam.[96]

Secessionism and ethnic conflicts are also key to the Bodo movement, Assam's second most significant source of terrorism. Bodos are one of the most prominent tribes in Assam and are very distinct culturally and ethnically from the Assamese. The animosity between the two groups is well documented. For this, many Bodos began demanding an independent Bodo nation to further their rights. Though many organizations claim to be the legitimate voice of the Bodo people, the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB) emerged as the most prominent in 1988.[97]

ULFA and the NDFB are only two of many terrorist groups operating in Assam. Other prominent groups include the Bodo Liberation Tigers (BLT), the Gorkha Tiger Force (GTF), the Kamatapur Liberation Organization (KLO), the Bengali Tiger Force (BTF), and the People's United Liberation Front (PULF). Nearly all of the organizations are driven by secessionism, socialism, and/or ethnic tensions.

Northeast / Nagaland

Extensive, complex patterns of violence continued in the seven states of northeastern India. The main insurgent groups in the northeast include two factions of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) in Nagaland; Meitei extremists in Manipur; and the all Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF) and the National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT) in Tripura.[98] The proclaimed object of many of these groups is to break out of the Indian union, creating new, independent nations. Their stated grievances against the Indian Government range from charges of neglect and indifference to the endemic poverty of the region, to allegations of active discrimination against the tribal and non-tribal peoples of the region by the center. The oldest of these conflicts, involving the Nagas, started with India's independence in 1947. On August 1, a ceasefire between the Government and the ISAC-Muivah faction of the NSCN went into effect and has been largely observed by the Government and all insurgent groups in the state. However, factional feuds among rival Naga insurgent groups claimed an estimated 120 lives during the first 3 months of the ceasefire. The Government extended the ceasefire for another 3 months on November 1, unilaterally including even those armed groups in Nagaland which had not been party to the original

ceasefire.

Indian Ocean

India has a littoral coastline of 7516 KM and an Exclusive Economic Zone of 2.01 million square k.m. under the award of the UNCLOS III 1982 (United Nations Conference of the Law of the Sea 1982). It has nine maritime states abounding the peninsular seas and four Union territories. India features 12 major ports, 185 minor ports, more than 250 fishing harbours and more than 100 offshore platforms.[99]

The scope of maritime low intensity conflicts that India contends in its littorals could in the following matrix: Firstly, the exploitation of national resources by unauthorized persons has assumed threatening proportion. Illegal fishery is the most commonly prevalent threat in the littoral-maritime waters of India. Secondly, the advertent/inadvertent human induced environmental disasters results in the marine ecological damage that pollutes the sea in the region. The third factor is the threat to safety of life and property on board the ship or on oil rig platforms and structures in the continental shelf or near the shore. Criminal acts of this type are equated with piracy. Fourthly, the illegal traffic of small arms, hostage taking, narcotic, contraband smuggling and the involuntary traffic of humans pose a larger threat to national peace and security. These events are precursors to the littoral-based terrorism and insurgency. India, the Maldives, Myanmar and Sri Lanka are all affected by these maritime asymmetric threats. These operations have an apparent criminal cover but do have deep political motivations to subversion, which are essentially criminal in nature, a political cover to provide them some legitimacy.[100]

The another challenge and threats to India's littorals emerge from the nexus of organized crime in the hinterland with terror groups in the proximity of India's borders and boundaries with Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Bangladesh and of course, from Pakistan. The crime syndicates have used the external linkages in the sea-smuggling of narcotics, small arms, explosives to be used in the various criminal and insurgent activities in the littorals and the hinterland. The littorals are the staging points for the long chain of links in the smuggling process.[101]

The Paradigm Shift

India has two nuclear armed neighbors, China and Pakistan, with whom it has fought conventional wars in the past. The Chinese and Pakistani threats in the 1980s and 1990s may have crystallized into demonstration of nuclear tests by New Delhi. India and the world are well aware of the non-proliferation set-back in the 1980s and 1990s as a result of clandestine assistance by China in the nuclear program of Pakistan, and this nexus continues to be a menace to India. India therefore finds itself in a precarious situation where it is threatened by two nuclear armed states which have common strategic interests. During the Cold War, because of the two main players, there was a kind of strategic stability; but in a triangular affair between India, China and Pakistan the strategic instability is bound to creep in. The nuclear doctrine, policy and posture of India then essentially respond to the relations of China and Pakistan.[102]

Nonalignment – the onetime fulcrum of India's foreign and security policy – has become irrelevant, whether it still exists in some other reincarnation or not.[103] With no

competing global power blocs, it may be important for India to take into account that the West is militarily and economically dominant. Russia can be of no assistance (as in the past) in countering any pro-Pakistani stance that the United States may take up. At present both India and Pakistan are wooing the United States and the West as possible quasi-allies. Indeed, at the end of the Cold War there was a sudden Indian rush towards embracing the United States. New Delhi sought greater military cooperation with the United States, but soon ran into several roadblocks. India's refusal to protect American pharmaceutical patents, its decision to buy from Russia cryogenic engines for its rocket program, and the testing of the Prithvi missile in defiance of American warnings, have cooled U.S. interest to establish closer military ties, and provoked growing suspicions in India about American friendship.[104] However, it is important to note that while Indo-American military ties have not progressed as well as India would desire, economic ties have been booming as never before. The United States was always India's main trading partner, but now leading American corporations have rushed into India with investment capital following New Delhi's economic liberalization.[105] Moreover, India's nuclear explosion in 1998, the Indo-U.S. diplomatic dialogue thereafter, the 9/11, the 12/13, war on terrorism, pronouncement as "natural allies" (India and U.S.), the NSSP declared in 2004 by India and the United States which followed the Indo-U.S. defence pact in 2005 and more importantly the 18 July 2005, Indo-U.S. joint declaration for civilian nuclear cooperation – all – completely, even rapidly changed the scenario of India's security.

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