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Vaccination Roadmap of India: from Vaccine Politics to Supreme Court Interventions

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Abstract

India, the world's largest democracy, was hit hard like other nations around the globe during the COVID-19 pandemic. Being a developing nation having the second largest population in the world, large-scale inequalities existed in the country with majority of the population having little or no access to public goods and services. This has further aggravated the difficulties faced by the country. A need to develop a comprehensive vaccination plan and other strategies became paramount to salvaging the country from the clutches of the deadly virus. The Central Government prepared a detailed plan to vaccinate its population in various stages based on the availability of doses and degree of vulnerability to reduce the risk of further outbreak. The pandemic period witnessed extensive public debate on India's vaccination policy, its challenges, consequences and implications, and intense politics over it. The Supreme Court had taken cognizance of the Centre's handling of the pandemic and issued necessary directives on various occasions. This paper aims to highlight the roadmap of vaccination in India, the politics centred around the vaccination policy and Supreme Court's intervention in the matter.

This paper revolves around the vaccination strategies followed in India and seeks to analyse how far they have been successful in dealing with the pandemic. It also strives to track the responses of the judiciary, analysing how it played the role of a watchdog monitoring the actions of the Central Government, and has issued directives from time to time. The Central Government had been proactive in ensuring that all citizens get vaccinated, though the policy had been revised many times. As of now, the government has successfully vaccinated more than 114 million of its total eligible population against COVID-19.

Key Words: Vaccination policy, India, politics, Supreme Court, COVID-19.

Introduction

The spread of COVID-19 has created an unanticipated and unprecedented situation globally that impacted all sectors. The deadly nature of the virus necessitated the development of reliable and medically effective medicines and vaccines to help save the humanity. Various research institutions in India and abroad took this initiative and made concerted efforts at developing vaccines. At present various vaccines are available in the market produced by different companies and different nations like Covaxin, Covishield, Sputnik V, ZyCovD, mRNA 1273, Ad26.COV2.S and AZD1222 etc. (GoI 2021), and some of the newly-developed medicines that include BBV152, Molnupiravir and Paxlovid etc. are in the final stages of the approval for use by the people infected with the virus (Firstpost 2021).

For India, navigating the pandemic period has been particularly very challenging due to the factors like a large population with low access to healthcare and hygiene, living in proximity, with no access to personal preventive equipment like hand sanitisers, masks etc. The widespread socio-economic inequality and little access to public goods and services added to the existing set of challenges. The initial measures taken by the Government of India were preventive in nature, but after the rapid spread of virus, the government became active in taking both preventive as well as curative measures (Pareek and Sole 2020). The Central Government and the state governments prepared their guidelines for district administrations for managing the devastation caused by the virus spread. Moreover, the shortage of healthcare workers and poor health infrastructure were serious impediments in winning the fight against the deadly enemy in the form of virus. The entire nation was put under a lockdown with stricter regulations on any kind of social gatherings or movement outside one's homes.

The nation experienced only a small relief when the government announced successful clinical trials of COVID vaccine to mitigate the risk of death by virus infection. The government prepared a roadmap for vaccination of the eligible population based on two criteria: availability of vaccines and a target population who are at greater risk of infection and COVID-related death. This vaccination programme was an ambitious one aimed at covering the majority of population in multiple phases. But it faced a lot of criticism from state governments and policy practitioners for the shortage of vaccine availability and unequal distribution among the states. There were certain other examples wherein non-government organisations, individuals and market players came together and contributed in the fight against COVID. Some considered the pandemic as a sort of 'break' applied on human activity and something that reminded them of environment and related issues. Some others thought it to be an opportunity to revive humanity, relationships, innovation, and

go beyond socio-physical presence into the virtual domain, making it a new normal. The paper evaluates the success of the vaccination policy and what the vaccination future holds for India as the country has already vaccinated more than 114 million of its total eligible population (MoHFW 2021).

This paper revolves around the path of vaccination adopted by India, its implications and drawbacks, politics around vaccination, and Supreme Court interventions and directions from time to time. The paper includes examples from both phases of the pandemic.

Road map for vaccination

The Central Government had formulated the National COVID Vaccination Programme based on scientific and epidemiological evidence, World Health Organisation (WHO) guidelines and best practices from around the world. However, the programme mandates the strong cooperation and coordination among/between the Centre, states/Union Territories and, above all, the citizens. Before implementation of the programme, the government had constituted committees: i) the 'Task Force for Focused Research on COVID Vaccine' to encourage research and development of COVID-19 drugs and vaccines, ii) the 'National Expert Group on Vaccine Administration for COVID-19' (NEGVAC) to prepare a plan for vaccine administration in the country, iii) the 'Empowered Group on Vaccine Administration for COVID-19' constituted in January 2021 that had the most important role in determining India's path to COVID-19 vaccination. The objective of empowered group was to make maximum utilisation of available technology to ensure a vaccination drive that is transparent, inclusive, simple and accessible to the citizens.

The programme has prioritised the suggestions of experts from the fields of immunisation, public health and disease control and information technology. The programme prioritised the strengthening of the nation's healthcare system by protecting professionals, healthcare workers and frontline workers, and the vulnerable groups of the population. The various population groups prioritised on the basis of vaccine administration are as follows.

Table 1. Vaccine Priority under National COVID Vaccination Program

S. No.	Target Population
1.	Healthcare Workers
2.	Frontline Workers
3.	Citizens above 45 years of age
4.	Citizens with second dose due
5.	Citizens more than 18 years of age

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Table 2. Vaccination Phases in India

S. No.	Phase	Target Population	Initiation Date
1.	Phase I	High Priority Group- frontline workers in healthcare, sanitation and security	16 January 2021
2.	Phase II	Citizens above 50 years of age and persons with co-morbidities	1 March 2021
3.	Phase III	Citizens above 45 years of age	1 April 2021
4.	Phase IV	Citizens above 18 years of age	1 May 2021

The Centre agreed to provide free vaccines to all states and Union Territories whereas, the states and UTs could themselves prioritise vaccine for citizens above 18 years (MoHFW 2021). The vaccines shall be provided free of cost to the states based on criteria like population, disease burden, vaccination progress and wastage etc.

It was planned that the Centre shall inform the states about the vaccination and then the state shall allocate vaccines to each district and each vaccination centre. This information on vaccination should be widely publicised for the benefit of the citizens for ensuring maximum visibility, accessibility and convenience. Most importantly, all citizens are made eligible for free vaccination irrespective of their income status to promote the spirit of public well-being. The private hospitals may charge for every shot of vaccine based on the price determined by each manufacturer. For the purpose of booking, CoWin application can be effectively utilised for registration using the Aadhar number of a citizen. Also, Common Service Centres and call centres can be used for booking a vaccination appointment.

The statistics show that around 75 crore people have already received first dose of vaccination and about 38 crore individuals have received the second dose also of COVID-19 vaccine raising the total number to 114 crore doses of vaccine administration (MoHFW 2021). However, the problem lies in realising the planned vaccine administration due to its limited availability. The table below shows the vaccine requirements for India.

Table 3. Vaccine requirements of India (News18, 2021)

	Adults	Total Indians
Population	94.02 crore	136.13 crore
Doses needed	188.04 crore	272.26 crore

The vaccination trials on children have just been completed and the government is yet to devise a plan for successfully vaccinating the children and revamp the derailed education system in India.

Politics around vaccination in India

Vaccines are, in a sense, 'political tools' as well as they provide the government the scope to shape the immunity and opinion of the entire population (Chatterjee, Mahmood and Mercussen 2021). Vaccination is not a politically-neutral activity, it has elements like relation with the state power, national identity and individual's sense of obligation to self and to others (Holmberg, and Greenough 2017). The race to develop COVID vaccine at first spurred unintended competition referred to as 'vaccine nationalism' among various countries in the world and provided a chance to prove their scientific advancement and lead over others. This has also initiated the 'vaccine diplomacy' among the nations. India's move to provide assistance in the form of vaccines to other nations has received criticism from all sections of people who argued that in a crisis situation, it is important to have an inward-looking orientation and to help oneself first than others. The emphasis has been on ensuring domestic availability of vaccines.

There were studies pointing to the fact that despite having high infection and high mortality rates, some states and Union Territories did not receive the amount of vaccines they had been promised as per an agreement reached between the Centre, state and local governments. Only the BJP/NDA-ruled states were preferred in providing large quantities of vaccine irrespective of infection or mortality rates (Duggal 2021).

The politics around vaccination was utilised by the party in power to its advantage by making it a sort of campaign plank that, in turn, had helped salvage the party's public image and regain the support of the people to a certain extent after the impact of the second-wave receded (Mahaprashasta 2021).

The government also faced a lot of criticism over two important aspects; first, the allocation of financial resources for the procurement of sufficient vaccines for the citizens, and second, the capacity to distribute, store and administer them. The pandemic exposed the Indian healthcare system and helped underscore the serious need to revisit the health policy. There were also complaints from non-Bhartiya Janata Party-ruled states of not receiving sufficient vaccines for its citizens and the Centre favouring the BJP-ruled states. Vaccines also became an instrument to win elections with the election manifestos of parties promising free vaccination for all. The citizens were already very sceptic about the vaccines and a few politicians publicly spread rumours which added fuel to vaccine hesitancy.

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It was pointed out continuously that the vaccination policy lacked universality as the population was divided on the basis of priority wherein the youth was given the last slot. The youth of a country is its future and risking their lives tantamount to letting the country plunge into an abyss of grave crisis. In fact, the youth was one among the worst-hit groups during the second wave of COVID-19 crisis in India. The need was to provide equal access to vaccination for all sections of society without prioritising them. Also, there should not have been any difference between procurement of vaccines by the Centre and states or, in other words, there should have been uniformity in the process of procuring vaccines. The vaccines are procured using the public funds, so procurement by the Centre or states makes no sense. More emphasis must be placed on early procurement and administration of vaccines rather than putting additional burden on the people. The opposition parties also argued that the Central Government must enter into contracts with vaccine manufacturers with predetermined price agreements and deadlines on vaccine delivery. The need for having a centralised vaccine procurement agency for uniformity in prices and accessibility to all could be easily ensured.

The National Expert Group Committee on Vaccine Administration for COVID-19 (NEGVAC) also asked the states to desist from spending on vaccination besides Central procurement and rather utilise resources in managing the pandemics. The former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh also had criticized the government asking it to focus more on absolute numbers that have been vaccinated rather than the population covered (Rao 2021).

Supreme Court interventions

The Supreme Court had raised various questions about government's COVID-19 handling. However, the court said that it did not question the executive's choice in designing, framing and implementing the policy but only intended to ensure transparency and integrity through dialogue with all stakeholders involved. The Supreme Court's questions and Central Government's responses in this regard can be analysed as below.

- On the question of vaccination roadmap, the Central Government had stated that vaccination had started in a phased manner and target populations were covered under each phase. The government had also accepted the directive that vaccines should be made available for free to all irrespective of their economic status (vaccine being a public utility good and considering the welfare orientation of the state), should be centrally procured and allotted fairly among all states on the basis of percentage share of the target population. The government also acknowledged the fact that the entire

target population had not been covered under various phases and hence, two or more phases could be implemented together.

- The government also emphasised the need for a decentralised vaccination policy for the effective coverage of target groups. For this reason, it was considered that vaccines would be procured both by the Centre and the states. The vaccines procured by the Centre shall be administered for free to high priority groups and to people more than 45 years of age. Whereas the states and private hospitals may charge some amount for the procurement and administration of vaccines to people between the age of 18 years and 44 years.

- The Supreme Court revisited the vaccine procurement policy followed by the states. The court said that it would result in each state government negotiating separately with the manufacturer on supply schedule, delivery points, transportation etc. This would create a lot of chaos and ambiguity. It guided the Central Government to come forward and look into the process of providing vaccines to the states, allotment made to each state, period of delivery and population size to be covered under vaccination.

- Besides, there were other question raised by the Supreme Court seeking the government's response. It sought answers on vaccination plan for the people who have no access to digital resources for vaccine registration; whether walk-in vaccination will be available for the people with more than 45 years of age and comorbidities after implementation of revised vaccination policy; and, the measures taken by the governments at the Centre and state-levels to protect people who are giving on-ground services.

- It had also asked the governments about the status of implementation of INYAS programme for spreading awareness on COVID-19, and vaccination in the remote areas and at people's doorsteps to help them overcome vaccination hesitancy. The court also directed the governments to focus on vaccination and reduce formalities like identity proof, vaccine registration etc.

- The court directed the Central Government to procure 100% vaccines and distribute them equitably among the states. The court further added that governments at all levels should come together, work in alliance to ensure that there is no vaccine shortage for next six months, driving vaccine availability both in current and projected terms. Further, the government should set a timeline for vaccinating India's largest population share, people in the age group of 18- 44 years.

On vaccine pricing, the court said because India is a welfare state in both principle and practice, the government should not price the vaccines, rather, free vaccines should be administered to all irrespective of their economic status. The vaccination policy should be seen as a bridge for harmonising the spirit of 'nation first', developing trust in the government and ensuring transparency, fairness and accessibility in vaccine administration. Free vaccination would also underscore the spirit of Article 14 (equality before law) and Article 21 (right to life and personal liberty) of the Constitution of India. The court also asked the Central Government about the strategies for ramping up inoculation, studies on which revised vaccination was introduced and rationality of decentralised vaccine procurement in bringing down vaccine prices in competition (The Hon. Supreme Court of India 2021).

The court also questioned the sanctioning of financial assistance of Rs. 3000 crore and Rs.1565 crore to the two vaccine manufacturers, Serum Institute of India (Covishield) and Bharat Biotech (Covaxin), respectively for enhancing production and infrastructure, and other purposes. It further asked that whether these funds were actually made available by the state governments for vaccine procurement. Besides, there have been various interventions by the Supreme Court in government's COVID handling. The actions of the apex court had helped guide the Central Government along the right path for the better management of an unprecedented crisis.

Conclusion

The lacklustre approach followed in the world's largest vaccination programme showed how vital public health programmes were implemented in a sluggish and poor manner. COVID has hit almost all the countries and India was no exception. However, the poor health infrastructure and inappropriate pandemic preparedness were the most prominent among many reasons why India faced more difficulty than any other nation. Since the spread of the virus, the debates in the international spheres have centred around two topics, source and the reason of virus outbreak and the medicine-vaccine for saving humankind. With the development of vaccine and medicines, though the world has been assured of a remedy for the deadly Coronavirus infection, vaccine-nationalism and vaccine-diplomacy have circumscribed intellectual discourses. This paper has attempted to shed light on the roadmap of the vaccination drive in India carried out on a massive scale, politics around vaccination and the Supreme Court interventions shaping the Central Government's course of actions. The paper adds to the existing knowledge and advances the government's vaccination policy programme.

The vaccination roadmap has not been an easy one and was replete with multiple impediments. However, it is worth noting here that the government's vaccination

policy was also a result of the Supreme Court's action of seeking its response on the management of pandemic, and cannot be seen in isolation. The Indian judicial system has been the most vital component in maintaining an equilibrium in the governance by providing effective checks and balances. The guidance and directives issued by the Supreme Court in the form of judgments had helped show the path forward, dispel suspicions and impart wisdom when the government fumbled in its course of action.

The paper would also help in understanding the coordination between the executive and the judiciary. It also helps in understanding the policy measures adopted by the government to manage and mitigate the impact of COVID-19 crisis in the nation. The court clearly outlined that it did not question the executive's policy formulation, its objective was to only have a dialogue with the concerned stakeholders on vaccination policy of the government to ensure transparency and probity. The resilience of the nation was severely tested during the outbreak. However, the nation is recovering fast and bouncing back to normalcy. But the journey would be a difficult one to start afresh. The government institutions came together and ensured the welfare of the people during the unprecedented crisis.

This can finally be concluded that the epidemic preparedness of the nation was not in a good state. Further, the poor health infrastructure, unanticipated outbreak, casual attitude among the citizens and lack of government pro-activeness were among the main reasons why the COVID-19 outbreak had caused such a devastation in India. There has been much criticism and politics around vaccination in India. But it has ultimately helped benefit the citizens, ensuring them relief and well-being, apart from assuring them goods and services. But most importantly, it helped broaden the scope of government engagement. The important lessons pandemic management had taught us were the supremacy of nature and the need for human preparedness.

End note

Table 1. Vaccine Priority under National COVID Vaccination Program.

Table 2. Vaccination Phases in India.

Table 3. Vaccine requirements of India.

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Pandemic, Health and Sustaining Peace in Global South

Anju Helen Bara

Abstract

> *The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted the lives of the people and shattered the economies around the world. The fatality of the disease has compelled the world to go under complete 'lockdown'. In the midst of this severe crises, the world has been struggling to survive, sustain and to work together to combat this pandemic. Though in the last few months we have witnessed global anger and accusations against China, we have also seen increasing cooperation and solidarity among the nations to mitigate the alarming situation. This paper is an attempt to assess the role of India as an emerging global leader in building peace and creating paths and strategies to allay the negative impacts of COVID-19 in the Global South. Taking the framework of sustaining peace and outlining the strategies that have been taken by the Government of India, I try to look into the interrelations of health and sustaining peace in the current scenario. I argue that Indian State action through vaccine and health diplomacy has been not only a strategic move to establish itself as a 'global leader', but more than that it is a move to stay rooted to its culture and the idea of India as the 'peace leader'.*

Key Words: Health, COVID-19, India, Peace, Vaccine, Diplomacy

Introduction

Globalization has been both a boon as well as a bane for the modern civilization. It has increased the movement of people and goods worldwide. It has also led to unequal development, growing inequality and disparity, poverty and malnutrition that, in turn, have been taking their toll on humanity in many parts of the world. Many regions, particularly the Global South, have been encountering violence in one form or the other; political unrest and war have become an everyday affair in a few regions of the globe, and considering this grim backdrop, the outbreak and spread of any infectious disease as lethal as COVID-19 could prove dangerous for the entire humanity. Epidemics are a direct threat to the state since it threatens the peace, prosperity, stability and power of the state. The weak and uneven public health

systems worldwide has amplified the threat of infectious diseases and exposed the vulnerability of the people.

COVID-19 which originated from the Wuhan province of China has crippled the entire world. The disease that engulfed the nations has worsened food security, inequality, poverty, homelessness, unemployment and human rights abuses. It completely disrupted life and affected global economy. With the first wave subsiding in the second half of 2020, the world could not relax as it witnessed the second wave coming in early 2021. Most of the countries were badly affected and the mortality rates were very much high. Along with the United States, the United Kingdom and Europe, India has been one of the worst affected countries during the second wave.

The pandemic has caused uncertainty, economic breakdown and innumerable deaths in the world. This has also brought all the countries together under the aegis of the United Nations and the World Health Organisation (WHO) in the fight against the deadly virus. The global leaders made a series of strategic moves to control the spread of the disease. One such strategy has been vaccine diplomacy. Being one of the largest producers of vaccines in the world, India has taken leadership in providing support and assistance to the collective global action towards curbing the pandemic. Through these vaccination programmes everyone is trying to build new alliances and strengthen the existing ties. India's capacity to build its own indigenous vaccine is seen by the Western countries as a counter to the overpowering influence of China in the global politics. In this paper I am trying to examine the role of India as an emerging global leader in building peace and creating paths and strategies to combat COVID-19 in the Global South. This paper tries to understand the interrelations between health and sustaining peace against the backdrop of COVID-19 crisis.

Materials and Methods

For this systematic review, various literature and articles were collected from different sources such as Google Scholar search engine, Science Direct, Ebocus and PubMed were used to find the articles published in the last few decades. Key words and common terms related to the paper such as 'health diplomacy', 'international relations', 'COVID-19', 'peace and health', 'sustaining peace', 'WHO', 'India' were searched in various search engines. The search was restricted to India and its foreign relations, particularly in matters connected to health and COVID-19. All the relevant articles were assessed completely and the data were extracted.

Health and Sustaining Peace

The conventional definition of peace has been the 'absence of war'. Hence, the culmination of war/ceasefire has been the most appropriate solution to deal with

matters related to peace and stability. Like the principle of 'prevention is better than cure' in public health, the peace studies also focus on the 'prevention' principle. There has been a paradigm shift in the understanding of peace. Since the beginning of the 21st century there has been unprecedented attention to the global health diplomacy. The United Nations Human Rights Declaration (1948) states that, "peace, development, health, security and human rights are interlinked and mutually reinforcing." A similar pronouncement is made in the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) where the dimensions of peace (SDG-16 on peace, justice and strong institutions), health (SDG-3 on health and well-being) and development (SDG-17 on development) are interrelated. The constitution of WHO states that health is fundamental to the attainment of peace and security.

Johan Galtung's seminal work on 'positive peace' has given a broader perspective to peace by encompassing issues related to development and social justice. According to Galtung, positive peace symbolizes presence of cooperation, equity, equality, culture of peace and dialogue (Brauch, 2013). For Galtung, positive peace is the absence of structural violence. John Paul Lederach, in his work published in 1997, provided the concept of a 'peace building pyramid' to explain the three levels at which peace building works. I find this model pertinent to understanding how peace permeates and functions at the community level, and ultimately reaches the top level. Lederach in his pyramid identifies three levels which are as follows: level 1- top leadership, level 2 - middle-level leadership and level 3 - grassroots leadership which includes local leaders and local health workers. Level three is crucial since it is engaged in grassroots training, psycho-social work and reducing prejudices. Similar to the concept of Lederach, Hybrid theory of peace proposes the idea of local ownership of peace building (Reich, 2006).

The United Nations in its report 'The Challenge of Sustaining Peace' (2015) has suggested that sustaining peace involves prevention of conflict and it requires a fully-integrated approach at the strategic, policy and operational-levels. The UN Security Council and General Assembly adopted the landmark resolution on sustaining peace in 2016. Mahmood and Makoond (2017) have outlined certain important characteristics of sustaining peace as envisaged by the UN. According to them, sustaining peace is an endogenous process that requires a strong leadership at the national level. It requires infrastructures in the form of institutions, norms, attitudes and capacities at different levels of society. In both the peace and health studies, the focal point is individual and community and both the disciplines aim to provide a prevention mechanism to the individuals and communities who are suffering either from trauma, war or illness, and to take them to a space of resilience (Chattu et al. 2020).

Regional Cooperation and Leadership for promoting Health and Peace Development

Health is a public good. It is the responsibility of a country to provide health services and protect the lives of its citizens. Kickbusch et. al. (2011) defined global health diplomacy as the processes by which government puts health at the centre of their foreign policy negotiations. At the joint IMF-WHO-WTO-WBG press conference on June 1, 2021, the IMF managing director Kristalina Georgieva said that the global economic recovery could be boasted through vaccinating the world. Thus, according to her, vaccine policy is the new economic policy.

The European Union along with France initiated ACT-Accelerator as G20s response to global mechanism to ensure access to tests and treatments, and accelerate equitable distribution of oxygen and vaccines. The Global Health Summit organized by the European Union and Italy under the behest of G20 in May 2021 emphasized global efforts to control pandemics and also underscored that saving lives in an investment. The Rome Declaration of the Global Health Summit, 2021 focused on large-scale immunization, called for global involvement in sharing and equitable distribution of safe, effective and affordable vaccines. It accentuated global solidarity, multilateral cooperation and sharing of financial burden to promote universal global health.

William Long (2011), who undertook a study of regional disease surveillance network, concluded that to lessen the perils of infectious diseases, there has to be involvement of international actors, state actors and private actors, and together they all need to focus on identifying the problem, getting prepared, sharing information, coordination and monitoring. In the context of the Global South, we witness the emergence of South-South cooperation in health. Developing countries are the leaders and agents of development process. This model emphasizes cooperation and sharing of expertise between the developing countries.

There is a growing presence of countries from the Global South in the global health sector. Countries like Brazil, China, India, Kenya and Mexico are actively engaged in producing drugs and R&D projects. For instance, Brazil and India have developed bilateral partnership in R&D and they are also doing it through the forum of IBSA (Chaturvedi, 2011). "Spirit of trusteeship towards planet Earth will inspire us for a healthy and holistic lifestyle," said PM Narendra Modi in his speech at the G20 Summit, 2020, which, in turn, reflects the idea that peace is necessary for a healthy and inclusive life. India and China, as emerging economic powers, are trying to consolidate their positions internationally as a global power. There is a tussle for assuming leadership and it has become evident in the COVID-19 phase, during which India has taken the initiative to provide health facilities and drugs to other countries.

Whether India's leadership as the global provider of drugs and vaccine has definitely been a game-changer in the power dynamics of the Global South, is yet to be assessed. The next section discusses the Indian strategies in health diplomacy in the COVID-19 times.

Strategies of Health Diplomacy and Peace in India

Indian pharmaceutical industry is the third largest in the world (Chaturvedi, 2011). It produces 60 per cent of the vaccine and supplies affordable and low-cost generic drugs to the world. India's foreign policy is based on the principle of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' (World is one family). The vaccine *maîtri* initiated by India is a strategic move towards building a global image and harnessing geopolitical interest. It is seen as an approach of India to play a greater role in international relations and to assume leadership in this emerging new global order. This initiative came at a time when the international organisations such as World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations (UN) have miserably failed to control the pandemic. The Government of India initiated a diplomatic mission to supply vaccine under the 'vaccine *maitri*' programme. Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, in its statement said that India will contribute significantly to produce COVID-19 vaccine and is committed to partnering with other countries in the fight against COVID-19. The Indian government's commitment to provide vaccines to low-income countries and neighbouring countries has strengthened the efforts to achieve global vaccination coverage. Till now, the Government of India has sent vaccines to 95 countries either as grants or as commercial supplies (Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, 2021). India's neighbours such as Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Maldives and Nepal received vaccines. This initiative has helped India cement its strained relations with its neighbours, such as Bangladesh which received two million vaccine doses and Nepal that received one million doses by January 2021.

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India followed the mantra of '*Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas and Sabka Vishwas*' (being together, everyone's growth and everybody's trust). India joined hands with World Health Organisation (WHO) in its COVAX initiative which is a drive towards achieving equitable access to vaccine globally. Indian government has been working proactively since the outbreak of COVID-19. The Government of India organized SAARC and NAM meetings and a voluntary Emergency Fund was created for the SAARC countries. In the time of lockdown, the Prime Minister conducted many virtual meetings with his counterparts and reached out to those who were in need. This action shows the attitude of the Indian state of taking leadership, giving a helping hand and building solidarity and trust in the time of crisis.

From the start of the pandemic through the height of it, India has provided medical aid, food supplies, and technical and financial assistance to other countries such as Myanmar, Maldives and Kuwait apart from Latin America and Africa. Pant (2020) is of the opinion that India has come up as a responsible global stakeholder. The vaccine diplomacy under the leadership of PM Modi saw the visit of 60 foreign envoys to biotech companies based in Hyderabad (The Hindu, 2020). How do we read this move of the government? Definitely, India has long established itself as a 'pharmacy of the world', but with this move, it has sent an unequivocal message to the world that it is capable enough to lead the international community that is in distress. This can also be seen as a soft power measure by India to build trust in the conflict-prone areas, particularly the Indian subcontinent region. India is one of those countries that developed vaccine domestically and donated it to its neighbouring countries such as Afghanistan, Maldives, Mauritius, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka (Leo, 2021). As part of India's 'Neighbourhood First' policy, the neighbouring countries of India have received the biggest benefits of vaccine supply. According to the report from the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, (September, 2021), 6.47 million doses were provided as grants and around 16.5 million doses were supplied as commercial items. So far, India has exported doses of made-in-India COVID-19 vaccine to Morocco (70 lakhs), the UK (50 lakhs), Nigeria (40.24 lakhs), Brazil (40 lakhs), Myanmar (37 lakhs), Nepal (24.48 lakhs), Ethiopia (21.84 lakhs) and Sri Lanka (12.64 lakhs). Vaccine diplomacy is a good way to mend the strained relations with traditional neighbouring allies. This diplomatic move by the government is also seen as a masterstroke to curb the growing dominance of China in the Indian subcontinent.

After the first wave of COVID-19, India exported more doses of vaccines to other countries as a strategic foreign policy move as well as it's commitment towards global vaccination programme. However, with the sudden surge in the COVID-19 cases in the second wave, the country immediately suspended the export temporarily and focused on administering doses to its populace on an urgent basis. India now aims to vaccinate the entire adult population and increase the production of the indigenous vaccines. Only after its accomplishment, will the country resume its vaccine diplomacy. The vaccine export shall be resumed by India in October, 2021, said Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on 20th September 2021. He said that more than 100 crore doses would be produced from October to December 2021. He further stated that the supply of vaccines was needed to realize India's commitment towards the collective global fight against the pandemic (The Hindu, 2021).

As we have seen above, the leadership and the political will of the government play a vital role in maintaining peace in the time of a global health crises. But most

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of the studies in the area of peace and health have been focusing on conflict zones and wars. However, even during a crises like COVID-19 pandemic, establishing global peace and solidarity becomes important. To understand the peace mechanism during this health calamity, I am using the framework of 'positive peace' proposed by Johan Galtung and John Paul Lederach. During the pandemic we have seen international organisations like the United Nations, WHO and powerful allied groups like G20 exhorting the international community to act collectively in the war against pandemic. In this global effort to 'vaccinate all and save all', India came forward to supply its surplus vaccines to the countries that faced severe shortage of vaccines. Thus, India adopted and followed the process of 'positive peace' which encompasses equity, cooperation and global solidarity.

Fig 1: Local and Global Health and Peace Measures in Covid-19, India
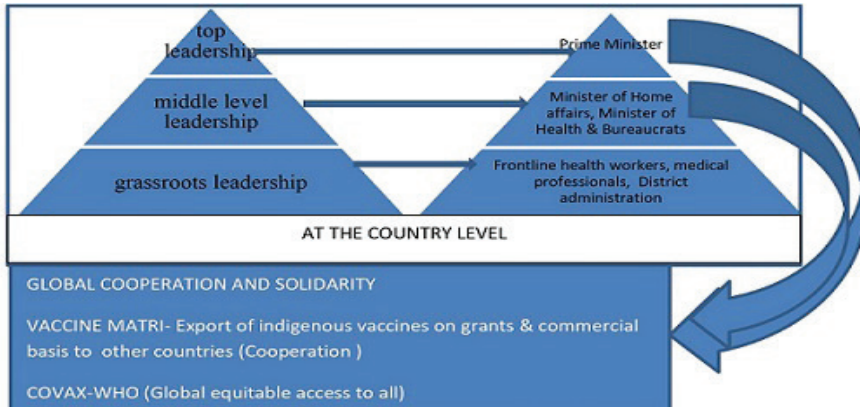
Source: *Constructed by the author*

If we apply the three-level peace flow process of Ledarach in the Indian COVID-19 control mechanism, we see that the top leadership is the chief and the most important decision maker. In the case of India, the role of the Prime Minister and his office was significant in taking decisions related to the domestic and global mitigation measures of COVID-19. The middle-level leadership was crucial in managing the COVID-19 mitigation action plan, providing logistics, meeting the demands, stock-taking and overall monitoring of the plan. It had the dual responsibility of attaining the commitment towards global partnership and giving equal weightage to domestic requirements. However, there were few setbacks like the migrant crises that was caused by the sudden lockdown, health system failures during the second wave and the delay in vaccinating the adults. Even after such

hitches, India kept its promise of exporting vaccines to its neighbours and other countries. The timely intervention of the government in commencing vaccination of its citizens was made possible through the preemptive action taken by the ministries and bureaucrats. The launch of web portal Cowin and app Aarogya Setu, database on COVID-19, unhindered vaccine supply and details of vaccine maître on the website of the government were some of the practical moves that helped build the trust of the people. Grassroots leadership was the most important level for the maintenance of peace and for ensuring safe health to all. The frontline health workers were the ones who were providing assistance and information to the people. Thus at the home front, India's leadership at the three levels were successful in carrying out vaccination drive and thus reducing the risk of pandemic. At the international level, the top two leadership have been crucial in ensuring peace and health to all through their global commitment, collaboration with international organisations, partnership with global initiative such as Covax and making vaccine diplomacy as the core of its foreign policy.

Conclusion

Export of Indian-made vaccine and drugs to other countries is one of the strategies adopted by India to establish itself as a global leader and to build solidarity with those nations. Moreover, as discussed above in the sustaining peace concept, it works at the local level. India, as part of its strategy to combat pandemic, has involved health professionals at the grassroots-level and utilized the services of SHGs in the production of PPE kits and N95 masks (these were also sent to other countries). One of the parameters of the sustaining peace is institution which includes norms and attitudinal change. The call for 'Make in India' and *Atmanirbhar Bharat* given by our PM has made it possible to develop indigenous vaccine, thus making us capable enough to serve humanity. It has helped bring about an attitudinal change among the people of India by proving that we can develop things indigenously and still be world leaders. Good health is essential for development and growth since it enhances human capability. In the present crisis, the need of the hour is a vaccine/ medicine to counter the lethal virus. The development of vaccine by India's biotech companies and the vaccine and health diplomacy pursued by India together have shown the country's willingness and capability to establish itself as the peace-keeper.

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Sino-Indian Border Dispute in Retrospect and Prospect: Mapping Issues and Emerging Trends

Keshab Chandra Ratha

Abstract

The Sino-Indian border dispute remains in a deadlock regardless of several rounds of bilateral talks over the years. China and India share the longest disputed frontier in the world, extending over 4,057 kilometres, with a contentious Line of Actual Control (LAC) across the Himalayas. There has been cooperation in some fields, but conflict has been occupying commanding position in their relations. The China Government is assessing its own readiness to deal with LAC- related issues. China refuses to scale down its aggression regardless of visual evidence. It indulges in acts of provocation. China had made two claims on what India deems as it own territory. One claim is Aksai Chin and the other is Arunachal Pradesh. Concerns over Dalai Lama and rebellion in Tibet at the instigation of India have continued to shape China's stance on the boundary issue. In addition, there has been infrastructure development in Tibetan plateau, force modernization and force superiority. The environment is one of strategic distrust intensified by Indian suspicion of Chinese intention. Despite a number of measures and initiatives taken, there is an unwillingness to resolve the border issue. The dynamics of the strategic and operational environment impinge on the bilateral relations to a large extent. The major thrust of this paper is to explore the historical legacy of the conflict, strong nationalistic sentiments of people of both the nations, deficit points, confidence building measures, changing dynamics and, above all, the dire necessity of a change in perception among the people through dialogue, consultation, reconciliatory approach and respect for each other's core interests for Sino-Indian rapprochement. The political leaders of both the nations need to understand major concerns by managing their differences properly and seek common development and a win-win situation.

Key Words: Economy, Border, Trade, Strategic trust, Co-Operative-Partnership

Tibet Factor

The Tibet issue is more central to the border dispute (Tsering 2011). Tibet was not a part of China. The imperialist rulers of China occupied it after a massive attack

in 1950 and transferred its suzerainty into sovereignty. Violating the Panchasheel Neeti framed by Nehru, China built a new road across the Aksai Chin in Ladakh through which it linked Tibet within the mainland. It occupied more than 25,000 sq. miles of Indian territories which, in turn, culminated in a sharp corrosion of relations between the two nations. It also claimed large areas of Indian territory in Ladakh and erstwhile NEFA. The Tibetan uprising and the consequent flight of Dalai Lama to India, in March 1959 created more complexity and misunderstandings. When China established new posts on the side of the border, the border dispute came to a head.

The British Indian Government and the then independent Tibetan government had signed a border treaty in 1914 (Shimla Accord) with the consent of the Republic of China (ROC). However, the border line separating Tibet and India, known as 'McMahon Line', was neither recognized by ROC nor by its successors. Hence, the Chinese had rejected outright the McMahon Line. It argued that Tibet had no right to enter into an agreement with India. They averred that if they accepted the McMahon Line as final, it would mean that Tibet that enjoyed some sort of an independent status at that time would go a step further and seek an 'independent Tibet' as mooted by Dalai Lama. In 1954, India signed an agreement recognizing Tibet as a region of China. A rebellion by Tibetan émigrés was broken out in Tibet which created suspicions in the minds of Chinese that India was conspiring with the rebels. Again India's decision to grant asylum to Dalai Lama added credence to these suspicions. The Chinese were convinced that India sought to make Tibet an independent buffer state. Concerns over Dalai Lama and the rebellion in Tibet at the alleged instigation of India continued to shape China's stance on the boundary issue.

China is well aware of the rift between Tibetan and Han ethnic groups and how concerned the world is about the unpleasant condition of Tibetan culture and religion. China understands the transportation problems of getting into and moving within Tibet. China has assumed a policy of demographic inundation of Tibet and its other minority areas by Han settlers. The PRC has also designed networks of roads, railways and infrastructure with the aim of uniting Tibet with mainland China. China neither wanted to make Tibet a province of it nor prepared to give it full autonomy and promise non-interference in the affairs of outer Tibet to be directly under Dalai Lama. The Chinese hesitated to sign the treaty due to disagreement over the exact location of boundary separating inner and outer Tibet. Tibet was India's neighbour for centuries and it was only after China annexed Tibet the problem arose. This problem cannot be solved very soon because Indian and Tibetans are not ready to re-write history. India still continues to support McMahon Line as final and conclusive (Rajinder, 2012).

India's Stance

By taking advantage of the unpreparedness of India's army, China attacked India in 1962 and occupied vast areas. During the Indo-Pak war of 1965, it helped Pakistan by supplying arms. China criticized India for conducting nuclear tests and the merger of Sikkim. Ignoring India's sensitivity, China secretly constructed a road through the disputed territory. There is an adversarial trade with China that will jeopardize India's national interests. China is not only supplying arms to India's neighbours but also providing aid and sanctuary to separatists and insurgents operating against India. On the Chinese side of India, the Chinese Government gave a helping hand to insurgent groups like the Nagas and Mizos in the North-east, as well as the Naxalbari movement in the north of West Bengal (Yang, 2007).

China has built a railway and an extensive road network in Tibet and Xinjiang, employing powerful weapons that include rocket artillery and battlefield support missiles. The Chinese have established new airfields and conducted four military exercises in Tibet in 2012 (Manoj, 2013). The Chinese actions are not easy to understand. They have publicly claimed Arunachal Pradesh as a part of their territory, refused visas to military officials serving in J&K, issued stapled visas to the residents of J&K, objected to developmental activities being undertaken by the state Government and questioned the visit of the Indian Prime Minister to Arunachal Pradesh.

China sought to create an issue whenever it was faced with domestic political uncertainty. The reason for Chinese motivation is apparent in "The Chinese Government's Defense White Paper" that states that China will back its diplomacy all the way by hard military power while dealing with issues involving sovereignty (Arvind, 2013). There is PLA presence in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir. It questions the legitimacy of India's control over the Ladakh region and uses Pakistan as a proxy by giving it nuclear technology and conventional weapons. China also contests India's attempts to acquire permanent membership in the UN Security Council. China refuses to scale down its aggression despite visual evidence. It demands that India must dismantle its apparatus near the Line of Actual Control. In June 1967, a diplomatic row flared up. China declared expulsion of two Indian diplomats from Beijing on spying charges. Stripping them of their diplomatic status, China opened a public trial.

Chinese Perspective

Arguing a strong historical backward China began emphasizing its claims on Arunachal Pradesh partially Tawang area. China's persistent demand for Tawang reflects two considerations; First, Tawang is its strongest bargaining chip for

territorial adjustments. Second, in exchange of its claim to Tawang, the Chinese evidently want to provide some tangible reassurance vis-à-vis Tibet (Srinath, 2009). India's tacit support for Khampa rebels in Tibet after 1956, provision of shelter to Dalai Lama and his Tibetan government in exile in Dharmasala after 1959, India's identification of completed Chinese road passing through Askai Chin region in 1958, India's expansion of defence perimeter and forward policy of stationing military outposts in disputed areas infuriated China to a considerable extent. Following the conflict in 1962, the relation of both the nations remained tormented for several decades. In 1986, China built up a military base and helipad in the area. In 1987, India granted statehood to Arunachal Pradesh of which China claims 11 of 15 districts. This had prompted both sides to deploy additional troops to the area. Besides this, the Indian Government stripped two Chinese diplomats of their diplomatic status and expelled them. On 16 June, 1967, some Chinese embassy personnel were attacked physically and wounded by Indian demonstrators in the vicinity of the Chinese embassy in New Delhi. In Beijing, Chinese Red Guards laid siege to the Indian embassy and closed all the roads that lead to the Indian embassy.

China claims around 90,000 sq. kms of Indian territory in Arunachal Pradesh and 2000 sq. kms in the middle sector of the Indo-China border. The so-called Arunachal Pradesh dispute is China's most thorny border dispute and the only one that has the potential to snowball into a full-scale conflict between the two nations. Each side beefs up its military and logistic capabilities in the disputed regions. When India made Arunachal Pradesh into state, tensions began to increase rapidly. Both sides tried to strengthen their capabilities in the area.

In 2009, the visit of Dalai Lama to the disputed territory of Tawang in the remote north-east Indians state of Arunachal Pradesh provoked protests from China (Southern Tibet). This incident whipped up nationalist sentiments in both countries prompting their respective governments to harden their position. During Sino-Indian border war of 1962, Chinese troops seized Tawang and held it under their control for more than a month. Now China is validating its claims. And India, in turn, is laying claims to more than 14,700 square miles of Chinese- controlled Askai Chin, near the Kashmir border. Talks between the two countries have been held regularly over the past four years but a successful resolution to the problems still eludes. The stand-off between the two nations continues with Chinese troops in Ladakh, continuing to camp 10 Kms within the Indian territory.

In recent times, border tensions came close to a war between the two rising Asian superpowers in 2017. China's military had warned India not to play down its resolve to hold a mountainous piece of land at the heart of a standoff between the two nations. The standoff surfaced after China started building a road near the Bhutanese border in the strategically sensitive Doklam Plateau area, contested by

both China and Bhutan. Both Bhutan and India expressed strong objection to the road building by China before Indian and Chinese soldiers were embroiled in a face-off along the disputed area. The troops later left their position and China discontinued the construction work (Dipanjan, 2017).

Confidence Building Measures

The evolution of confidence building measures contribute a lot in generating mutual trust between the two Asian giants based on pragmatism, creating a ray of hope for peaceful resolution of disputes in due course. There was a realization on the part of both China and India that peace and tranquility along the border is a necessary condition for the advancement of their relations. A positive attitude in taking the talks forward was called for with great urgency. In 1978, Atal Bihari Vaypayee, the then Indian External Affairs Minister, paid a visit to the PRC and officially reestablished diplomatic relations. This visit was reciprocated in 1981 by Huang Hua, the Chinese Foreign Minister. The 1988 visit of Rajiv Gandhi, the then Indian Prime Minister, helped infuse certain amount of bonhomie in bilateral relations again. Both sides agreed to widen bilateral relations and work towards a resolution of border disputes in a rational and just manner. The Prime Ministers of the two countries agreed to settle the boundary issues through the guiding principle of 'Mutual Understanding and Accommodation and Mutual Adjustment'. The two sides concurred to establish a Joint Working Group (JWG) on the boundary questions at the Vice-Foreign Ministerial level. Since 1990s, both sides have shown willingness to take steps to improve their overall relations. Both sides have implemented confidence building measures along the borders like troops reductions, advance notification of military exercises and steps to nurture mutually beneficial and stable relations. In 1993, Narasimha Rao and his Foreign Secretary J N Dixit took the initiative to work out a treaty with Beijing to maintain peace and tranquility along the Line of Actual Control on the India-China border. But the government that came to power next at the Centre slid back to 'Nehruvian inflexibility' and the conciliatory Rao/Dixit initiative was called off (Neville, 2003).

After more than 30 years of border tensions and impasse, high-level bilateral talks were held in New Delhi starting in February 1994 to promote "confidence-building measures" between the defence forces of India and China, and a new period of improved relations commenced. In November 1995, the two sides dismantled the guard posts almost facing each other along the border in Wangdong area, making the situation on the border areas more stable. During President Jiang Zemin's visit to India in November 1996, the Governments of China and India signed an agreement on Confidence Building Measures in the defence sector along the Line of Actual Control on the China-India border, which was, in fact, a significant step towards

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ensuring mutual trust between the two countries. These agreements provide an institutional framework for maintaining peace and tranquility in the border areas.

During Prime Minister Vajpayee's visit in 2003, the boundary talks were elevated to the political level from bureaucratic level. It was for the first time that India signaled its readiness to settle the disputes with a pragmatic approach. Since 2003, the Special Representatives of China and India have conducted 15 round of talks on the boundary disputes and have signed agreement on political parameters and guiding principles for the settlement of India-China boundary issues and reached an 18-point consensus on resolution framework. During this period, in June 2003, both the countries inked a memorandum of understanding on expanding border trade by including the Nathu La Pass also within the ambit of the border trade. Both sides carried out patrolling activity in the border areas. Transgressions of LAC were taken up through diplomatic channels.

During Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao's visit to India in April 2005, the two sides signed an agreement on political settlement of the boundary issue, setting guidelines and principles. In the agreement, China and India affirmed their willingness to seek a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable solution to the boundary issue through equal and friendly negotiations. In April 2005, a new framework for engagement, an agreement on 'Political parameters and guiding principle for the settlement of India-China boundary questions', that provided a new impetus to the attempts to normalise the relations, was signed between Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and Wen Jiabao, the Chinese Prime Minister, during the latter's visit to India. In 2006, PM Dr. Manmohan Singh pointed out to the visiting President of China that India could not make any concessions on Tawang, but would look into the possibility of 'territorial exchange' elsewhere in Arunachal Pradesh. Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao advocated 'sincerity and patience' in resolving the border dispute ahead of the 11th round of talks in Beijing in September 2007.

During the visit of Dr. Manmohan Singh to China in the month of October, 2013, both India and China have inked a comprehensive border agreement to avoid any stand-off in future. Both have agreed not to tail each other's patrol along the Line of Actual Control. The agreement also agreed to set up a hotline between the military headquarters of the two countries. The agreement was, in fact, an addition to the existing confidence-building measures such as flag meetings, joint military patrols, and periodic high-level interaction. Both New Delhi and Beijing accorded high priority to curbing hostile incidents along the Line of Actual Control. The signing of this agreement was meant to codify the good practices and experiences in dealing with important issues. The deals had sent a positive and powerful message that the two countries are committed to working together (The Hindu, 2003).

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi urged visiting Chinese President XI Jinping to resolve the boundary dispute after holding talks in New Delhi on 18 September 2014 that lasted much longer than the stipulated 90 minutes. Both leaders agreed that peace along the border constitutes the foundation of the trust and relation between the two nations. Modi called for an early clarification of the 'Line of Actual Control' which presently separates the two countries. He said if this happened, "we can realize the potential of our relations."

The Doklam standoff of 2017 was seen as one of the most serious instances of border tensions between the two countries. The 20th round of Special Representative (SR) talks on boundary dispute held in Delhi, the first such meeting since the Doklam standoff, discussed the LAC issue in detail. The two sides made persistent efforts to narrow down differences over different perceptions of LAC which, in turn, lead to transgressions. While the Indian side at the talks was led by Ajit Doval, National Security Advisor and SR, the Chinese side was led by Yang Jiechi, State Councillor and Member of the CCP Politburo. The talks that remained positive focused on realising the full potential of the Closer Developmental Partnership between the two countries. The Special Representatives undertook a comprehensive review of the earlier rounds of talks and reached an agreement that an early settlement of the boundary issue would serve the fundamental interests of both the countries. The two nations re-emphasized their commitment to achieve a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable solution to the India-China boundary dispute at an early date. The two sides agreed that since the final resolution of the boundary question is still pending, it is necessary to maintain peace and tranquility in the border areas. In this regard, the Special Representatives exchanged ideas on various confidence building measures. The two SRs underlined the need for the two countries to build on their convergences, while seeking mutually acceptable resolutions of their differences with due respect to each other's sensitivities, concerns and aspirations. A hotline between the two central military headquarters and the annual army exercise were on the agenda. Prime Minister Modi said that a strong India-China relationship assumes immense significance not only for the mutual benefit of the people of both the countries, but also for the region and the whole world. The Wuhan meeting resulted in both countries reaching an understanding to increase 'strategic communications', de-escalate borders and provide strategic guidance to their respective armies to manage the situation on the borders, and enhance confidence building measures (CBMs). In Mamallapuram Summit also, border issues were discussed and it was decided that the Special Representatives will continue their talks to arrive at a mutually-agreeable framework, which will be premised on Political Parameters and Guiding Principles that have been concurred by the two sides in 2005. And it was also agreed that work would continue on additional Confidence

Building Measures to achieve this. A stable and peaceful border region was considered as the prerequisite for both the countries to focus on their internal socio-economic advancement. This is probably the reason why both countries have managed to set up various stabilization measures to effectively manage their border disputes through negotiations (Hongzhou, 2013).

What is lacking?

The strategic mistrust between the two nations, caused by the 1962 conflict, was the largest obstacle in advancing their mutual relations. The area in dispute is small and remote, but the geopolitical stakes are high. The threat to their borders was a threat to their very statehood which, in turn, led to an identity crisis of the state. This situation incited strong nationalist sentiments in both India and China, which, by September 1962, had spiraled to a point wherein military engagement between both sides became inexorable. The 1962 border conflict was, in fact, a clash of nationalism over the Himalayan frontiers (Yang, 2007). The inadequate LOCs, infrastructure and the continuous deployments along the borders have exerted financial pressure on the overall defence preparedness of both the countries. The increased war-waging potential and the established intent to use force to settle the border dispute made the situation susceptible to conflict and sudden escalation. Any conflict along the LAC has the potential to escalate into a serious major conflict and thereby lead to a second major Sino-Indian conflict. The first and foremost cause of border dispute is the absence of a formal and mutually agreed Line of Actual Control (LAC) to separate the jurisdictions under the control of their armies. The perceptions of the LAC differ at many places. In some places it might vary by just a few meters, and elsewhere by several kilometers.

India's decision to advocate an inflexible policy on border negotiation and China's rejection of the McMahon Line unsurprisingly led to both countries acting independently along their common frontiers, Aksai Chin and the NEFA region. Both sides are basically suspicious of each other. The domestic politics prevents both sides from making any concessions. Domestic politics plays the most important role in the dispute, and neither side would be able to make concessions without provoking their domestic audience. Although China is not a democracy like India, the Chinese Government is careful not to incite public outrage as border issues are very sesitive ones. Moreover, there are still impediments in arriving at a complete settlement of the dispute. One obstruction is India's 1962 parliamentary resolution. At the height of the border conflict, on 14 November, 1962, the Indian Parliament passed a unanimous resolution stating that India would get back every inch of territory lost to the Chinese. Hence, the concession of Aksai Chin would tantamount to a betrayal of India's national integrity on account of this parliamentary resolution, which has

been neither invoked nor repealed. Efforts on the part of the Indian Government are still in the pipeline to encourage public opinion in favour of an amicable settlement of the border dispute rather than through the means envisaged by the Parliamentary resolution of 1962 (Yang Lu, 2007).

China's nationalist tabloid 'Global Times' opined on July 5, 2017, that ''This time we must teach New Delhi a bitter lesson." An article on the PLA's English-language website, China Military Online, has warned that "if a solution isn't reached through diplomatic or military communication or the issue isn't handled properly, another armed conflict... is not completely out of the question." Chinese officials have also warned India that it should learn ''historic lessons'' from its humiliating defeat in the 1962 war that both countries fought over the border issue. In response, Indian Defense Minister Arun Jaitley reported that "India in 2017 is different from India in 1962," referring to its improved military strength (Mohan, 2017).

The two countries are in the grip of strong nationalist sentiments bordering on jingoism, complicating prospects of successful resolution of such long-standing disputes. Discussions are heavily influenced by an aggressive nationalist narrative driven by social media. Both countries maintain that these are issues having their roots in history and hence, difficult to manage in the short or medium-term and are best left for the future. They consider obduracy and historical short-sightedness as the stumbling blocks that prevented the successful resolution of the dispute. In recent years, the border issue has become comparatively less significant as the two countries have focused their attention on other domains of their bilateral relations like trade, energy, and even military ties, yet an unsettled border dispute has the potentials to upset the smooth sailing of bilateral relations. In addition, it will prevent the progress of joint efforts in counter-terrorism operations or military exercises in the border areas and the full-scale expansion of border trade. The border dispute has caught worldwide attention due to its impact on regional and global power patterns as well as on great ideological debate among the communist countries (Purushottam, 1965).

Changing Perspectives

China and India constitute the world's two most-populated countries, with a combined population of nearly three billion. But the contested border region between the Asian giants is thinly populated. Arunachal Pradesh, which shares a 1,129km (700 mile) border with China, forms part of the Eastern sector. The state, which is claimed by Beijing, was at the centre of a full-scale border war in 1962 when India lost some territory to China. The Chinese state that the entire area in Arunachal Pradesh claimed by it is part of Tibet (South Eastern Tibet) that they have ruled undisturbed for over 700 years. Since Tibet is an integral part of China, this entire

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claimed area in Arunachal Pradesh belongs to them. The Chinese, in addition to claiming the entire area, state that they do not recognize the McMahon Line. India's claims are supported by recorded history such as that of Ahom Burunjis, British historians and the Tibetans, and local folklore. However, China has been claiming that area as its own, and recently they even started to claim the entire Arunachal Pradesh as theirs.

The Tawang Tracts stand for Tawang and West Kameng districts of Arunachal Pradesh. The importance of this area stems from the fact that the sixth Dalai Lama was born in Tawang in the 17th century. The Tawang Tract with Se La as the dividing line is claimed to be the fiefdom of the Dzongpens (high officials) of the Tsona district in Tibet. In recent days the Chinese have revealed their true intentions by staking claim to Bhutan's Sakteng wildlife reserve area, which falls just below the Tawang Tract. They are looking for a direct passage from occupied Tibet to the Assam valley. The entire Tawang Tract, being south of the McMahon Line, is clearly part of India; and that the Tibetan Government in Exile and the Dalai Lama have openly stated that Tawang is a part of India (John, 2019). It is a place having religious importance for the Tibetans, Monpas and Tagins of Arunachal Pradesh. It is a site of pilgrimage since early times and is claimed by China. The ridge in the shape of a dagger is surrounded by the Subansiri River and the Yume Chu stream. It is a pilgrimage used to be conducted once in every 12 years, starting from Chosam in Tibet. Today, the pilgrim's journey is not allowed since the McMahon Line divides Takpa Siri and the valleys of Arunachal Pradesh. In the Siang Sector, whilst not yet specifically claimed as Tawang has been, the entire Siyom valley, including Mechuka and Manigong, and from the border up to Gelling in the Siang Valley, has some population of people of Tibetan origin similar to Tawang and are again considered by the Chinese to be fiefdoms of Tibet. The Gompa at Mechuka is also regarded to be a sacred shrine of the people of Monpa/Tibetan origin, Adis and Sikhs as it is claimed to have been a resting place of Guru Nanak during his visit to Tibet. In fact, a gurdwara has also been constructed near Nishangong/Tongkhorlaen route to Yorlung which was also considered to have been a resting place of the Guru. The shrine also has cultural significance. However, the Tibetans believe these areas are a part of India and are well south of the McMahon Line. The Adis, Nishis and Apatani tribes are of the view that China's demand on Arunachal Pradesh is not backed by any historical evidence. In fact, representatives of the Adi and Galo tribes asserted that the major cause of China's aggressive stance on the Arunachal Pradesh issue was the regular visits of Dalai Lama to Tawang. They also held the belief that Chinese insecurity over Tibet is directly linked to Dalai Lama's presence in India.

The Dibang Sector, the least inhabited region of Arunachal Pradesh, is a turbulent zone where on account of cartographic errors the Chinese staked claim to

a fairly large area on both sides of the Kaila Pass. In the Lohit Sector, the Chinese lay claim to, along with the land up to Walong, the Diphu Pass itself on the watershed. But this is disputed by India and the area is under Indian occupation. Moreover, the area from the border up to Walong also has a considerable population of the people of Tibetan origin and hence, in all likelihood would be claimed by China at some stage on the lines of Tawang (John, 2019).

The Central sector is the shortest with a distance of 89 kms (55 miles). In early May, fights broke out at Nathu La Pass in the Indian state of Sikkim between Indian and Chinese soldiers. The sector remained largely peaceful but it was the site of a weeks-long dissension in 2017 at the Doklam Plateau, which is at the tri-junction of India, China and Bhutan. The Himalayan region of Ladakh, which was carved out of Indian-administered Kashmir last August, and the border regions of Himachal Pradesh constitute the Western sector of the India-China border. The soldiers of both the countries clashed with each other in Pangong Tso Lake, Galwan Valleyj, Depsang plains, and Demchok in Ladakh after PLA soldiers built bunkers and brought armoured trucks and artillery. Hundreds of soldiers of both the countries remain 'face-to-face' in the Ladakh region.

In the last decade or so, India has begun strengthening its infrastructure along the border, building roads and airports near the LAC with more than half a million Indian forces stationing there to put down a decades-long armed rebellion. The two Asian neighbours have come to blows over control of the Muslim-majority region since independence from the British colonial rulers in 1947. A small portion of Kashmir, called Aksai Chin, is in the hands of China.

India and China share one of the world's longest land borders, where conflict occurs every now and then since the bloody border war of 1962. During the latest face-off in the border area in 2017 troops clashed with each other in and around the disputed Doklam plateau, a thin strip of land at the tri-junction between India, China and Bhutan. Despite the fact that it is not a part of Indian territory, the area is adjacent to the 'chicken's neck', a strategic corridor that acts as a main artery between Delhi and its far northeastern states. Bhutan accused China of building a road inside its territory, which Beijing refused to recognize. India then interfered backing the Bhutan's claims, which then culminated in a long deadlock which witnessed the People's Liberation Army conducting live-fire drills on the border.

In the last ten years, three such incidents had happened; at Depsang in northern Ladakh in 2013, at Chumar in eastern Ladakh in 2014, and at Doklam on the Sino-Indian-Bhutanese border in 2017. They all started as local issues but evolved into major crisis demanding political intervention to find a solution. A solution to the scuffle in May, 2020, which caused 11 soldiers to be admitted to hospitals on both sides, however, was found by the next day after "dialogue and interaction at the local

level". Most of the incidents involving military perosnnel were attributed to the confusion caused by the unmarked border. According to some analysts, the reasons for the incursions were totally China-centric. They include its imminent economic collapse, Beijing's problems in Hong Kong and Taiwan and President Xi's inclination to impress upon his domestic audience. For India, the present crisis on the China-India border is really grave. It is not just because it is unlike a routine accidental border conflict or on account of the unparalleled high levels of tension and physical violence at several locations along the disputed LAC. The standoff also makes a critical turn in China's strategic calculations in South Asia (Antara, 2020).

The Chinese forces are stationed along the border in order to defend the new physical infrastructure like roads, bunkers, and barracks which are in the process of being built. But on some other occasions, they seek to set up a new presence across critical avenues of access to both sides. In almost all cases, the Chinese incursions are relatively not deep, on the order of 1 to 10 kilometers west of their routine operating areas. New Delhi finds Chinese troops stationed on territories the Government of India has considered as its own till now. These incursions, as a result, cannot be played down as trivial for the reason that in the murky post-colonial politics of South Asia, all the involved states have fought acrimonious battles in the past over minor portions of territory. In view of the disputes on what the territorial boundary between the two countries should be, any permanent Chinese presence up to the limits of the area claimed by it distinctly smacks of an incursion into the Indian territory and shows an intolerable disregard to New Delhi.

The first Chinese incursion in Barahoti took place in June 1954. The ink was still wet on the agreement when the Chinese made wrongful entry into the area. The irony was that it was China who found fault with the ''incursion of Indian troops'' into Indian territory. In a way, Barahoti incident could be understood in light of the fact that Indian negotiators had failed to notify Tunjun-la as a border pass in the 1954 Tibet agreement. This provided a chance for the Chinese to demand the Barahoti plains, south of the pass. In April 1958, for the first time, officials of India and China joined together to sort out the issue. But as an unnecessary compromise, India agreed that Chinese "unarmed" patrols could visit the place in summer till the matter was decided. Beijing never showed deferential regard to that gesture by India and frequently sent armed soldiers to Barahoti. In fact, there are five "disputed" areas in the central sector which spreads across Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand: Chuva-Chuje, Shipki-la, Nilang-Jadhang, Barahoti-Lapthal and Lipulekh.

After the passage of 62 years, the Chinese still cross Tunjun-la and walk into the desolate area. Then there is the area south of Shipki-la (pass) in Kinnaur district of Himachal Pradesh. This is another dubious claim by China, having no historical, cartographical or geographical support. The claim for the time being is not reiterated.

But with Beijing still not ruling out staking a claim to Tajikistan's Pamir region and Vladivostok (and, of course, Ladakh), it could well be revived. It is an intrusion into Indian territory, without any good reason as it was specified in the 1954 agreement, which meant that north of the pass was Tibet and south India. In the 1960 talks, China included two more "disputes" — Lapthal and Sangchamalla, areas adjoining Barahoti.

The irony is that these claims do not take into consideration any of the factors that help distinguish a boundary — watershed, river, customary routes, grazing rights etc. Due to this reason, it is difficult to talk with China as it is guided by its own changeable rules, giving highest priority to its own interests (Claude, 2020). Inhabitants of villages in the remote districts of Kinnaur along with those of Lahaul and Spiti have given an account of Chinese stepping up road-building and construction activities along the border. It does not matter whether China had staked any illegal claims in the region earlier or not.

China treats Tibet as the backdoor for its expansion and dominance in Asia. This difference in approach to the Tibet issue has become the root of the Sino-India contention. Both India and China are well aware of the geostrategic importance of Tibet and the strong link their strategic interests has with Tibet. If Tibet is considered as the 'core issue' as far as Beijing's national interest is concerned, it is equally very important for Indian national security. China's expansionist approach to Tibet now threatens India. Although India and China are not engaged in an open war, the conflict between them has reached a new level, which is unprecedented.

In fact, Chinese aggressiveness towards India is manifested in the form of threat to use military force along the LAC, a development that has its roots in the pre-pandemic days. Beijing's responses indicate that Chinese anxieties have intensified since the August 2019 when India decided to change the status of Ladakh, which was part of the autonomous state of Jammu and Kashmir before, by converting it to a Union Territory directly governed by New Delhi. This Indian decision was dictated entirely by domestic exigencies. The only international dimension of the decision was an unequivocal message that it sent to Pakistan that any 'prospect' of secession is a closed chapter and that all the parties involved in J&K conflict would have to resign to the reality that Jammu and Kashmir will remain an integral part of the Indian Union.

Senior Indian policymakers regularly underscored that their August decision involved only the political question of Jammu and Kashmir's relation with the rest of India. This action did not in any way presuppose the territorial issues concerning the boundaries with China. Beijing, however, was unconvinced by these reassurances and, in collusion with Islamabad, directed its efforts to mobilise international opposition to New Delhi's decision. However, these efforts were unsuccessful, because the United States was supportive of India. It will never be known with

certainty whether this defeat had helped bolster China's inclination to penalize India in other ways or had it helped intensify Chinese resolve to take control of disputed territories that were long cherished by it. However, India's domestic decision has helped effectively counter Chinese territorial designs and jeopardize attempts to raise the issue at key international forums such as the UN Security Council.

But China's severe resistance to the change of Ladakh's status, something that received only passing attention up till now, has set the stage for the militaristic power play that is now in the offing along the LAC. Moreover, New Delhi's criticism of Beijing's failure to help contain the international spread of the coronavirus and the Indian decision to restrict Chinese investments in line with similar global sentiments sharpened China's resentment and beefed up the prospects of a counter attack. The increasing acquisition of claimed territories along the Sino-Indian border exhibits similarities to the pattern Beijing resorted to elsewhere such as the South China Sea. From the early 1990s until as recently as the 2018 Summit in Wuhan between Xi Jinping and Narendra Modi, a series of agreements and understandings have been arrived at. These measures were meant to curb violent conflict at the LAC in order to provide political authorities on both sides an opportunity to decide the border dispute through negotiations, which would, in turn, permit the demarcation of a single common boundary between the two contenders.

Until such an outer boundary of a two-dimensional figure could be concurred upon, patrols on both sides were expected to continue in the undefined gray zone. It is especially a narrow space where neither country had a permanent presence and threats of physical obstruction by the opposite sides were absent. While Chinese patrols often entered into new areas, although within the limits of the border claimed by them, Indian forces rarely reached the limits of their own border lines. While the negotiated agreements helped occasionally to calm down tensions, they were unsuccessful in bringing about any permanent harmony for the simple reason that they did not spell out the actual positions that each side occupied relative to their claimed boundaries. As a result, Chinese patrols slowly expanded the sphere of their operations, extending their reach into territories that they had not patrolled before and where there were no settled Indian populations. These tactics have helped China to stake a claim to more territories during boundary negotiations.

India is now very much trying to catch up with Chinese, and its tireless efforts to improve infrastructure for land and air travel along the Himalayan borders have drawn the attention of China. Beijing, on the other hand, seeks to oppose these efforts in order to retain its current advantages for an indefinite period. By retaining control over new segments of Indian territory, China aims to change the reality on the ground either to improve its bargaining power in future negotiations, to simply annex territories for political or military reasons, or to put pressure on India to bring to a

halt the ongoing infrastructure modernization that could be to the advantage of it in any future conflict.

The blueprint of Chinese patrolling since the late 1990s indicates that Beijing seeks to ultimately control the entire Aksai Chin plateau. China has been demanded this region as a rightful due since the 1950s, but as the Sino-Indian rivalry intensified after the Cold War, Beijing has left no stone unturned to gradually bring small fragments of the disputed frontier under its real authority. The term de facto authority itself is not enough in this context because of the absence of maps that clearly define which areas each side actively control. China's appropriation of territory over a period of time cannot be either contested or contained except through physical obstruction by the Indian side.

On this calculation, Chinese actions have been singularly malicious even if both countries have long committed to exchanging maps describing their presence in the disputed territories as the first step toward a boundary settlement. Beijing has thus constantly refused to abide by its obligations detailed in agreements. In large measure, this is because accepting any Indian map carrying the locations of Indian presence would make it hard for China to demand that territory in future negotiations. What China actually look for is the annexation of the entire disputed borderlands merely on the strength of its claim that it once had control over them.

The most recent Chinese incursion in the Ladakh region left India only with awful choices. Beijing has moved into disputed territories that did not witness a continuous Chinese presence as recently as January 2020. China's first-mover advantage has now put India in an awkward position wherein it has to try to negotiate a Chinese withdrawal from these new occupations, which is an unlikely prospect especially in areas like Pangong Tso, where China is forcibly finishing a motorable road, and in the Galwan Valley, where it is allegedly building bunkers and barracks. Even if China pulls back as the result of successful Indian negotiations, the newly-built infrastructure would remain there.

The regrettable truth is that China can now hold on to its new acquisitions unless India chooses to eject out Chinese troops by force or decides to go for a tit for tat by taking over other pockets in contested territory in a similar manner where it has a tactical advantage. But such a situation involve danger for the reason that China could obstruct such Indian actions making use of its significant resources already moved into position for military action at key locations along the front, in which case the stage would be set for possibly a wider conflict.

The current Sino-Indian border crisis has revealed that China has little respect for India's persistent efforts to maintain status quo along the two countries' disputed frontiers or for New Delhi's cautious efforts to avoid the appearance of balancing

against Beijing. Rather, treating India's internal actions regarding Jammu and Kashmir as an incitement, China has taken control of new areas along the Himalayan border. By doing so, it has compelled India to join the rest of Asia in figuring out how to deal with the latest twist in China's salami slicing tactics which now distinctively marks its role as a rising power (Ashley, 2020).

The events in Galwan Valley need to be a wake up call for India to reactivate its South and East-Asia policy. This is a chance for India to organize its interests much more strongly with the US as a principal strategic partner. India should also infuse more energy in its relations with Japan, Australia, and the ASEAN. Time has also come for India to ponder again its stand on joining the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership. To withdraw from economic involvement with China, and build the capacities and capabilities it needs in manufacturing, and in supply chains networks closer home, India has to consider evolving long-term strategies. The context of changing relations with China has compelled India to reassess the depth of its involvement with other countries. In every aspect, engagement with China calls for a re-look. And that also includes an increased level of engagement in South Asian neighbourhood.

In recent years, Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan and his predecessors have sought to expand its ties with China through initiatives such as the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, coupled with Chinese funding for Gwadar Port and other economic initiatives. That has resulted in Pakistan scaling down it criticism of China's for its alleged oppression of Muslims, such as the million-plus Uighurs and other minorities. At the same time, Pakistan's cooperation with the United States has lost its earlier vigour.

This has, in turn, facilitated the firming up of relations between the United States and India, though there are also other factors that helped achieve it. Since the 1990s, India has been slowly gravitating towards the West. In the early 1990s, India initiated ambitious economic reforms, more radical than those prescribed by the International Monetary Fund. The two key areas which saw drastic reforms were domestic business and international commerce. Business in India between 1947 and the early 1990s was subject to 'License Raj', the cumbersome regulations that caused starting even a small business very difficult. On the other hand, China, which had liberalized its economy to a certain degree in the 1980s, was in an advantageous position. India choosing free markets was a major transformation. It showed that the country was prepared to discard failed economic philosophies it had followed and embrace the Western/American economic model. As India began registering high rates of growth, it became a suitable competitor for China. This happened along with India strengthening its relations with Chinese adversaries and American allies such as Vietnam and Japan.

The United States now assumes a significant position in the Sino-Indian relation. In recent years India has sought to beef up its ties with Washington, driven largely by an apprehension of Chinese economic and political influence in the region, particularly its presence in the ports of neighbouring countries. As the Chinese are found to be more firmly and aggressively positioned in the Indian Ocean region, India has been striving persistently to locate an ally to build up deterrence (Anik, 2020).

Need of the Hour

Now is the time to test the wisdom of the political leaders in evolving a mutually acceptable solution. There is a need for change in the perception of the people of both nations. An opportune moment has come for both the nations to understand that unsettled borders can only lead to lingering discord among the nations. The exact border alignment between China and Arunachal Pradesh can be decided by joint surveys and consultations. China also dropped the hint that it would recognize the McMahon Line in return for India giving up claims over Askai Chin. It is a better option for India. If this give and take approach is accepted, there is a possibility of settling this long-lasting border dispute which generated so much misunderstanding between the two nations. It is the right time for the people of both the nations to take a rational and reasonable approach considering their long-term interests.

There is a dire need to work out a common alignment and consultation mechanism for LAC in a time-bound manner. This will ensure peace and help reduce the occurrence of border disputes. Both sides should move forward with negotiations in an unwavering manner for keeping peace and tranquility and not letting the border dispute impact bilateral relations. As long as both nations stick to the process of peaceful negotiations considering the well-being of the people of both the countries, it will be easier to find reasonable, fair and mutually acceptable solution to the problem. Finding a mutually acceptable agreement also requires patience, perseverance and a friendly and favorable atmosphere. The political leaders of both nations should understand and respect each other's core national interests and major concerns, and try to manage their differences properly. India-China relations should be seen in the Asian and global context in order to perceive the strategic opportunities in the relations. The accommodating and positive partnership in various fields will enable them to make the 21st century an Asian Century. It is also very vital to be mindful of the problem at hand and to devise policies that seek to deal with differences often caused by conflicting claims. This is particularly important in an age of nuclear weapons where careful thought and deliberation are nery much required to ward off potentially terrible repercussions. A sound China–India relation makes both winners while a confrontational one makes both losers. The crucial basis of a healthy relation is the development of mutual trust between the two countries

that can be achieved only through institution-building at the bilateral and multilateral-levels. A peaceful and settled boundary between the two Asian giants will help ensure national security, political stability and economic development.

To sum up, it can be said that the border conflict between China and India cannot and should not be understood on its own. Rather, the dispute has to be looked into carefully taking also into consideration several other factors that go on to define bilateral ties. Beijing and Delhi should have adequate incentives and political will to control the harmful impact of the border dispute, at least in the near future.[22] In the present world order, multilateral cooperation is of crucial significance, especially since both India and China give high priority for promoting multi-polarity. Their multilateral cooperation can move ahead through their contribution to the multilateral organisations, particularly at the regional level, such as the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) or the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). Multilateral forums are ideal platforms for dialogue among nations and for maintaining a balance between them. Therefore, problems of India and China arising out of border disputes that still remain unresolved through bilateral channels may be taken up at a multilateral level as a means to find a solution through the involvement of other countries. Moreover, both countries acknowledge that the non-traditional security issues of the region, such as terrorism, transnational crime, piracy, natural disasters and other challenges, can be tackled only through joint efforts and regional co-operation. One glaring example is the sub-regional co-operation between China, India, Burma and Bangladesh, which focuses on economic co-operation and non-traditional security issues, such as narcotics. On a global level, there are broad common interests between China and India, such as reform of international financial institutions, continuation of an open international trade system and the need to deal with the challenge of climate change. As developing countries, both China and India can cement their collaboration at global institutions to protect their national interests. Their strategic partnership has already made a great impact, especially on the North-South relations. Both sides must now look forward to a rewarding future, drawing lessons from the mistakes of the recent past. A complete strategy in this regard will involve military, diplomatic and political realms. And diplomatic channels should always be kept open as it is very essential in the current situation.

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China's BRI Project and its Implications in South Asia

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The Belt Road Initiative (BRI) is one of the efforts made by the People's Republic of China (PRC) to enhance its global image and to keep Beijing as the centre of the Asian neighbourhood. It can also be viewed as PRC's bridge to reach out to South Asia and a pathway to expand its sphere of influence. As the major hub along the lucrative Indian Ocean trade lanes, the South Asian region is a significant one for the BRI and for the PRC. Additionally, the region is important to PRC's foreign affairs because South Asia is home to both the most potential regional rivals and the closest partner nations. As we examine South Asia's regional characteristics and its overall significance to the PRC's foreign policy, the relevance of this initiative becomes clear. The geographic makeup of South Asia has a significant impact on the dynamics of the region's politics and international relations. Additionally, this topographical pattern is crucial in determining the intra and inter-regional connectedness of the area, which the PRC emphasises through the BRI.

The Belt Road Initiative

The People's Republic of China (PRC) launched the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) as a plan to connect Asia with Africa and Europe through land and sea networks in an effort to strengthen regional integration, boost commerce, and foster economic progress. The concept of BRI was first introduced by PRC's president XI Jinping in 2013 during his official visit to Kazakhstan. This strategy was unveiled as the Silk Road Economic Belt by Xi in an effort by the PRC to revive the old and ancient maritime silk routes to help firm up its position in the modern trade realm. Xi Jinping who was inspired by the idea of the Silk Road, a network of trade routes that connected China to the Mediterranean across Eurasia for millennia and was first proposed by the Han Dynasty 2,000 years ago, envisioned it as a new initiative to make PRC as the centre of the world once again.

The modern day vision of BRI comprises two aspects; a land route that connects China to South East Asia, South Asia, Central Asia, Russia, and Europe is known as

the Silk Road Economic Belt and a maritime route known as the 'Maritime Silk Road' that links China's coastlines with Southeast and South Asia, the South Pacific, the Middle East, Eastern Africa and Europe. BRI achieves this connectivity and interconnectedness with these regions through large-scale constructions and developmental projects such as railroad tunnels, skyscrapers, railroads, highways, bridges, airports, dams, and coal-based power plants. The economic strategy employed by PRC in materialising BRI involves large-scale economic support to participating countries. The BRI was incorporated into the Constitution of PRC in 2018, making it an integral part of PRC's foreign engagements. It also extends its purview to other sectors of human life, including telecommunication networks and also prioritises its engagements in policy coordination, infrastructure connectivity, unimpeded trade, financial integration and connecting people. Currently, nearly 149 countries are engaged with various aspects of BRI. According to World Bank estimates, BRI can increase trade flows in 149 member countries by 4.1 per cent and lower the cost of international commerce by 1.1 to 2.2 per cent, and increase GDP growth in developing East Asian and Pacific nations by an aggregate of 2.6 to 3.9 per cent. The project is expected to complete by 2049 and it is celebrated as "a bid to enhance regional connectivity and embrace a brighter future" by the Xi administration.

In order to protect its borders on the Asian continent, PRC sees the BRI as being of utmost importance. It shares land borders with 15 countries, some of which are unstable, like Afghanistan, while others, like Russia, are looking to form new alliances with other countries that oppose the US. PRC's 'periphery diplomacy'— partnerships in trade and infrastructure with the nations along this lengthy land border — is seen as being facilitated by investments in the Belt and Road projects. The Belt and Road Initiative should not be viewed as a single, cohesive plan but rather as a patchwork of bilateral agreements negotiated on various terms. This is demonstrated by the fact that governments receiving loans from PRC are occasionally unsure of which Chinese authority they are working with. Due to the lack of a return on investment, the Chinese government is financing the project through four of its state-owned banks, which lend to state-owned firms. Even the Chinese business sector, which has been attacked by other governments for the lack of private sector involvement, is not overly enthusiastic about the programme due to the poor return on investment. The amount of loans provided through PRC's state-run BRI has decreased since 2019. The BRI is currently emphasising on 'high quality investment' particularly through proper utilisation of project financing, risk mitigation techniques, and green finance more frequently.

BRI and Geographical Relevance of South Asia

India is the centre of South Asia in every sense, be it physical, political, economic, historical or cultural. India shares borders with four of the five regional, continental states: Bangladesh, landlocked Bhutan, landlocked Nepal, and Pakistan. Meanwhile, the Maldives and Sri Lanka are closer to India than any other continental South Asian country, with Afghanistan being the only exception as it doesn't share any border with India (Anwar 2020). Surprisingly, all South Asian nations, with the exception of India, do not share a border with more than two neighbouring South Asian nations. As a result, India is extensively relied upon by the states of the region to connect across regional (land) borders. Afghanistan, which is a landlocked nation that connects South and Central Asia, is bordered by Pakistan, India's geographic position in South Asia as a whole is extremely important in determining the geopolitical dynamics of the region. Apart from India, China is the only shared neighbour and geographic entity in the region, and it is the only nation that borders every subregion of Asia. Except for Bangladesh, all of South Asia's continental nations have a border with China. South Asian nations are consequently caught between China's quick re-emergence and India's rapid development, as well as between their conflicting goals for connectivity.

Despite similarities in language, politics, economy, culture, and administrative and legal systems, South Asia is far from being a homogeneous region. In light of regional patterns of international relations like the rivalry between India and Pakistan, each country's geostrategic positioning with China, domestic politics of each nation, and their various economic positions and needs, each South Asian country's relationship with China had thus also evolved differently in the post-colonial period. With India and Bhutan being the only dissenters in South Asia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Nepal, and Afghanistan have all professed their support for the BRI (Anwar 2020). India's opposition originates from its antagonistic relationship with China, which has been marked more by competition than collaboration. The region of South Asia is also plagued by geopolitical tensions that meddle with the BRI, which is a little more fluid than the region's distinctive terrain. These conflicts and divisions have transcended the region and still continue to do. In the Indo-Pacific, the United States has shifted its attention from Pakistan to India in an effort to challenge China while China continues to back Pakistan.

Additionally, South Asia is afflicted by numerous ethnic and sectarian issues. This region is the focal point of some of the most severe conventional and non-conventional security threats in the globe. These security issues need to be addressed by the BRI. Religious and ethnic insurgencies may potentially thwart China's lofty objectives. While militant insurgencies continue in Pakistan and Afghanistan, ethnic tensions are growing in China's Xinjiang region, which is home to a major Muslim

ethnic group. Hindu-Muslim tensions are also being exacerbated by India's nationalist politics, which could result in massive religious bloodshed and spill over from such a trend would impact nearby countries, notably PRC's problematic Xinjiang province, where the PRC administration is having problems with the Muslim population (Anwar 2020).

As previously indicated, the BRI connects three continents—Europe, Africa, and Asia—via land and the Indian Ocean. However, while the BRI runs from Eurasia to Africa, its major states are in South Asia, at the intersection of the maritime and continental routes. If China develops a foothold in South Asia through connectivity, it might reduce its reliance on the perilous Malacca Strait by constructing alternative overland routes to ensure access to the Indian Ocean and a steady supply of energy (Bindra 2017). However, the BRI faces a variety of significant security risks in South Asia, including conventional territorial and border disputes, potential naval rivalry with India, unusual sectarian uprisings, unsustainable development of the environment, and corruption. As China uses free money and alluring business opportunities to encourage smaller countries to cooperate with it, its growing influence in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) threatens India's regional security architecture.

However, as a result of China's poorly managed loans and financial infusions, South Asian nations experience corruption and societal strife. In addition to the possibility of China building ports with dual-use (civil and military) that would span from Pakistan to Myanmar, there is a significant chance of India losing its strategic advantage in the Indian Ocean due to an increased Chinese naval presence. The Belt and Road Initiative is a key component of China's grand strategy, with the potential to alter sub-regional security arrangements and tip the scales of power in China's favour in the IOR. South Asia is a region of problems for China. All of South Asia's overland nations, with the exception of Bangladesh, have borders with China; however, Sri Lanka and the Maldives are island nations on the Indian Ocean. The BRI's most successful project, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), traverses South Asia, and India, the region's most important nation, is also a part of it. India is the biggest borrower from the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), which is headed by China, despite its opposition to the BRI. Additionally, South Asia has had average yearly growth of 6% over the previous two decades and is home to a quarter of the world's population (Jain 2018).

South Asia is a prospective route for oil transit from the Middle East and Africa to China since China is strategically restricted on its east by two island chains and has a significant vulnerability in the Malacca Strait. South Asian trade lanes and waterways may potentially connect China's landlocked southwest areas, such as Yunnan and Sichuan, to the coastline (Samaranayake, 2019). China may be able to expand its influence outside of its borders and eliminate any external concerns by

gaining a presence in important South Asian ports. A strong advocate of the BCIM-EC (Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor), Liu Jinxen, asserts that it is a component of a national 'bridgehead' strategy that aims to identify cities or regions with a strategic position on a logistical and supply chain that can control the flow of resources along international trade routes. This is part of a bigger power struggle as well as an instance of one-sided interest with a single aim to push its aspirations. With the exception of India, South Asian nations see China's presence in the area as favourable to their own national interests (Snedden 2016). As a strategic competitor to India and a strong economic alternative to the United States, China has been welcomed by Pakistan. Since the US has long supported Pakistan's economy, this tie is likely to end now that the 'war on terror' is over and the US has left Afghanistan. Smaller nations in the area, such as Pakistan, have long detested Indian dominance and are encouraged to see China as a new option. The nations in the area remain sceptical despite the advantages of Chinese economic participation in the region that have been anticipated. They worry that having a close connection with China might harm ties with the regional power India and, therefore, the US. As a consequence, South Asian nations try to gain as much from China as they can without harming the US or India. Moreover, in recent years, Pakistan and Sri Lanka have had financial problems as a result of China's assertive economic policies, which, in turn, has caused interest in Chinese assistance in those countries to wane.

BRI and PRC's Relations with South Asia

China's desire to 'invade' South Asia in order to reach the Indian Ocean is growing along with the evolution of the global power struggle. As a result, China is compelled to build a sizeable footprint in the South Asian region's Indian Ocean littorals. Since China and India have a rocky relationship, China often supports Pakistan, India's worst foe, and maintains firm eco-political ties with it. The expansive border of collaboration between China and Pakistan spans a wide range of fields, from investment in infrastructure projects to defence and strategic alliances. When we talk about this kind of collaboration, we need to consider China's rivalry with and relationship with other important partner nations.

China-Pakistan Relations and BRI

The largest infrastructure project under the BRI umbrella is the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) which is now steering the bilateral relations between the two countries. The CPEC is a crucial bilateral endeavour to improve Pakistan's infrastructure in order to increase trade with China and deepen regional integration. The project was launched on April 20, 2015, with the signing of 51 agreements and memorandums of understanding worth $46 billion by Chinese President Xi Jinping

and Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif (International Crisis Group 2018). In addition to linking Pakistan's deep-sea docks of Gwadar and Karachi to China's Xinjiang region and beyond through overland routes, CPEC plans to modernise Pakistan's road, rail, aviation, and energy transportation networks. Shipping goods and commodities, including natural gas, to China would be quicker and less expensive by bypassing the Straits of Malacca and the South China Sea (Bindra 2017). The launch of joint space and satellite operations involving China and Pakistan in 2016 was inspired by CPEC. CPEC is a component of China's larger Belt and Road Initiative, which was launched in 2013 to encourage commerce, cooperation, and connectivity among the nations of Eurasia (Pathak 2014). CPEC has been compared to the Marshall Plan which did a fabulous job in rebuilding the post-World War II Europe, in terms of its potential effect on the region, and other countries have indicated an interest in participating.

It is important to see CPEC as a consequence of lengthy bilateral collaboration and trust-building as it becomes a significant component of China's Belt Road Initiative. In addition, China has supported Pakistan in the majority of its confrontations with India, its neighbour. Strategic collaboration between China and Pakistan has a long history. It started in 1951 when Pakistan recognised the People's Republic, and it intensified after the Sino-Indian War in 1962 and the division of East Pakistan into Bangladesh in 1971. Despite the lack of any natural or cultural links between the two countries, China gains from cooperation with Pakistan as a crucial counterweight to its shared neighbour India. Particularly taking into account that China's assistance has also played a significant role in Pakistan's strategic stance against its adversary since 1971. One example is Pakistan's development of both its military and civilian nuclear programmes. In addition to financing and developing civilian power facilities, China has provided Pakistan with designs of nuclear reactors, uranium supplies, missiles and weapons, including submarine platforms. Beyond any other bilateral agreements between China and the United States, there is extensive nuclear cooperation.

China has a dominant role in the relationship and has maintained mutually advantageous ties with Pakistan at a level enjoyed by almost no other nation with whom China has diplomatic relations—probably with the notable exception of North Korea. Despite the fact that the relationship has not been formally established as a treaty alliance, the 'all-weather strategic cooperative partnership' between China and Pakistan is supported by ongoing nuclear cooperation, expanding military-to-military exchanges, conventional arms sales, and joint production agreements. At the non-military level, the partnership is seen in close diplomatic cooperation in international fora as well as growing commercial and investment connections on a bilateral basis, particularly in the last 20 years.

China has mostly backed Pakistan's military establishment. The United States gave Pakistan high-tech weaponry and financial assistance between 2002 and 2016, including $14.6 billion in funding under the Coalition Support Fund programme (Khalid Rahman 2018). However, Beijing has been a staunch supporter of Islamabad's strategic nuclear programme from the start, and after 1972, overt Chinese sales and transfers of conventional weaponry to Pakistan exceeded American shipments. The Chinese have worked with Pakistani troops to foster deeper collaboration in addition to delivering weaponry. Significant interoperability is made possible through regular joint exercises, military education partnerships, joint production agreements, and strategic alliances. The two governments also work together on technology. There are procedures and practises in Pakistan for controlling the information environment.

Polls conducted inside the nation reveal that Pakistanis have largely positive views about China and a mostly unfavourable view of the US, despite the fact that public opinion has very little influence in determining Pakistani foreign policy. Instead of questioning the relationship's overall purpose, which is frequently praised in exceptional terms, attempts to divert the perks of Chinese investment and aid to preferred constituencies and away from opponents have overshadowed discussions between many of Pakistan's key domestic political leaders, such as those in the military establishment. This rivalry has sometimes impeded China's quest for a more stable set of connections with Pakistani interaction partners. When the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor project was launched in 2015, Pakistan's current government, led by Prime Minister Imran Khan, was in opposition. It accused the government of the then Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif of giving priority to projects in its members' home constituencies at the expense of other regions of the nation and of accusing its opponents of corruption in project management (Khalid Rahman 2018). In November 2019, the PTI Government appointed Lieutenant General Asim Saleem Bajwa, a former military spokesman, as the head of a new CPEC Authority, giving the military considerable authority over the project's administration and the range of public discourse. Bajwa has since been embroiled in a corruption scandal surrounding his employment (US Institute of Peace, 2020).

Pakistani leaders have found a stabilising anchor in their interactions with China throughout the phase of more erratic changes and fluctuations in the US-Pakistan relationship. The US-Pakistan strategic relationship has become increasingly estranged in the mid-2000s due to the development of a closer US-India strategic partnership, including civilian nuclear cooperation and attempts to enhance military-to-military ties, divergence of US and Pakistani preferences in Afghanistan, and related American concern over Pakistan's antiterrorism initiatives and history of nuclear and missile technology proliferation. (US Institute of Peace 2020).

While US civilian and military aid to Pakistan has fallen during the past ten years, China's influence in politics, the military, and the economy has increased concurrently. US policymakers have started to view China as a direct strategic adversary at this period. Many Pakistani politicians and military strategists prefer what they perceive to be the more secure and less transactional of the two factors because China's assistance promises to Pakistan are more solid and less transactional than the US-Pakistan relationship (Tehseen 2017). However, Pakistan's leadership has made an effort to maintain ties with both China and the US. Some of these tensions may have been temporarily reduced by Washington and Islamabad's alignment during the last 18 months on efforts to broker a peace agreement in Afghanistan (US Institute of Peace 2020). On the other hand, Pakistani officials see China as a close neighbouring great power with enduring influence in the region who has provided Pakistan with significant prospective benefits at a cheap cost.

Pakistan and China are also forging stronger business relations. Pakistan's biggest export market is the United States, but China is Pakistan's biggest trading partner, a substantial source of new foreign direct investment, and a significant source of bilateral credit. Over the preceding five years, trade between the two countries increased by more than 50 per cent, reaching $12.1 billion in 2018-2019 (US Institute of Peace 2020). However, almost 87 per cent of total transaction volume is made up of Chinese exports to Pakistan, whereas moderate growth over the last ten years has been seen in Pakistani exports to China. Pakistani industries and companies have expressed concerns about Chinese products entering the domestic market and pushing out local firms, despite the fact that the commercial relationship is not generally recognised in Pakistan. President Xi Jinping's Belt and Road Initiative's cornerstone project was the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, whose expansion has further increased Sino-Pakistan cooperation. Apart from the economic component of the relationship, the start of this programme saw the growth of high-level strategic dialogue and the Chinese leaders giving priority to their bilateral ties with Pakistan. CPEC has reportedly increased capacity of Pakistan's stressed energy industry and facilitated a much-needed rush of infrastructure finance from China at a time when many other nations' investment levels had dropped to severely low levels.

In addition to providing finance for CPEC programmes, which are almost all carried out on a commercial basis, the Chinese government and investment companies have served as Pakistan's lender of last resort. China has aided Pakistan with short-term loans, most recently in 2018 and 2019, to help the nation avoid a balance-of-payment crisis while negotiating contracts for a longer-term loan with the International Monetary Fund. China has joined a small cluster of other strategic partners, including Saudi Arabia, in this effort. Pakistani authorities claim that as of November 2019, Chinese-held loans made up 24 per cent of Pakistan's total state

debt, with CPEC-related projects making up 6.6 per cent of the total. US criticism of CPEC-related loans has frequently been rejected by Chinese and Pakistani officials, but access to project financial data that would enable a complete analysis of the terms of transactions has been denied. Islamabad is experiencing significant financial problems. Raising domestic income has fallen due to worries about Pakistan's total debt burden even before the economic downturn associated with the COVID-19 epidemic had started. Even before the economic downturn linked to the COVID-19 epidemic started, domestic income collection had declined despite structural changes mandated by an IMF loan deal.

By April 2020, over 25 per cent of the officially-designated CPEC projects were completed, even as the progress slowed, particularly following Pakistan's most recent (2018) parliamentary elections, which led to a change in the country's leadership. During the first year of the new PTI-led government, Chinese foreign investment reached a five-year low. Several officials in the new administration advocated renegotiation and reallocation of CPEC projects or launched inquiries into CPEC initiatives that had begun under their political adversaries. Early attempts by the PTI government to reorient CPEC to focus on socio-economic development initiatives, such as creating special economic zones inside Pakistan to increase manufacturing and industrial output, have so far been unsuccessful. Pakistan's ability to allocate additional money for these programmes is constrained, and its legislative institutions are slow to change. The development of the Gwadar port in Balochistan, which US and Indian strategists have expressed serious worry about as a potential dual-use facility that may aid Chinese marine force projection, has also moved slowly. The Chinese military is in danger because local separatists have repeatedly targeted the area. The port has also failed to attract business as a viable economic plan.

The expansion of Pakistan's Mainline One railway corridor is the only major project added to the CPEC portfolio since the project's commencement in 2015, and additions to the pipeline of jointly permitted CPEC projects had stagnated before the PTI government took office. It is unclear if China would agree to PTI government's suggestions for renegotiations of initial loan repayment dates or modifications to guaranteed rate of return calculations for CPEC-backed energy projects. Due to the fact that the CPEC project hasn't yet reached its full potential, several Chinese officials and analysts have expressed buyer's remorse (Ramay 2016). The stakes are higher for both sides to portray CPEC as a long-term success despite the slowdowns due to its significant position in the bilateral relationship and as a cornerstone of the larger BRI strategy. The COVID-19 outbreak, however, suggests that significant new Chinese investments in Pakistan or the revival of the CPEC may now be put on hold forever and that financial problems may continue to worsen. Chinese General Secretary Xi's next trip to Pakistan, which was postponed due to the pandemic in

September 2020 and has not yet been rescheduled, has the ability to strengthen CPEC by increasing the chance of new loans or project additions.

China and Pakistan are striving to achieve an equilibrium between two tiers of often-at-odds interests in terms of geopolitics. One the one hand, the Sino-Pakistani alliance gives China a potent instrument to put pressure on India, increasing the possibility of a two-front conflict and compelling New Delhi to focus on containing Islamabad (Faisal 2019). However, even while a likely outcome that keeps India occupied benefits China, a true military conflict between India and Pakistan would put China's regional economic, security, and geopolitical interests at jeopardy. This paradox explains China's challenging relationship with Pakistan in terms of security issues including terrorism, crisis management, and the related territorial disputes between India and Pakistan.

Despite its repeated condemnations of terrorism, China has shielded Pakistan from international pressure and punitive actions for years by supporting anti-India insurgent and militant groups like Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM), which operate within Pakistan with the support of Pakistan's security apparatus. China has blocked sanctions on Hafiz Saeed, the mastermind of the cell responsible for the 2008 Mumbai attacks, at Islamabad's request. In the weeks after the February 2019 tragedy in Pulwama, Kashmir, in which his organisation killed forty Indian paramilitary soldiers, China has prevented the recognition of JeM head Masood Azhar as a global terrorist four times (ABB 2021). A retaliatory Indian strike into Pakistan was sparked by this, and an Indian fighter pilot was shot down during this raid and was ultimately repatriated by Pakistan. Additionally, it was the first time in history that a nuclear power directly attacked the undisputed territory of another.

Beijing has sought to protect Pakistan from Indian diplomatic retaliation in such circumstances, but it has also helped to prevent big regional crises from worsening. It has supported US-led de-escalation efforts since the late 1990s, when India and Pakistan became nuclear. During the 1999 Kargil crisis and the 2001–2002 Twin Peaks battles, China used its diplomatic ties with Pakistan to bolster American requests and demands. After the 2008 Mumbai attacks, China urged Pakistan to find the attackers and reaffirmed its appeal for caution, and had even gone to the extent of publicly promising to cooperate with India to find the perpetrators. Although there is no proof that Beijing would intervene to sabotage the Pakistani military's decades-old alliances with these proxy organisations, China's willingness to take risks in the area seems to be constrained.

In the past few years, China's support for Pakistan has decreased. China joined the US in adding Pakistan to the IFATF's 'grey list' in 2018 for its insufficient efforts to fight money laundering and terrorism financing. Since then, Islamabad has been

coming under pressure to show that it is making progress in cutting off funding to extremist groups in order for Islamabad to continue receiving international assistance in times of financial hardship. In addition, after the Pulwama strikes, China first opposed Masood Azhar's inclusion, but eventually gave in to pressure from other UN Security Council members and sanctioned it. These actions indicate that China may lose patience if Pakistan's support for terrorist organisations jeopardises regional stability. China desires that CPEC and trade alliances realise their full potential.

Sino-Indian Relations: A Different Story with BRI

When it comes to the backdrop of Sino-Indian ties, the BRI prospects differs. Only by studying both nations' post-World War II histories can this setting be grasped. The history of ties between China and India has been turbulent. Both nations consider themselves as the inheritors of two great civilizations, the contemporary manifestations of which, the Republic of India in 1947 and the People's Republic of China in 1949, were established in the 1940s after protracted periods of Western power supremacy. Following China's conquest of Tibet in 1950, the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan spiritual and political leadership fled to India in 1959. In 1954, the two sides came to an agreement on the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, which served as the cornerstone of official Chinese foreign policy theory. In 1962, a short border dispute occurred despite conceptual agreement on the standards that should guide developing nations in international relations. Despite adhering to the non-alignment policy, India maintained strong ties with the Soviet Union, which ultimately turned into China's opponent, especially from the early 1960s. In the past, bilateral relations have made an effort to balance the promise of more cooperative relations with geopolitical realities and very varied political frameworks (Adhikari 2014). Indian-Chinese ties are far more mature than those of nations dealing with a significant Chinese presence for the first time since they are founded on decades of experience.

The two countries are balancing conflicting nationalisms as developing and more established Asian countries desire a strong alliance and continuing economic prosperity. Examples of bilateral ties include commerce and finance, technology, defence, and diplomacy. Despite the possibility that these connections might foster both collaboration and conflict, both powers have made an effort to engage in trade and financial transactions with one another. India and China have a substantial trade imbalance, which has been a key cause of conflict between the two nations. India's imports from China surged by 45 times, to more than $70 billion annually, between 2000 and 2019 (US Institute of Peace 2020). One of the justifications offered by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi for pulling his country out of the massive

Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership trade pact is concern about an influx of Chinese goods.

In addition, China has a substantial presence in the Indian IT sector, both as a producer of goods that are popular with Indian consumers, such mobile phones, and as an investor in Indian technology companies. The drawbacks of economic and technological integration with China, such as Chinese coercion, supply chain disruptions, data security difficulties, and anticompetitive behaviour, are becoming a more prominent theme in Indian discussions. The Indian government barred 59 Chinese apps from the Indian market in the middle of the Ladakh border dispute in mid-2020, prohibited Chinese construction companies from state road-building contractual agreements, and seemed to hint that Huawei may not be the 5G provider for Indian telecommunications networks. In spite of this, no definite decisions have been made about if, how, or to what extent India should divide or decouple its economic ties with China. Geopolitical rivalry is most evident in the military balance. The PLA has advanced quickly since the mid-1990s, and China's 2019 defence expenditure was $261 billion, vs $71 billion in India (US Institute of Peace 2020). Although Indian defence forces have improved recently, they still lag behind the PLA. But because of a variety of factors, India enjoys an edge over China in a number of areas. Among these include India's geographical position for operations in South Asia and the Indian Ocean, its skilled mountain troops, and vital ties with other powerful countries like the US and Russia. Beijing and New Delhi both possess modest nuclear arsenals, but they are expanding to meet increasing demands for modernisation and deterrence. Both nations' nuclear arsenals are equipped to thwart at least two significant adversaries; in China's case, the US and India, and India and Pakistan in the case of India. Each purports to follow a serious nuclear 'no first use' policy, but there are important caveats. In light of all of these worries, Xi and Modi have made efforts to reach an agreement via leader-level dialogue, most notably at two informal encounters in Wuhan, China, in April 2018 and Mamallapuram, India, in October 2019 (US Institute of Peace 2020). The G20, the BRICS organisation, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and the Russia-India-China trilateral also often bring the two together. In light of the fact that China is the source of numerous significant rivers in India, they also addressed bilateral diplomatic issues, including the Tibetan community in India and water management. Long regarded to be mostly calm, the India-China border has recently emerged as a potentially more volatile flashpoint than the India-Pakistan border. Each country along their 2,200-mile border claims territory that the other nation governs. The line between the two countries, known as the Line of Actual Control, has never been established or defined. The western, central, and eastern sectors are how both sides see the border. India asserts authority over 33,000 square kilometres of Aksai Chin, a territory under

Chinese control in western Asia and the focal point of the 2020 stalemates. In the eastern sector, China claims ownership of over 90,000 square kilometres that are roughly equivalent to the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh (US Institute of Peace 2020). A little under two thousand square kilometres of the disputed terrain in the central sector are under common authority. In a series of clashes that started in May 2020 and ended in the deadliest day since 1967, the two powers came to blows over the border.

The current border clashes seem to be the consequence of a confluence of several factors, the relative significance of which is difficult to assess. The Chinese experts mention India's decision to remove Article 370 of the Indian Constitution, which had previously provided Jammu and Kashmir autonomy, which was made in August 2019. The power of the local government was weakened when India split the former state into two Union Territories, or regions over which the Union Government in New Delhi has greater direct control. China has expressed its displeasure with these moves. One Chinese analyst said that India's choice was made to split the territorial disputes between China and India from those with Pakistan.

According to some commentators, Beijing's apparent hesitation in resolving border conflicts is an effort to compel New Delhi to focus resources and attention on the border, so restricting New Delhi's ability to influence the remainder of South Asia and the Indian Ocean region. Part of the reason Modi adopted a 'neighbourhood first' strategy was to offset a decline in India's local ties and an increase in Chinese outreach to South Asian nations through the BRI and other initiatives. The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), two of China's connectivity initiatives, have spurred India to work to revive subregional groupings and shed its reputation as a regional powerhouse in the diplomatic sphere. The hostility between India and Pakistan has caused the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation to stagnate. New Delhi has made an effort to revive it (US Institute of Peace 2020). However, by creating the China-South Asia Cooperation Forum, which convened in 2018 and 2019, China seems to have made some success in replicating a strategy that has been used in other regions. India has constantly tried to strike a balance in interacting with international organisations that are controlled by or influenced by China, by supporting initiatives where it can have a say while avoiding those where it can have no say. India first suggested the BRICS New Development Bank at the 2012 meeting in New Delhi, but India has declined to accept the BRI generally. Modi joined the AIIB, which is a branch of the BRICS New Development Bank.

Some BRI initiatives are seen to be harmful to New Delhi's security objectives. China has been Pakistan's main commercial partner since the early 2010s, generating multibillion dollar reciprocal trade. This expanding economic partnership has been

fuelled by CPEC, which was established as a part of China's Belt Road Initiative to build an economic corridor between Xinjiang and Gwadar Port. Gwadar was given to China Overseas Port Holdings, a state-owned Chinese business, in February 2013. The port will act as the 'primary gateway' for commerce between China and the Middle East and Africa, according to the Chinese government. There are several issues with this project in India. The path will first traverse the contested areas of Kashmir. The Kashmir region, which is claimed by China, Pakistan, and India, worries Indian officials in New Delhi. The construction of an economic corridor from Kashmir to Gwadar by China, despite pledges to the contrary from Chinese authorities, might be seen as acceptance of Pakistan's claims to Kashmir. Territorial issues are a major source of Indian discontent with Pakistan and have even recently triggered hostilities. As a result, any action by China that is seen in New Delhi as endorsing Islamabad's claims over Kashmir would be terrible for bilateral relations between the two nations.

However, as a deep-water port, Gwadar may provide Islamabad and Beijing a tactical advantage over India's position as a regional power in the IOR. India's naval forces stationed on the subcontinent are under risk if the port, which is run by a Chinese state-owned enterprise (SOE), is turned into a permanent military outpost, according to New Delhi. With this theory, Gwadar is positioned within the greater Indian belief in the nautical concept of the 'String of Pearls' (Bindra 2017). A primary priority in the IOR is the defence of China's maritime lines of communication (SLOCs), particularly for the transport of liquefied natural gas. The development of anti-access area denial weapons like the DF-21D anti-ship ballistic missile presents a strategic risk to Indian naval dominance when coupled with the growth of ports in the Indian Ocean region. Indian concerns about the wider MSRI have been heightened by the construction of nearby ports in places like Chittagong, Bangladesh, Sittwe, Myanmar, and Hambantota, Sri Lanka. In the case of Hambantota, China offered funding for the construction of a deep-water port while being aware that Sri Lanka would not be able to pay them back at 6.3 per cent interest, as opposed to 0.25 per cent to 0.3 per cent on IMF and AIIB loans. In exchange for a 99-year lease on an 80 per cent part in the port, Sri Lanka was required to convert its debt into equity. A means for Beijing to challenge India's dominance as the region's maritime powerhouse is shown in Beijing's infrastructure spending.

BRI and Small South Asian States

China's connections with the two dominant nations in the area, India and Pakistan, can overshadow its links to smaller states in South Asia, such as Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, the Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. Every nation has a unique set of circumstances, as well as ties to Beijing. Detailed case studies on SSA countries are not within the purview of this article. In general, however, the

Belt and Road Initiative's increased infrastructure spending and expanding trade linkages have helped China's economic ties with many of the smaller governments in the area strengthen during the last ten years. China is the main source of bilateral imports for many, but not all, of the SSA nations due to its role as a global industrial powerhouse (US Institute of Peace 2020). The SSA countries' exports to China are far less than those to the US, India, or EU nations, which are more commonly their main export destinations. Prior to the start of the COVID-19 outbreak in early 2020, Chinese tourism has been a significant and expanding source of additional inflows to SSA nations, in particular the Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka (Anbumozhi 2020).

Moreover, Chinese FDI in Small South Asian nations topped $3.9 billion annually, making China one of the largest bilateral investors in a number of these nations (US Institute of Peace 2020). Chinese investment, funding, and infrastructure development projects in SSA nations have grown dramatically in recent years, despite the fact that their economic ties predate China's BRI agenda. The most well-known Chinese initiative in the smaller South Asian countries, the Hambantota port project in Sri Lanka, was built before the BRI's formal launch. In order to address a balance-of-payments imbalance, the port, which was developed in Mahinda Rajapaksa's home district, was leased to Chinese management in 2017 (Hazarika 2016). The case has come to represent the possible risk of engaging in development agreements with China involving assets of strategic value, even if the technical details of the deal portray a less concerning image in the view of many in the region and beyond (US Institute of Peace 2020). Other significant projects, including airports, increased port facilities, road and rail infrastructure, and other initiatives, are either under construction or in the planning phases in Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, and the Maldives. With possible 5G cellular network developments in Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka, Chinese investments in technology and telecommunications have also surged.

Again, a number of China's huge infrastructure projects in smaller South Asian countries have slipped behind early commitments to act. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor transportation network hasn't been extended to Afghanistan despite conversations with the Afghan government over the issue. China invested in some of Afghanistan's most significant mining regions but owing to security issues and the challenges of acquiring these resources effectively, work has been halted for years. In spite of these setbacks, new initiatives like the Nepal-China rail link and others have the potential to significantly improve the infrastructure and transportation potentials of the SSA nations, which is encouraging news for one of the world's least connected regions when it comes to intraregional trade and connectivity. (US Institute of Peace 2020). The financial burden that these projects will have on SSA countries, the bulk of which are middle-income countries, has been a source of concern. For the time being, Chinese finance only makes up a tiny fraction

of the total debt balance of the SSA countries, therefore the increase in Chinese loans is more relevant in terms of changing flows than overall stock. But more research should be done on the long-term profitability and durability of many of these projects, particularly if the COVID-19 epidemic affects future travel and trade patterns, slowing down economic development. Other initiatives are purely political, personal, or strategic quagmires funded by China or local elites, while others may be justified using important financial criteria. Beijing, however, offers an alternative for initiatives that are unable to get support from Japanese institutions like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. It is believed that conventional creditors have more stringent project requirements, tougher financial limitations, and slower payment timelines than Chinese financiers.

Conclusion

China and South Asia now have stronger economic ties than before. The path for Chinese economic infiltration into the region has been paved by China's growing economic influence and ability to finance infrastructure projects, as well as geopolitical factors like smaller countries wooing China to balance India. Apart from the security risks associated with the CPEC projects, there are no immediate threats to China in this area. China's challenges, however, are to dispel the BRI's tarnished reputation as a 'debt trap' initiative, which could impede its progress, and to show that cooperation with China results in win-win outcomes. The BRI partners must ensure that there are no unforeseen expenses, but India is worried that the CPEC project may undermine its territorial integrity and national sovereignty. India must consider the geopolitical implications of China's economic expansion in the region. This viewpoint suggests that not everyone gains equally from Chinese economic activity. Chinese investments in the future will be heavily influenced by the health and success of China's own economy.

As China increases its presence and involvement in South Asia via the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), in both conventional and unconventional methods, there is a significant risk of regional instability. Both components may be referred to as the Maritime Silk Road and the three major overland projects of the BRI in South Asia (CPEC, BCIM-EC, and the Trans-Himalayan Economic Corridor). The risks to South Asian security posed by the BRI may be better understood by looking at these four initiatives. The BRI has a unique influence on connectivity and integration in South Asia compared to other regions where the project is active. This difference is the consequence of three interrelated factors. The first is the location's particular geographical reality. The epicentre is emerging India, both literally and figuratively speaking. The rapidly reemerging China is every state's near neighbour in continental South Asia save for one (Hailin 2018). The second issue is the area's diversity of

entrenched geopolitical divisions, most notably the long-standing hostility between India and Pakistan, the two most significant players in the region. The third issue is India's widespread strategic scepticism of China, which is shared by the majority of its academics, the military, and political institutions. As a consequence, India has to be avoided for BRI connection in South Asia. As a consequence, the BRI has not been successful in really integrating the region, at least not yet, despite some advancements in national and international connectivity in Pakistan and other smaller countries. The proposal has nonetheless spurred a frenzy of connectivity projects throughout South Asia, led mostly by India and non-regional countries. This has led to a greater range of investors, which has strengthened both China's agency and that of other South Asian governments outside India. The BRI has also effectively encouraged a very divided region to come together, which is a remarkable accomplishment. Despite this, historical tensions between China as well as between India and Pakistan have increased as a result of the BRI. It has also helped to keep the rift between Pakistan and India alive. Additionally, the BRI has further complicated and internationalised the geopolitics of the area, particularly the geopolitics of the Indian Ocean.

South Asia has had a different evolution of perspectives on the BRI than other parts of the globe, as well as diverse government responses to it. The changing viewpoints of BRI and policy activities in the region may be explained by drawing an analogy with the people sitting at the metaphorical BRI table. India has consistently refused to join the other parties at the negotiating table. Since the BRI's inception, India has been sceptical of the initiative's economic justification as well as its lack of openness and multilateralism. The BRI has mostly influenced India's traditional foreign policy characteristics of action independence and a certain amount of realism and idealism. This thread has continued as the BRI expanded across India's sphere of influence. India has actively worked to make up for its deliberate disconnection strategy throughout the majority of the later half of the 20th century. India, to the contrary, doesn't have the administrative, financial, and diplomatic weight of the BRI. Because of this, the BRI has alternatively decreased and increased Indian agency. Both the war-torn nation of Afghanistan and the country in severe need of investment, Pakistan, have maintained a consistent BRI strategy. Nevertheless, unlike India, they both have a seat at the BRI table. Under the current prime minister Imran Khan, the policy community in Pakistan has been more involved in the development of the CPEC, but maybe with greater caution. Battlegrounds for Indian-Chinese influence and investment have emerged in the Maldives, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh. Sri Lanka and the Maldives have reconsidered their BRI membership in light of recent political leadership changes, concerns about the sustainability of foreign debt, and worry about long-term strategic

costs. Their chairs are now a few inches further apart from the BRI table. The ability of Bangladesh, on the other hand, to deftly negotiate BRI investments while upholding Indian basic interests has been constant. In order to lessen its long-term dependence on India, Nepal, which is politically divided and surrounded by both China and India, has consented to take a seat. These demonstrate that a regional power, in this instance India, is only able to have a limited influence on a region that is geopolitically divided and in need of investment, improved connectivity, and a power balance. With the exception of India, South Asia continues to welcome BRI investments while becoming less enthused and wary. However, unless China and India are seated at the same regional connectivity table, the initiative would fall short of truly integrating the region and will only serve to exacerbate existing regional divides.

The region's acute infrastructure financing shortfalls, which provide China with a wide entry and strengthen its regional footprint, should be acknowledged by South Asians. The Asian Development Bank estimates that South Asia would need to devote more than 9 per cent of its GDP on infrastructure development between 2016 and 2030 in order to sustain growth and combat climate change, which is more than most other Asian sub-regions will need to do. These nations should, at the very least, drastically increase their infrastructure spending by reallocating resources from other sectors, even though it would not be practicable given certain local concerns and inadequate budget projections. This will help the BRI lessen its excessive dependence on Chinese finance.

The region's principal regional organisation, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), may coordinate regional nations' reactions to China's unilateral initiatives in the region (Haldar 2019). On the other side, the competition between India and Pakistan has all but wiped out this organisation. India and Pakistan must understand that their hostility gives China an advantage in promoting its own regional goals, which are incompatible with those of other South Asian countries. Smaller countries in the area are starting to question if India and Pakistan really want South Asia to prosper since they can't seem to put their differences aside and work together. The region's six smaller states should exert diplomatic pressure on India and Pakistan to set aside their disagreements and cooperate for the region's best interests (Ghiasy 2021). Alternatives to SAARC, such as the Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal Initiative (BBIN) and the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), would find it difficult to gain traction since they do not include all of South Asia's countries. They must recognise that the only way to protect their regional interests is for them to unite as a bloc like the European Union or ASEAN since the majority of South Asian states are small and economically fragile (Haldar 2019).

On the other hand, the persistent infrastructure gap in South Asia may push

the region's countries to look for BRI investment. Governments in South Asia should require that any BRI funding in this instance be open and transparent. Any South Asian nation contemplating taking large loans with unfavourable terms and circumstances should heed the enormous debt created as a consequence of the building of the Hambantota port. Pakistan was compelled to ask the International Monetary Fund for financial assistance in order to protect its economy from debilitating debt. South Asian nations should be cautious about imitating this. One strategy they may use to do better is to diversify their borrowing portfolios. Nations may cooperate with international development banks and other projects, like the Indo-Pacific Free Trade Area, rather than relying only on a single country's project, such as the Belt and Road Initiative. Contrary to BRI initiatives, which are state-led initiatives, FOIP seems to promote private investment and cross-sector cooperation (Ghoasy 2021).

India, however, has to adopt a proactive approach rather than reactive measures. If India adopts a reactive strategy, its limited resources will be used to chase China, notwithstanding Beijing's stronger economic influence. India must prioritise strategically, create a sensible, coherent policy framework, and work toward a burden-sharing model with its partners if it is to safeguard its strategic interests in the region. Nevertheless, given India's economic and technical limitations, it is difficult to provide a convincing alternative to the BRI's aim of enhancing regional connectivity. One of the most crucial elements will be adopting a group strategy. The FOIP in the United States, the Partnership for Quality Infrastructure in Japan, and India's Act East initiative are all in agreement. New Delhi has to work actively with the US, Japan, Australia, and the smaller nations in the area to provide a viable alternative to a China-led infrastructure funding model. This framework for economic cooperation may be used to solve the security issues raised by China's Belt and Road Initiative.

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India and Iran at Crossroads on Chabahar: The US as a Factor of Derailment

Syed Mohammad Raghib

Abstract

The domain of India-Iran relations has large possibilities as the two countries have longstanding and deep-rooted mutual interests in several areas. This paper will look at the US withdrawal from the Iran nuclear agreement (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, JCPOA) in 2018 under the presidency of Donald Trump, and its long-term consequences for India-Iran relations. Since the Chabahar port agreement, many hurdles have been emerging around this project. Using the old Silk Route, China is linking itself to Pakistan's port Gwadar through China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). China's new $400-billion deal with Iran is considered to be a game-changer. Through the CPEC, China will be more close to the West Asian region, and the investment of $46 billion in Pakistan is a significant part of this geo-economic strategy. Another hurdle that suddenly popped up on the path of Indo-Iranian deal was the Trump administration's decision to pull back from the Nuclear Agreement and impose sanctions in two installments, effective since November 2018. This paper argues that the new US sanctions do not directly derail the whole project but will harm India's energy needs. The increase in the tariff rate on aluminum and steel imports will also harm India's interest because India is involved in Chabahar and other projects across the world, like in Afghanistan and the Central Asian countries. The recent US move to withdraw from the Iranian nuclear deal of 2015 will affect the economic interest of India and I hope that the India-Iran Chabahar project will not suffer adversely.

Key Words: Chabahar, Consequences, CPEC, Nuclear-Agreement, Project and Sanctions

Introduction

India and Iran have been maintaining deep-rooted cultural and economic relations since the medieval period. The closeness became more visible during the Mughal Period (1526-1857), especially during the reign of Shah Jahan. The relations

were at their peak because Noor Jahan, from Iran, was a very influential and highly diplomatic queen of the Mughal period. After the medieval period, the relations between the two countries continued during the British rule. India attained freedom in 1947, and the relations peaked because the British also had a strong influence in southern Iran at that time (Lok Sabha Secretariat: 1996: 44-45).[1] After three years of Indian independence, India and Iran established diplomatic relations on 15 March 1950. The relations are still going on with mutual respect for each other's interests. The document of agreement between India and Iran in 1950, that shows their commitment to friendship, speaks thus;

The President of India and His Imperial Majesty, the Shahanshah of Iran, recognise the ancient ties which have existed between the two countries for centuries and their mutual need for cooperation in strengthening and developing these ties and are urged by their mutual desire to establish peace between the two countries with a view to the common benefit of their people and the development of their respective countries, wish to enter into a treaty of friendship with each other and to this end have appointed as their plenipotentiaries the following persons, viz. (Ministry of External Affairs).[2]

Indian foreign policy makers always have given special attention to Iran due to its oil resources and the socio-cultural similarity between the two countries. India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and the Shah of Iran had good relations. Even after the Revolution of 1979 led by Ayatollah Khomeini, the relations between the two countries continue. Indira Gandhi and other Prime Ministers of India gave special attention to Iran and its people in their foreign policy, despite some ups and downs in relations due to the war with Pakistan. The connections become stronger during the period of other Indian Prime Ministers and are still going smoothly. During the Iran-Iraq War, the relations between India and Iran were not up to the mark because India was close to Iraq and brought maximum Baghdad oil. India also signed a friendship treaty with Baghdad in 1952. [3]

India and Iran are both sovereign countries which have deep-rooted associations at social, political and economic-levels. India has been looking at Iran as an old friend and the most important country in the West Asia region. Despite all these ups and downs, India has been in warm relations with other Arab countries in the region for many years. The affairs based on mutual understanding and respect have a centuries-old tradition. Both countries influenced each other in the fields of culture, arts, architecture, language and politics. There was a strong influence of Buddhism in the East Iranian region during the Parthian times (247 BC - 224 AD). The region grew closer during the Mughal period. The Persian language became the language of the Indian elite, and the new language, Urdu, having a strong Persian influence gradually developed in northern India. Historic structures having Indo-Persian

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architectural style slowly came up across the breadth of India. Grousset referred to the Taj Mahal in his writing as the "soul of Iran incarnated in the body of India".[4] An excellent example of the political link with Iranians was the wife of Jahangir (Mughal King), Noor Jahan, who was a political expert and a sincere diplomat of that time. India and Iran both have cultural similarities and the historical approach was also the same. These close links between the two countries have continued over contemporary times. Though from time to time, there have been hiccups in ties as well due to political developments at the international level.

India-Iran Relations and Non-Aligned Movement

India and Iran were the founding members of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) set up in 1961 to maintain equal distance from both the power blocks during the Cold War period. Both countries took the analogous decision on various issues from the NAM platform, especially on Palestine. Three top leaders Nasser, Nehru and the Shah of Iran, were famous due to their neutral stand in world affairs and regional issues.

After the independence of India, Nehru's policy towards Iran was based on mutual and regional cooperation. The Panchshila and Non-Aligned approaches were very powerful, but due to the US intervention in Iran during 1952-53 to overthrow Dr Mohammed Mossadeq over oil nationalisation, Iran came into the highlight. The Shah of Iran visited India in February 1956, and Nehru made a return visit to Tehran in September 1959. A number of high-level visits and a large volume of bilateral trade also took place. Several years later, Prime Minister Narasimha Rao paid a landmark visit in September 1993 as the first Indian PM to visit Iran since the Islamic Revolution of 1979. When Iranian President Hashmi Rafsanjani visited New Delhi in April 1995, he emphasized the need for bilateral cooperation to secure the region. In 2003, moderate Iranian President Mohammed Khatami was the Chief Guest at the Republic Day Parade. These developments indicate the close relations between these two nations, a relation that withstood many critical periods and situations.

India-Iran Relations Since the Islamic Revolution

The Islamic Revolution of 1979 in Iran was one of the momentous events that changed the world's policy toward Iran. Ever since this development, especially since the Islamist Revolution of Iran in February 1979, the Iranian regime has remained strongly ideological. But, India has maintained the state as secular. This ideology is acutely rooted in religious convictions, with numerous ramifications, in which symbolism plays a crucial role. The Iranian ideological corpus has been explicitly incorporated in the Constitution, which stands as the foundational discourse of the

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regime. The Preamble of the Constitution declares, "Our nation now intends to establish an ideal and model society on the basis of Islam."[5] Accordingly, ideology in post-revolution Iran is the basis of governance within the state and also an important rationale behind Iran's stand in the international arena, as reflected in its external policy decisions and actions in the past decades. Export of the Revolution, for instance, became the foremost principle of its foreign policy. It gave Ayatollah Khomeini, the chief architect of the Iranian Islamist regime, a sense of being a leader and protector of the Muslims of the world and helped project Iran as the leader of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). This is known as the 'Third Bloc', which was based on Khomeini's vehement opposition to the 'West' and the 'East'. While America was portrayed in Khomeini's speeches as the 'Great Satan' and 'the wounded snake'; the USSR, America's principal antagonist during the Cold War was called the 'Lesser Satan' because of its atheistic communism.

The anti-West and anti-East rhetoric was part of a larger scheme of seeking to establish the supremacy of the Iranian state and its Shia Ideology through what Khomeini called the 'export of our revolution.' Establishing the Islamic state worldwide, he believed, would replace both capitalism and communism. Thus, the shift in emphasis from Persian nationalism of the pre-revolution period to the Shite Islamic identity had a strong bearing on the foreign policy behaviour of post-revolution Iran, as reflected in its messianic drive in West Asia to challenge the regional status quo. At the end of the eight-year war with Iraq and Khomeini's death, although Iran's foreign policy behaviour showed signs of pragmatism, especially under President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, ideology never completely eclipsed by realpolitik imperatives. With the election of the reformist President Mohammad Khatami in 1997, Iran's foreign policy underwent the transition from confrontation to conciliation, replacing ideological antagonisms with policies based on pragmatism and national interest. Nowhere was this more evident than with Khatami's notion of 'dialogue among civilizations, which signified a departure from the radicalism typical of the earlier stages of the Islamic Republic. While his 'good neighbour' diplomacy in the Gulf led to an unprecedented improvement in bilateral relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia, his conciliatory policy initiatives towards the EU and the United States paved the way for Iran's international integration.

India's neutral position on some of the important events, such as Iran's Islamic Revolution of 1979, the response to the US embargo, and Iran's eight-year war (1980-88) with Iraq where India maintained a non-partisan approach, also bolstered and boosted the Indo-Iranian ties. India has been trying to maintain good relations with the GCC states. And it is in this connection one has to see the Indo-Iranian ties, including the visit of Mohammad Khatami as Republic Day Guest in 2003 and the visit of King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia as the Chief Guest of the Republic Day in

2006. US unlawful war against Iraq without the UN mandate destroyed peace in the Gulf region and this war had a direct impact on India's economy. India has increased its engagement with Israel but also continues its relations with Iran. Despite the visits by several prominent leaders; Israeli President Ezer Weizman in December 1996, Shimon Pares (Foreign Minister) in May 1993 and Ariel Sharon, a retired General of the Israeli Army, in 2003, India will have to balance its growing relationship with Israel without sacrificing its core interest in West Asia. India is also committed to strengthening its relationship with Iran.

The New Development in the Early Twenty-First Century

In the mid-1990, India launched a new liberal policy to safeguard its deteriorating economy. The new economic reforms opened the door for foreign investment in the country. The initiative of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) was one of the significant steps taken by the Indian policymakers who opened the door for foreign players to invest in the country in different sectors.The momentous change in Iran's foreign policy came when the country was going through a phase of relative social and political liberalisation due to President Khatami's advocacy of freedom of expression, tolerance, and civil society. It is thus arguable that Iran's conciliatory foreign policy during Khatami's presidency (1997-2005) cannot be attributed to the pragmatic considerations of national interest or other geopolitical factors alone. It had much to do with the democratic dimension of the Khatami government's domestic reformist agenda. The expansion of public space through recognition and protection of civil liberties opened up political discourse regarding the very nature of the Islamic Republic and its ideology-driven approach to international relations. However, the reform movement proved short-lived partly because of Khatami's inability to implement changes in the face of stiff opposition from the radical factions of the clerical establishment. In fact, in a more significant part, the US visceral rhetoric against Iran denouncing Iran as part of an 'axis of evil' adversely affected the internal reformist movement and emboldened the radical factions.

Admittedly, geopolitical factors, namely, the changing regional balance of power, particularly in the wake of the US occupation of Iraq and the recent Syrian crisis, played a significant role in shaping the Iranian foreign policy behaviour in the past decade. However, it does not provide a fuller explanation of Iran's behavioural change from pragmatic and conciliatory foreign policy to confrontational posture. Even without considering the role of ideology in sustaining the Islamic regime's identity, especially in the backdrop of the reformists' receding credibility and the rise of neoconservatives to power since 2005.

India voted three times against the Iran Nuclear project in International Atomic Energy (IAEA) on 24 September 2005, and subsequently on 2 February and 3 March

2006. This event shook Indian politics and was discussed inside and outside parliament. Questions were raised if Iran was neglected just for the sake of the Indo-US Nuclear Deal? Iran has been facing four UN sanctions against uranium enrichment, which are as under: (1) Resolution No.1696 (2006) - Demands Iran suspends Uranium Enrichment by 31 August. (2) Resolution No.1737 (2006) - UNSC imposes sanctions on Iran for failing to halt uranium enrichment. (3) Resolution No.1747 (2007) - UNSC toughens sanction against Iran, adds arms embargo. (4) Resolution No.1803 (3 March 2008) - Extends sanction against import of 'Dual Use' technology used for both peaceful and military purposes and asks UN member states to inspect cargo suspected of transporting nuclear material to and from Iran, currently against its Nuclear Project.

It came as a surprise to many in the Indian side that due to the pressure of the US, India was drifting away from its long-term friendly country. A year later, a deal on the Indo-Iran Gas pipeline was about to be finalized but did not materialize at the top level. Iran-India gas pipeline, also known as the Peace Pipeline, was proposed as a 2,775- km gas pipeline project aimed at delivering natural gas from Iran to Pakistan and India. The project was expected to take three to five years to complete and would cost US$7 billion. India is expected to require 400 million cubic meters of gas per day by 2025, which is a significant rise from 60 million cubic meters per day in 2005. The deal suffered a setback on 16 July 2006, when Iran demanded a price of 7.2 dollars per mBtu of gas against India's offer of 4.2 dollars per mBtu. Earlier, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad had talked to Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, during his visit to Iran and discussed many issues. Manmohan Singh had assured Tehran that the deal was going to be finalized shortly. Later, the Iranian authority gave 45 days to India and Pakistan to give their word of confirmation. Iranian religious or political leadership is trying to avert the war with the US but does not like to hand over the nuclear key to the Western powers. Top Iranian leaders Ali Hosseini Khamenei and President Hassan Rouhani are the Iranian religious and political leaders. The government is running under the supervision of the Guardian Council. However, the sole power is still in the hand of the religious head, Ali Hosseini Khamenei.

Recently, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani talked to the Indian Prime Minister, Narender Modi, during his visit to Iran and discussed several issues and bilateral relations, but special attention was given to Chabahar Port as a gateway for India for Central Asian countries. And they together signed an agreement in 2015. India is willing to invest in the development of Chabahar Port for easy access to Central Asian countries, especially Afghanistan, where India has invested a lot since the departure of the Taliban government in 2001.

India-Iran Agreement on Chabahar

The Chabahar port is one of the world's very sensitive and strategically important ports in Iran, through which India is looking to gain access to Afghanistan and Central Asian countries. It's a golden gate for the economic development of India. Two Asian neighbours made a very robust decision to boost their economic and cultural ties, which started in 2013. The new innings of friendship started with the new agreement that was signed in a trilateral agreement on 21 May 2016.

In 2016, Indian Prime Minister Modi visited Iran on 21 May, met with Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and President Hassan Rouhani and signed many agreements, including a trilateral agreement on Chabahar trade. The Trilateral Agreement on Chabahar trade was signed by Indian Prime Minister Modi, President of Afghanistan Ashraf Ghani and Iranian President Rouhani in Tehran. Chabahar is a strategic port in southeast Iran that will enable India to bypass Pakistan and open up a route to landlocked Afghanistan, with which New Delhi was having close security and economic ties. The importance of Chabahar is that its existing Iranian road network, which can link up to Zaranj in Afghanistan which is about 883 km from the port.[6] The other important factor of Modi's visit was that Indian refiners have to pay oil dues, which was part of the $6.4 billion owed to Iran for crude oil imports in Euros through Turkey's Halkbank. Many MoUs were signed between the School for International Relations of the ministry of the foreign affair of Iran and the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) of India. The new Chinese move to have a $400-billion deal with Iran is giving a shock to Indian investment in Chabahar. Iran dropped India from the Chabahar rail project, saying that the reason behind this move was funding delay.

According to the UN charter, India is one of the strongest advocates of the peaceful resolution of conflicts in West Asia. Despite the clash in the region between various parties, India always believes in peaceful negotiation among the various parties in West Asia like Israel-Palestine, Hamas, Israel-Syria (Golan Height), and Israel-Lebanon (Israel-Hezbollah war in 2006). The US policy of regime change which was applied in Afghanistan and Iraq is being threatened by Iran and Syria. India cannot ignore the sentiments of its Muslim minority, which is about 172 million (14.2%).[7] They have a deep religious, cultural and sentimental attachment to three Islamic Holy Places (Makkah, Medina and Jerusalem), and some cities of Iran and Iraq (Qum, Mashhad, Najaf, Karbala and Samara) etc. More importantly, about seven to eight million-strong expatriate Indian labour force in Arab countries and the Gulf is India's primary source of expatriate remittances. In 2015-16 workers sent back $35.9 billion in valuable foreign exchange. Indian oil and gas imports from West Asia, which constitutes 60 per cent of the country's oil and gas import, is one of the main reasons why India follows a pragmatic approach in its foreign policy in

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this region. India always tries to maintain a balanced relationship with all the GCC countries as well; even the current clash between Saudi Arabia and Qatar is a setback for India due to the expatriate issue.

India-US alliance and Future of Chabahar

After the disintegration of Russia in 1991, India took a new foreign policy initiative to move towards the United States. The not-so-healthy economic condition and the other demands of the situation compelled India to go for a rethink of its security and strategic needs which, in turn, forced it to look for a strong world power as its ally. New Delhi finally accepted Washington as an ally moving away from Moscow, keeping in mind its military needs as well economic requirements that it hoped to meet with the support of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank.

The Chabahar Port project will serve India's economic, strategic and foreign policy objectives. The port is situated at a very strategic location, outside the Strait of Hormuz in deep water. The Chinese investment across the world especially in Pakistan, of around $46 billion through the CPEC project, is also a worrying issue for India's future and survival in a competitive world. China-Pakistan friendship and Chinese investment in India's other neighbouring countries are an emerging threat for New Delhi which the policymakers in Delhi have to take serious note of. China is using the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) to meet its energy needs and expand economic hegemony in the region.

The Chabahar port is no doubt a strategic victory for India. Due to this big deal between India and Iran, both are ready to use this strategic port for economic and security purposes. Recently, Tehran proposed New Delhi to manage phase one of the port built by Iran, even as the two sides are still negotiating other terms and conditions. Indian government wants to invest Rs.150 crores, or $235 million. It will help not only connect with Iran and Afghanistan but also reach most of the Central Asian countries up to Russia. IRCON International will also be ready to set up a railway line at Chabahar to move goods right up to Afghanistan. The 500-km rail link between Chabahar and Zahedan will link New Delhi to Iran's railway network. India will also supply $400-million worth of steel rails to Tehran.[8] The Chabahar project will restrict the influence of Chinese and Pakistani recent projects, starting from Gwadar port to the Chinese City Kashgar. More than that, it will also restrict the power balance of China in the region. In light of the above, it can be said that the Indo-Iran ties, in various sectors - Social, Political, Cultural & Bilateral - is very important for both the countries in the near future. As per India's point of view, given the huge increase in oil price, $146 per barrel, India's oil and gas requirement

can be easily fulfilled by Iran's huge oil reserve. And the government can control the current inflation rate, which is crossing 11.13 per cent, and ease the suffering of various Indian social classes and small and big industries which are suffering a lot due to the oil crisis in international markets. India is known for its vibrant and neutral policy in the world for promoting reciprocal cooperation and prosperity. That is why West Asian states have deeper relations with India in many fields. India never intervened unnecessarily in regional affairs and is still trying to give proper attention to all Arab countries and Iran.

With the US sanctions on Iran, especially its oil sector and banks, that came into effect in November 2018, India has become one of the prime targets because most of its oil comes from West Asian countries, especially Iran. India is the world's third-biggest oil importer for its domestic needs and is heavily dependent on imports. It purchased about 1,84,000 barrels per day (BPD) from the United States between November 2018 and May 2019, but earlier, the data for the same period was only 40,000 BPD. The effect of the sanction forced India to buy 48 per cent less oil from Iran at about 2,75,000 BPD (Source: India Crude oil imports from top suppliers since Iran sanction took effect-tmsnrt.rs/31LGRv).[9] The other reason for purchasing oil from the US is that West Texas Intermediate crude futures are running at around $7 to $8 a barrel cheaper than international benchmark Brent futures.[10] The new US sanction is not directly derailing the whole project. Still, it will harm India's energy needs because India imports 25 per cent of crude oil from Iran, apart from its 83 per cent oil import dependency on West Asian countries like Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Iran.

As per the clarification of the director of energy consultancy FGE, "Venezuela's oil output is now declining. Saudi grades are costly, and Iraq has only limited capacity to sell extra oil. So Indian refiners can't escape from the US Shell oil". In such a condition, when the US sanctions halted the export of Iranian oils, India was forced to look for other options for its needs. India's intake of Saudi oil during the seven months to May rose by 11 per cent to 804,000 BPD, while that from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) jumped by 37 per cent to about 360,000 BPD, as the data showed.[11] The most shocking figure emerged during the sanction period on Iran, crude oil export to India from Iran was affected deeply. From November 2017 to May 2018, the import of Iranian oil was 112 million barrels which drastically reduced to 58 million barrels (Source: Shipping & Industry Contacts).[12] These figures are enough to elaborate on the whole numerical calculation of India's oil import data from the oil suppliers of West Asia.

The recent Covid-19 crisis across the world and the continued fall of the crude oil demand and supply changed the economic flow of the Gulf countries. The recent move by OPEC to cut production and issues with Russia and Saudi Arabia over the

production of oil also caused the decline in price of crude oil in the international market. Iran is also facing many problems due to the cut in demand for crude oil and the recent American sanctions. So, more or less, India is not presently in a difficult position even though it has not reduced its oil prices despite the low price of oil in the international market until May 2020.

Deteriorating Iran-US Relations on the Nuclear Issue

The relations between Iran and the US deteriorated after the Iranian Revolution of 1979. During the time of Mohammad Reza Shah, the relations were so good, and Iran was one of the key players and agents of the US in the region along with Israel and Saudi Arabia. But the Iranian Revolution changed the whole political calculation of the West when Tehran took a completely new path in its foreign policy. Iran is a member of the IAEA and signed NPT/NNPT in 1968, assuring the UN watchdog IAEA and EU (2+1, England, France and Germany). Iran claims that its nuclear projects in Bushehr, Arak and Natanz are for energy purposes and not for developing nuclear bomb as the US alleges. But the US mounted pressure on Iran to suspend uranium enrichment and the nuclear project and insisted that UN nuclear watchdog IAEA should go ahead and tighten the grip over Iranian regime. The situation deteriorated fast, and in January 2008, Iranian naval speedboats threatened US navy ships in the Strait of Hormuz, which sparked high-level tension between the two rival countries.

The new twist in Iran-US relations started when Trump scrapped the Iran Nuclear Agreement signed on 2 April 2015 at Lausanne between the P5+1 and Iran. The 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) agreement, which was signed during the Obama presidency, was scrapped in May 2018. President Trump also criticised Obama for giving Iran 1.8 billion dollars as part of the deal. Some of the experts later pointed out that it was related to the settlement of unfulfilled military orders from the 1970s.[13] Relations between the US and Iran have steadily deteriorated since the unilateral withdrawal of the US from the deal, despite the objection of European Union members, especially Germany. After scrapping the deal, the US re-imposed sanctions on Iran's oil and banking sectors along with other sectors to maximise pressure on Iran. The result of the embargo on Iran's oil export was adverse, which is the country's main income source.

Apart from this, the Syrian crisis and Iran-Saudi tension in the wake of the drone and missile strikes at the Saudi Aramco facilities on 14 September 2019 are also adversely affecting the region. The drone strike halted about five per cent of the world's oil production, so the price of oil in the international market rose unexpectedly. The attack on Saudi oil facilities was severe and it damaged its oil economy. But some experts pointed out the role of Houthi rebel behind the attack.

The rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia is not for religious leadership but for political leadership plus regional supremacy. Saudi Arabia has the support of the US and the Western world, but Iran is getting the backing of Russia and China. The proximity between Iran and Russia is often visible, but the Syrian crisis has boosted their fractured relations. Riyadh and Tehran both blame each other for the deteriorating relations. However, Iranians continue to go to Makkah and Medina during the Hajj time. But the interference of the external powers for their political and economic purposes has been worsening the situation. Recently, a Saudi oil facility was hit by a drone attack, and several countries, including the US, blamed Iran, but the Iranian government official denied any role and involvement.

In the second week of October 2019, an Iranian oil tanker was attacked by a rocket on the Red Sea, 100 kilometers south of Jeddah, and no casualty was reported; this was allegedly the result of the Iran-Saudi rivalry. The rivalry between two Muslim countries allows the US and its Western ally to interfere deeply in the region, which has 60 per cent of the world's oil reserves.Prolonged US sanctions since 1979, and unilateral American withdrawal from JCPOA, and fresh sanctions by the Trump administration crippled the Iranian economy badly. The worldwide Covid-19 epidemic also badly damaged the economy at the global level. In such a time of crisis when the demand for oil in the international market continues to be below, the Iranian economy needed to be revived. They were forced to look for some alternative paths to revive the country. The new Iranian move toward China, finalized in the form of a $400-billion strategic partnership deal for 25 years, and dropping of India from the old Chahbahar rail project need to be seen in this perspective. The reason cited for the dropping of India from its earlier deal was the delay in funding for the project.[14]

Conclusion

India and Iran are among the oldest friends in the region. They share many similarities and have the capacity to handle their bilateral relations cordially. Their relations may sometimes fluctuate due to various factors and regional and global issues. India and Iran have been historical partners for a long time, and both started a new inning of diplomacy through the Chabahar. In the last two decades, their bilateral relations have been through ups and downs. This new initiative will help further firm up the relations between the two historical friends and regional powers of Asia. The relations irked many rivals in the region as well as the world power due to the Chabahar agreement. The US has never fully accepted this relation because they want to keep Iran in trouble. Since the Islamic Revolution of Iran, the US has been imposing sanctions to crush the Iranian economy, but it has failed even after 40 years of continued sanctions. India-Iran agreement on Chabahar has given a

special edge to this relation. It is expected to further boost the economies of both countries, and cause the trade figures to double in the coming years. India has its particular interest in Chabahar as it helps the country gets closer to Afghanistan, where India has invested heavily. The other important aspect of Chabahar is that New Delhi will be close to the Central Asian countries for trade and commerce at a lower cost of transportation. India also wanted to keep its old friend Afghanistan within its diplomatic domain and restrict Pakistan and China through the Chabahar port.

Calculating all these advantages of Chabahar, the US has opposed this deal from the very beginning as it has the potential to revive the Iranian economy and bypass American sanctions. For the US, Iran is a big enemy and obstacle and threat to American hegemony in the West Asian region. India has its own political and strategic calculations to have close ties with these countries with different strategical designs. For India, US and Tehran are equally important, Tehran is important because of India's huge need for oil, which cannot be fulfilled by impoting oil from Saudi Arabia and Iraq. Similarly, India needs technology enhancement and military equipment to maintain the status quo in the region as well as to maintain the power equation for its armed forces. India has signed an agreement with Russia to get S-400 Air Defence System, some of which have already reached. Side by side it has also received American Apache helicopters for its armed forces.

So on the one side, India is looking for an economic partner like Iran for gaining access to Afghanistan and Central Asian countries for trade and commerce, and on the other side, New Delhi is determined to have good relations with the US to fill the power vacuum. The other important factor is that India is heavily dependent on Israel for small arms and ammunition needs of its armed forces. Israel is known to be the US agent in the West Asian region and a close ally of Washington. Washington and Tel Aviv shares multifaceted relations. India is paying extra attention to the two countries for economic and military support.

The new twist in the story emerged after the US and Taliban signed a deal on 29 February 2020 in Doha. They reached a consensus on the withdrawal of the remaining US forces from Afghanistan's soil within 14 months. This US-Taliban deal is not only an alarm bell for the India-Iran but India-Afghanistan relations as well. The recent deal will hamper the efforts made by New Delhi in Afghanistan on different fronts, especially economic, security and reconstruction work, and also will create a security vacuum and confusion in the region. New Delhi's intervention in Afghanistan is not only to contain nefarious Pakistani activities along its border but also to divert Islamabad's attention to two fronts, Kashmir and Afghanistan. To keep bilateral relations strong, India invested around $2 billion in various Afghanistan projects since 2001. Despite Taliban attacks, most projects are based on humanitarian grounds, like building dams, hospitals, and roads across the country.

Pakistan was getting all kinds of support from the Islamic countries and OIC, but in the last two decades, India has proved its strong relations with the Gulf countries and the Islamic World. Indian Prime Minister Modi received the highest award in Saudi Arabia and the UAE, which has already changed Islamabad's calculations.

After twenty years of continued Indian support for a war-torn country, which was fully paralysed as revealed by human development indices, this agreement between the US and Taliban came as surprise and a diplomatic challenge for New Delhi. Indian diplomatic circles are taking cautious steps to analyse the fragile situation and evaluate India's stakes that, in turn, pose a sever challenge. India should also try to use their soft-power diplomacy and reshape their foreign policy to handle the upcoming challenges in Afghanistan. In the coming few months, the Taliban will be able to control maximum territory and form a new government, and then very few options will remain in the hands of diplomats to handle Pakistan. When India makes significant investments in economic and security interests in the Central Asian region, it will diminish the significance of Chabahar and weaken Iranian influence.

Finally, India-Iran relations became stronger due to the Chabahar agreement and the goods movement will make the economy stronger despite the regional and international hurdles. India and Iran are also committed to exploring engagements in other sectors where these two countries can benefit from each other despite restrictions on Iranian oil exports. In the last two years, the US government has restored the Obama administration's decision on a nuclear deal with Iran; Trump's retreat from the nuclear agreement has disturbed the whole region and it has especially harmed the Indian interests. The Chinese investment in the rail project and Iran dropping India from the Chabahar rail project is a new setback for New Delhi, but there is hope that both countries will continue to improve their bilateral relations. The investment in Chabahar Port appears to be another project derailment that needs to be assessed again, and the new US-Taliban accord would affect India's prospects because of this.

End Notes

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Of Migration: Locating Migrant Labourers in Kerala

Kabeer K.T. and Rajesh Komath

ABSTRACT

The paper examines literature on migration and stating an economic rationale of the movements of people from country to country, state to states and rural-urban interconnectedness. The mobility of people is driven by many hopes and aspirations which are primarily economic but it produces many other non-economic factors which are socially and culturally embedded. The context of Kerala is one such state/place that gives unimagined social security to the migrant labourers in the form of high level of wage rate and relatively better conditions of work. Literatures on internal migration reveal that a new paradox is visible in the migration pattern of Kerala and the flow of internal migration towards the state is on the rise. The role of the state and the perceptions of the people of Kerala towards labour and work as an ideology and practice produce spaces of labour and capital more dialogic though one could identify forms of exploitation in the case of labour recruitment and the extraction of unpaid money to the hand of middleman. However, public action and concern of the state made migrant labourers to lead relatively decent working condition in Kerala.

Key Words: Economy, Internal Migration, Mobility, Migrant Labour, State, Migration Paradox

Introduction

The movement of people from one place to another in search of better economic conditions and a more secure environment is known as human migration. Such movements not only affect the living situation of the migrants but also lead to significant economic and social transformation in the regions of origin and the destination of the migrants. Migration is considered an essential driver of economic efficiency in more developed countries, but the process remains relatively understudied, under-measured, and misunderstood in less developed countries (LDCs). Existing evidence shows that internal migration in LDCs, as in the case of underdeveloped countries (UDCs), is beneficial for economic development, efficiency,

and social change, while pathways of influence are complex (International encyclopaedia of the social and behavioural sciences, 2015). Migration plays a vital role in determining the distribution of a region's population and the labour force supply. The pull and push theory of migration coined by Ravenstein states that people migrate because of factors that push them out of their existing place or nation and factors that pull them into another location or country and this movement happens due to the desire to be better off than they currently are, and the deteriorating living conditions force them to move to better places (Ravenstein 1886). Many plus and minus factors at the origin and destination cause migration, the plus factors or positive factors which hold people within the area or pull others to it and opposing forces that repel or push people from the site and some zero points neither attract nor repel people from migrating (Lee, 1966).

Internal and international are universal phenomenon and the trend of these migrations is on the increase in almost all the regions of the world. There are several motivations why people choose internal migration from one place to another. Migration with family is considered pull-induced if there is a significant increase in expected earnings at the destination location. Family migration will be regarded as push induced if the expected income in the destination is less. Still, the families' decision to move is primarily motivated by the search for alternative survival options (Jayaraj, 2013). Literatures say that economic factors are the leading factor determining the decision to migrate, and it has gained momentum in the globalised world. Other than economic factors, people are forced to move due to conflict, human rights violations, violence, extreme weather, etc at the origin. Certain social, cultural and geographical factors also significantly influence the decision in the process of migration.

Background of the study

Internal migration has tremendous potential for poverty reduction, meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and contributing to economic growth in developing countries than international migration (Priya Deshingkar, 2006). Internal migration involves the movement of poorer people from poorer regions of a country to certain flourishes areas or regions and ultimately it has a substantial role in attaining the Millennium Development Goals. Internal migration is an essential driver of growth in many sectors, including agriculture, manufacturing, construction, coastal economies, and services of a region (Priya Deshingkar, 2006; Edgell, and Granter, (2020). In recent years, the word "migration" has nearly always been associated with international migration while internal migration has been subsumed under such terms as population distribution or urbanization, and those working on international migration seldom consider internal migration as relevant

to their interests (Skeldon, 2003). Therefore, internal migration has tended to be neglected in the literature of migration and economic development. The flow of people within the country is not well recorded or documented; therefore, it is neglected and less discussed by scholars.

It is observed that internal migration regularly takes place in countries with large population and also having vast territory and the process of migration widens as these countries experience a larger divide in the rural urban living and also with inter-state disparities. Internal migration is a regular phenomenon in India as the country experiences significant differences in the economic development among states. People flow from rural to urban areas and also from one state to another for better opportunities. In India most of the internal migration is semi-permanent in nature as the migrants are temporarily attracted to the better economic opportunities that are there in the other regions or states. Recently, the southern state of Kerala has witnessed an influx of internal migration to the state due to different reasons. This flow of internal migration has significant labour market effect as it reduces the poverty and unemployment at the origin and filling the requirements of the economy at the destination. Kerala has been experienced large scale outmigration from the state to gulf countries since 1980s and this external labour migration from the state did not create any major problems in the labour market of the state at the early phases of migration, but in the last two decades Kerala's labour market has faced tremendous changes. The continuous large scale out-migration of labour force from the state has created severe scarcity of semiskilled and un-skilled workers in almost all sectors of the economy. This has caused to increase the wage rate in the state for all types of labourers. The shortage of skilled, semi skilled and unskilled workforce in the state has resulted in to large scale in migration from other states of India (Dilip Sakia, 2014). This inflow of internal migration to the state from northern and north eastern part of India is on the increase. Reports say that migrants who left the state due to covid-19 pandemic started to turn back to the state in large scale for their better prospects. In these circumstances this paper tries to analyse the following research questions.

1) What are the driving factors of internal migration with special reference to the Kerala state?

2) What are the recent trend and pattern in the internal migration towards Kerala state?

Data and Methods

This study is basically a review based study and for that it extensively makes use of the literature related to internal migration with special reference to Kerala

state. Various reports published by different agencies with regard to the internal migrants of Kerala and literature published in different journals and books are extensively reviewed to make a valid estimation of the size of internal migrants of the state and also for analysing the driving forces of internal migration. In addition to different research articles data provided by Labour Commissionerate, Government of Kerala, Economic reviews of state Planning Board, Reports of Gulati Institute of Finance and Taxation, data provided by Centre for Migration and Inclusive development (CMID), National Sample Survey Data, Kerala Migration Surveys of CDS, etc. are extensively used to make this study authentic. For making analysis logical this paper is divided in to two parts. The first part of the paper analyses driving factors of the internal migration with special reference to Kerala state and the second part analyses the trends and pattern of internal migration towards the state.

Part-1:Inter-State Migration to Kerala and Driving Factors

Temporary migration is increasing in Asian countries as the population of developing countries has never been static, and people have moved around a great deal for several historical, cultural, climatic, and economic reasons (International Migration Organisation, 2005). In India, inter-state migration is a common phenomenon mainly driven by pulls and push factors. Attractive factors like high wage rates, more employment opportunities in the other states, modern amenities, etc., pull the people from different conditions and many other repelling factors at origin push people to other states for migration (Bose, 1974). Relatively better development of some states in India due to the growth of the manufacturing and service sector attracts many migrant workers to these states from poor States. According to the estimate of the 64th round National Sample Survey, 232 persons out of 1000 migrants cross the border of their respective states to work in different States. Various studies revealed that most of these inter-state migrants are temporary migrants, their records are roughly available, and their socio-economic conditions are miserable and pathetic. The movements of migrants make an overwhelming socio-economic impact at the origin and also at the destinations. The significant implications of migration on the source areas or birth occur through changes in the labour market, income, and assets, the patterns of expenditure, and investments (IMO, 2005). Literature says that migration offers a more diversified livelihood strategy for migrants as it support for pushing up wages in rural areas. Reviews reveal that in a country like India, with an exploding population, increasing urbanization rate, and regional disparities in development, the flow of migration from rural to urban regions and from one state to another are on the increase.

Exceptionally high wage rates compared to the rest of India, sustained job opportunities, peaceful social environment, relatively less discriminatory treatment

of workers, direct trains from native states, and development of ICT shortened the distance from their homes have influenced the migration to Kerala (Benoy and Vishnu 2017). Poor economic conditions in the native place, high wage rate, better employment opportunities in Kerala have been identified as the main reasons for migration to Kerala (Dilip 2014). Emigration of workers from Kerala, demographic contraction of the supply of young workers brought about by the rapid demographic transition in the state and the higher wages charged by Kerala workers, the ability of Kerala workers to sustain themselves with remittances from relatives, and the reluctance on the part of Kerala workers to do hard physical work all have stimulated the era of replacement migration in Kerala (Rajan and James, 2007). The relatively higher wages, enormous employment opportunities, and shortages of local labourers make Kerala a lucrative job destination for workers outside the State. This has made Kerala an emerging destination of internal migrants from other states in India. But Kerala continues to send its workers to the Middle East and Europe (Udaya S Mishra, S IrudayaRajan, 2018). Reviews say that economic factors mainly drive internal migration, and it plays a significant role in moulding a region's population's social, economic, and structural characteristics. Given the demographic conditions of the native population, shortage of labour, current penetration of migrant workers in the state, and the precarious state of human development in the source regions, this migration is only likely to increase in the coming years (Benoy and Vishnu, 2017). Evidences say that work environment of migrant labourers and government interventions for inclusive welfare programmes make a place an attractive destination for internal migrants. In addition to economic factors other important factors namely; work environment and government intervention make the Kerala state an attractive destination for internal migrants especially for the migrants from northern parts of India.

Work Environment as a driving factor of internal migration

Interstate migrant workers are engaged in different areas such as agriculture, construction, hotel and restaurant, manufacturing, and trade. It is evident that 60 percent of the migrant workers are engaged in the construction sectors, 8 percent in manufacturing, 7percent in hotels and restaurants, 2 percent each in trade and agriculture, and the remaining 23 percent engaged in other activities (Economic Review 2018). The majority of the workers involved in large-scale work are young single men from backward communities in rural areas, predominantly from Jharkhand, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, and West Bengal (Benoy and Vishnu, 2017). The high wage paid to the migrant labourers compared with their homeland is a major factor attracting the migrants to the state. In the construction sector, they are paid at least Rs.400/- a day, and a majority of the migrants work for more than

10 hours a day without any reluctance, and this is the main factor that makes migrant labourers attractive in the local markets of Kerala (Asha Elizabeth Thomas, 2018). It is a fact said that migrant labourers are easy to manage and work continuously without breaks. They also put in long hours and are ready to do overtime with no extra pay. In the construction sector, these labourer's typical working day extends to 14 hours a day. Even though labourers are satisfied with the wages they are paid for their work, in many cases, it is due to the poor job market and extreme poverty in their homeland (Asha, 2018). Deepa (2014) observed in her study that migrants are ready to take risks and work in hazardous conditions and local employers find it easy to have migrants because there are almost no complaints, however, they love to work here as the state provides them with a comparatively better work environment.

The migrant workers get more number of workings days with a higher wage rate in Kerala than what they received in their native places. This has significantly improved their earnings, and they have moved from low to high-income brackets (Saikia, 2008). Internal migrants are earning a monthly average income that is more than that of their previous monthly earnings at the origin. It is seen that the present average monthly earning of migrants in the state is estimated as Rs. 15833 for all migrant workers in contrast to their previous average earning at the origin of Rs. 8640. It is observed from various studies that the monthly average earnings of the migrant workers in the state are still high across sectors even though the Covid-19 pandemic and lock-down have negatively affected their employment. Reviews revealed that despite many shortcomings, Kerala has been far better for migrant labourers. Compared to other states, in Kerala workers face less discrimination and get good wages and their work environment is comparatively better.

Government Interventions as driving factor of Internal Migrants

Kerala's experience in promoting the welfare of internal migrant workers offers essential lessons for the inclusion of migrant workers in India, as Kerala is the first Indian state to enact a social security scheme for migrant workers (Srivastava 2020). The state's concern for the welfare of the interstate migrant workers is reflected in the way it constituted a Working Group on Labour Migration under the 13th Five-Year Plan deliberations for the period 2017–2022 (Benoy 2020). Various departments have taken several measures for the inclusion of migrant workers. The evidence shows the intervention of the education department of Kerala for promoting inclusive education for children of migrant workers with the appointment of educational volunteers who speak the mother tongues of the migrant workers in the specific areas with a high density of migrant children. With the help of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan project, these volunteers also tried to enrol migrant children in the schools.

The Kerala State Literacy Mission, from 2017 onwards, commenced another programme for teaching the migrants Hindi and Malayalam.

Interstate Migrant Workers Welfare Scheme (ISMWWS), a separate fund, was created under the Kerala Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board (KBOCWWB) in 2010 for the welfare of migrant workers. Under this scheme, a migrant worker in the age group 18 to 60 years can enrol in the plan one month after their arrival in the state by paying a renewable annual membership fee of rupees 30. The government of Kerala contributes a sum equal to three times the yearly receipts through membership to the fund, and a matching contribution is earmarked from the KBOCWWB. Under the Kerala Migrant Workers Welfare Scheme, a registered migrant will get accident coverage or medical care for up to Rs 25,000. As far as migrants are concerned, the probability of accident or death is high as they are ready to take hazardous jobs. In case of death, the family of the migrant would get Rs 1 lakh as well as funds to embalm and transport the body to their state. In addition, education allowance for the workers' children and termination benefits of Rs 25,000 after five years of work is the other benefits of this scheme. To avail all these benefits a migrant worker needs to register with the schemes and the membership has to be renewed every year. But only a few migrants are aware of all these schemes. The government is now issuing pamphlets and application forms in the local languages of migrants to make them aware of various government schemes.

'Aawaz' is an insurance scheme launched by the Department of Labour and Skills (DOLS), Government of Kerala, in 2016, exclusively designed as a free insurance scheme for migrant workers. Under the Aawaz scheme, migrant labour will get a health insurance cover of Rupees 15,000 and an accidental insurance cover of two lakhs. Over five lakh Aawaz cards have been issued so far to interstate migrant workers during the period 2016 to 2020. 'ApnaGhar' is another scheme launched in the year 2019 by the Government of Kerala to provide affordable rental housing to migrant workers in different places of the state. It envisages dormitory-style rooms, cooking and dining facilities, drying areas, and toilets. This hostel is available to the migrant workers at subsidized rent through their employer. The first construction of such a hostel is materialized at the Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in Kanjikode, Palakkad, with 620 beds. The department plans to construct such hostels in all the districts across the state. The department also plans to start kiosks and call centres with people proficient in Hindi as staff to interact and understand the problems of the labourers. Migrant Suraksha Project has been implemented across the State under the aegis of the Kerala State Aids Control Society among the migrant labourers since 2009 mainly to detect HIV-positive cases among them and to create awareness of AIDS. The Department of social justice has started setting up mobile crèches to take care of kids of migrant workers. Kudumbashree Mission has also initiated efforts

to bring female migrant workers into their groups. Nowadays, many private foundations and NGOs have their own 'migrant Suraksha projects' and free medical camps aiming at the welfare of the internal migrants of the State.

During the COVID-19 lockdown, the Kerala government's intervention to help the migrant workers in the state was reasonably inclusive and appreciable. The state's effective response to workers' distress during the lockdown emanates from its overall disaster preparedness and resilience achieved from confronting two consecutive state-wide natural disasters and a public health emergency in the immediate past (Benoy, 2020). Free food provided through community kitchens and other facilities to migrant workers is wonderful model of state Government. The Department of Local Self-Government on 20 March 2020 issued a detailed order that to be carried out for the preventive measures in the midst of COVID-19 pandemic.

Apart from government initiatives, the collective efforts of the volunteers, activists, Civil Society Organisations, corporate entities, employers, contractors and neighbourhood societies to support migrants in the pandemic has become an amazing model of extending help to the vulnerable. The social media groups were also created at the national level to facilitate interstate support for migrant workers (Benoy, 2020). Studies conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic observed that government and other agencies' intervention has positively affected the living of internal migrants in the state. The combined efforts by the government and other agencies helped the internal migrants to feel safe in the state. A survey reveals that the internal migrants' income has decreased due to COVID-19 related factors, whereas the health concerns of the migrants are not as severe as observed in the other states of India. The state's concern over the welfare of the interstate migrant workers is reflected in the socio-psychological life of migrants working in the state, as a majority of them expressed less concern over their health issues and medical expenses during the COVID-19 pandemic. From various reviews and reports, it could be concluded that unlike other states, the concern of Kerala state for the welfare of its migrant labourers has become a model of inclusive growth.

Part-II: Recent trend and pattern in the internal migration towards Kerala

Estimating the total stock of internal migrants in Kerala is not an easy task, and some of the well-known methods of estimation based on sample surveys are not of much help in the context of the state. The fundamental problem is not having a proper sampling frame (Narayana, 2013). The State Planning Board has given a total size of internal migrants in the state as 393281 as on 31.07.2019 (Economic Review 2019). The estimation made by the Planning Board regarding the size of the total

stock of internal migrants and their percentage in the state's real labour force is far different from the actual situation. The state planning board has used the data provided by Labour Commission, Government of Kerala, which in turn, makes use of the registered migrant's data in their estimation. It often leads to discrepancies and demands for intensive field studies for the correct estimate of the size of internal migrants in the state. An intensive estimate was prepared by the Gulati Institute of Finance and Taxation (GIFT), Thiruvananthapuram, in 2013 by conducting an extensive field study across the state. As per the estimate, the volume of internal migrants or Domestic Migrant Labourers (DML) was 2.5 million in 2013. Assuming that the estimation is rigorous and extrapolating when taking into account the net annual addition of migrants, possible growth in migration rate, as well as accounting for the migration from the neighbouring states, Kerala was expected to have 3.5 to 4 million inter-state migrant workers in 2018 (Narayana, 2013). The estimated figure state that the size of internal migrants in the state population comes to around 12 percent and its volume is high in many districts like Ernakulum, Palakkad, and Kozhikode.

A contemporary study by Jajati Keshari Parida, submitted to the Kerala state planning board in March 2021, has estimated the stock of internal migrants as 31.4 lakhs. It is noted that the growth rate of temporary migration has been rising, whereas the growth rate of permanent migration is declining in Kerala. The growth rate of temporary migration was about 6.5 percent per annum during the year 2005-06. This growth rate increased to about 9 percent during 2017-18. On the other hand, the growth rate of permanent migration declined from 7.7 percent to about 4 percent per annum during 2005-06 and 2017-18. The rising temporary migration from other states is mainly because of the increasing demand for these workers in Kerala, particularly for the low-skilled jobs (Jajati, 2021). The report has projected the number of interstate migrants in Kerala for 2025 and 2030 based on the growth rates of interstate migration. From the given trend, it is estimated that the total number of migrants in Kerala will be 45.7 lakhs by the year 2025 and 55.9 lakhs by the year 2030. Table 1 shows the district wise estimation of internal in- migrants for the year 2017- 18 and its projected numbers for the years 2025 and 2030.

Previous studies on internal migration like Kumar (2011), Rajan and Moses (2012), Saikia (2014; 2015), Manoj and Viswanath (2015), Mohan (2016) and Peter and Vishnu (2017) etc. have looked in to the migrants problems in relation to the employment status, earning status, housing condition and living conditions etc. The findings of these studies reveal that migration inflow to the state during 1980s and 1990s were mainly dominated from the neighbouring states Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. However, this trend has been changed in the recent years as a large number of in-migrants are started coming from the far off northern states of India

and. Inflow of migrants to the state is seen from the relatively backward states like West Bengal, UP, Assam, Bihar, Odisha, Jharkhand, and north eastern states and these workers have filled the vacuums created by external migration

Table 1: Estimated and Projected Number of Internal Migrant Workers in Kerala

| Districts	Estimated number of Internal Migrants (in lakhs)	Projected No. of Migrants (in lakhs)	
	2017-18	**2025**	**2030**
Alappuzha	2.4	3.5	4.3
Ernakulam	6.3	9.2	11.2
Idduki	1.2	1.7	2.1
Kannur	2	2.9	3.6
Kasaragod	1.1	1.6	2.0
Kollam	1.6	2.3	2.8
Kottayam	2	2.9	3.6
Kozhikode	2.8	4.1	5.0
Malapuram	1.9	2.8	3.4
Palakkad	1.6	2.3	2.8
Pathanamthitta	1.6	2.3	2.8
Thiruvananthapuram	3.4	4.9	6.1
Thrissur	2.8	4.1	5.0
Wayanad	0.8	1.2	1.4
Total	**31.4**	**45.7**	**55.9**

Source: *In-migration, informal employment and urbanisation in Kerala- Report submitted to State Planning Board, 2021.*

External migration from Kerala to the Gulf countries during 1970s, 1980s and 1990s and to the Europe and North American regions since 2000 is on the increase for last five decades (Zachariah et al., 2002; Rajan and Kumar, 2010; Zachariah and Rajan 2012 and 2016). Among the states of India, Kerala also ranks the top in terms of international remittance receipts (Parida and Raman, 2019; Raman, 2012). The remittance of migrants is largely spent on real estate market and construction sectors of the state, which in turn, increased the demand for unskilled workers in construction and other sectors. This resulted to the influx of internal in migrants to the state. It is observed that the in-migrants to Kerala almost match the quantum

of international migrants from Kerala and giving rise to the phenomenon of replacement migration (Udaya and S Irudaya, 2018).

While going through the literature on the migration phenomenon of the state, it is apparent that a circular pattern is visible in the migration flow of Kerala. The unique pattern of labour movement in the state could be termed as 'migration paradox' as it establishes a phenomenon which causes people to migrate from the origin to other nations due to unemployment and in turn the flow of internal in migrants from different destinations to the origin due to the employment opportunities created by the outmigration. This phenomenon of migration paradox of the state is depicted in the following chart (chart: 1).

Chart1. Migration flow and the migration paradox of Kerala
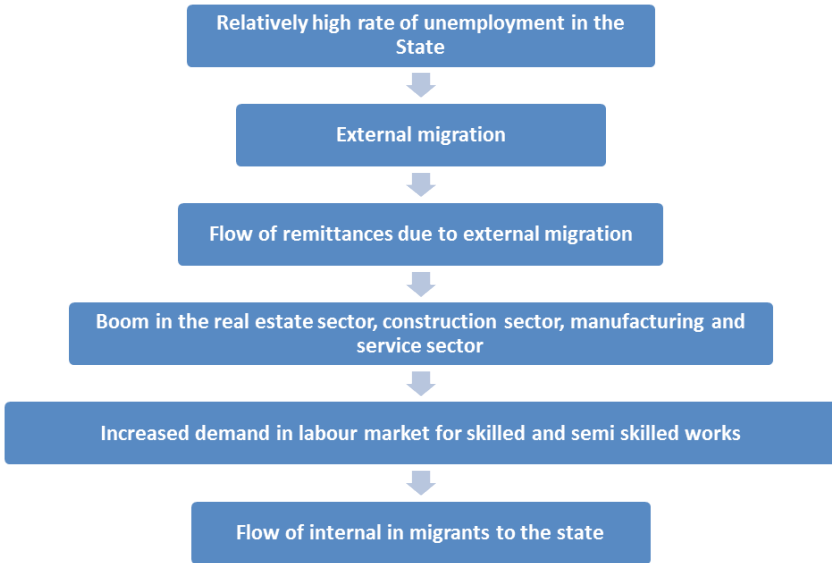
The chart shows how the continuous large-scale out-migration of labour from the state has caused for the influx of internal migration and the replacement of outflow of labour force with internal inflow of labour.

In Lieu of Conclusion

It is a fact that since 1961, labourers from Karnataka and Tamil Nadu came to Kerala in search of manual jobs. Later, in the 1990s, when the construction and MSME work flourished in the state, labourers from Orissa started migrating to Kerala. But in the last two decades, Kerala has experienced a considerable influx of labourers from

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north and North East Indian sates in addition to the neighbouring Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. Though the state intervenes in many forms, as stated in the preceding pages, most schemes are unaware of workers. A classic case in point is the Aawaz health insurance scheme. None of them has availed health insurance during 2018-2019. The mismatch in communication between the local self-government bodies and the migrant population is a severe problem that shall be separately addressed in the context of respiratory diseases like the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The data culled out through the works of literature, and various estimates on internal migration, observation of the field of labour camps, talking to the workers and their conditions of employment, a large population from north and north eastern part of India have moved to a tiny state of Kerala. This has changed the conventional labour relations of the state. These labourers are made use of the construction of projects of the state and private capital. The small and large firms producing specific products such as plywood and plastics in Perumbavoor and Angamali, local spaces of production units have also emerged. Theoretically, it is interesting to observe the dynamics of migration of labour and capital scattered across the country to a small state Kerala. Labour of different ethnic groups, crony capital or clusters of capital as well as inter-state relations; make these production spaces a social space of hybridism of labour and capital. Subsequently, otherwise passive labour relations within Kerala were subjected to change and adopted new forms of recruitment and organizational culture of the workers. It could have a role even in micro politics and the structure of society.

Productions of cultural space that acculturate between different ethnic groups are also evident in the Orissa girl who goes to a Malayalam school and speaks fluent Malayalam. Otherwise impossible case of schooling a kid from a working-class family in northern states made possible in Kerala would be another culturally driving force to migrate to Kerala, despite the higher wage rate. With internal migration, a new market form has also emerged in small and big towns in Kerala. Sunday congregation of the migrant population use spaces of street vendors of the locality or open space before a shutting shelter of the shop for the operation of Sunday market. However, it often turns into a site of conflict between the locals and the migrant. These issues of the economy and society in an intersection of the local, migrant, ethnic connection of the labour and capital shall be studied in detail to understand both macro and microstructures of migration.

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Abstract

Human Rights are those inalienable rights which acquired its contemporary form and content through different stages of human societal evolution. A meaningful contextualization of the contemporary notions of human rights essentially necessitates a revisit of different methodological theoretical frameworks of human rights which are embedded with different material structures and power relations in the society. The nation states across the world take numerous steps and programmes for the protection and promotion of human rights. The NGOs also help the governments in this venture. The grassroot contacts of the NGOs can effectively identify the human rights violations, articulate them and help the governments to prevent them. Here comes the importance of the human rights NGOs. They take care to reduce the rate of human rights violations. A large number of human rights NGOs are working at the national, international and the local levels to help the governments to formulate policies and programmes for preventing the grave human rights violations. The universe of the human rights NGOs is highly diverse and all may not share the same common vision. They use several techniques and methods for the prevention of human rights violations. These techniques include information gathering, evaluation and dissemination of human rights violation, advocacy, developing human rights norms and lobbying, legal aids and humanitarian relief, building solidarity etc. This paper discusses the origin, growth and role of human rights NGOs in India with focusing on Jammu and Kashmir region.

Introduction

The World Bank has defined NGOs as private organizations that pursue activities to relieve suffering, promote the interests of the poor, protect the environment or undertake community development. Another interpretation is that NGOs as a wide variety of groups and institutions that are entirely or largely independent of governments and characterized primarily by humanitarian or co-operative, rather than commercial objectives. The NGOs are 'non-governmental'

'non-profit-making', 'voluntary', 'altruistic', 'philanthropic' and 'private' organisations. The main purpose of these organisatons is to provide the necessary services and relief to the socially and economically weaker sections of the society. These non-profit voluntary groups are usually established at local, national as well as international levels. They perform different tasks for solving the problems that enhance the development of the society.

The NGOs are connected with government or private sector firms. The social issues which they deal with include women empowerment, gender issues, education, pollution, health, slum dwellers, street children, urban development, human rights, concerns of less privileged etc. they take care to bring up people's concerns and issues to the government and policy makers. The NGOs fulfil a variety of roles in the society that, among others, include delivering aid and assistance, monitoring, education, grass-roots political action and service delivery. One of the fundamental roles of the NGOs, however, lies beyond the representation of the marginalised and voiceless or the challenging of government policy. They are integral in promoting hope within society by bringing about a socio economic change. This is a role that is immeasurable, unquantifiable, and intangible. Voluntary organisation is not a new phenomenon in the World. Voluntary effort has always been an important part of our culture and social tradition (Kurakose 1989). In recent years, they have increased in considerable number, acquired greater importance and put up many new experiments in the field of rural development. The NGOs can play a crucial role in bringing about the socio economic development of the nation by supplementing the Government efforts as they are close to the hearts of the rural people.

Historical Development of NGOs in India

In India, there is a strong link between the history of development organizations and the history of voluntary efforts. The history of social welfare and social reform movements are also linked to the ones mentioned earlier. The religious and the social reform movements like the Brahma Samaj, the Arya Samaj, the Prarthana Samaj, the Ramakrishna Mission, the Theosophical movement etc[1]. had a similar approach since they adopted reformist approaches to eradicate the prevalent social evils and the religious dogmas that existed in the society. Untouchability, caste rigidity, human bondage and inhuman treatment of the women and the children were some of the evil, which were deep- rooted in the society at that time (Beteille 1999). Many educational and literary societies were set up, with an aim to expose the emerging middle class to the secular Western thoughts and ideas.

The earliest reform movement of the modern type which was greatly influenced by the Western ideas was the Brahma Samaj. Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1774-1883) was

the founder of the Brahma Samaj. Roy's contribution to this movement was long lasting. He re- interpreted the Hindu doctrines and found ample spiritual basis for his humanitarianism in the Upanishads. He started a campaign for the abolition of the Sati, a social evil, condemned polygamy and concubinage, denounced casteism and also advocated the right of the Hindu widows to remarry. The Arya Samaj movement could be viewed as an outcome of the reaction to the Western influence. It's founder, Swami Dayanand, rejected the Western ideas and sought to revive the ancient religion of the Aryans (Grover & Sethi 1970). The Ramakrishna Mission was founded by Swami Vivekananda in 1897. It was founded with the purpose of preparing the youths to dedicate themselves to the service of the God. This could be achieved by serving humanity.

The appearance of the great leader, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi during the struggle for independence changed the nature of voluntarism in India and there began a process of networking of organizations under his leadership. Gandhiji's call was for collective action to end the social evils like untouchability, casteism and illiteracy. People's participation at the grass roots level was essential to needed for achieve this task. Gandhiji felt that 'Constructive Work' was distinct from 'Political Work'. According to him, sooner or later, all development work would turn out to be political work. This was evident from the emergence of such organizations like 'All-India Spinners Association (1925)' and 'All India Village Industries Association (1934)[2]'. Soon after independence, Gandhiji made a strong plea for disbanding the Indian National Congress (the political party which came into power), and transforming it into a Lok Sevak Sangh (Public Service Organization), which was rejected (Brass, 1990) Nevertheless, the whole range of 'Constructive activities' of the national movement, spearheaded by the Indian National Congress, were continued in the form of 'non-governmental agencies'. The followers of Gandhi who did not wish to join the government or the ruling party established a number of voluntary (Non-governmental) organizations to work closely with the governmental programmes. These programmes were aimed at promoting the welfare of people belonging to diverse social strata, from Harijans (the untouchables) and tribals to slum dwellers, and also for setting up important sectors of a mixed economy, which was the development strategy adopted by the Government. Such agencies organized various handicrafts and village industries, rural development programmes, credit co- operatives, educational institutions and retained a degree of autonomy in their functioning (Jain 1997). Later, a new set of social work organizations were added to these, in the rural areas, in community development, panchayati raj and other such bodies. However, there has been a significant change over the years in the character of these organizations. Marcus Franda says, "whether for groups inspired by religion, by Gandhi, by a political ideology or by patronage politics, has run counter to the

old ides of welfare, charity, and social reform to emphasise professionalism, in the service of self reliant community development" (Franda, 1982). The public policy tends to depend heavily on such organizations and as result, it has motivated them to upgrade their technical skills and even to have a regular salaried staff.

The second phase of the growth of the NGOs in India occurred in the 1960s. The iniquitous nature of the State and the inability of the government programmes to benefit the deprived sections, provided the awareness that mere implementation of the governmental schemes by the State sponsored agencies was not enough, and could in fact be counter productive. This resulted in the emergence of a new set of more struggle-oriented groups. Today there are a large number of such organizations, struggling for the poor, the landless, the tribals, the bonded labourers, and many other social strata, that are being discriminated against both by the policies of the State and the dominant elements in the social structure (Chandra, 2001). These NGOs constitute a whole spectrum of different kinds of voluntary groups. The large NGOs, with their headquarters, their branches and their bureaucracies covering the whole country, are often in close liaison with the ruling groups. They are associated with many developmental schemes, but most often the benefits do not really reach the poor. They seem to suffer from the same weakness that the government bureaucracy and the political parties do. Still they have grown and developed in different sectors. They concentrate on the matters of bonded labour, child labour, women labour, migrant labour, and the labour of those who are forced to work below the subsistence levels. This is the result of a fast changing national and international division of labour (Kothari, 1988). This new breed of voluntary organizations has got their own demerits. First of all, they are scattered. Most of them operate only at the micro-level; the co – ordination among them is not strong; and they often find it difficult to work smoothly with each other. Some of them suffer from the lack of leadership, ego complexes and ideological problems.

Role of the Human Rights NGOs in India

There has been a change in the nature and the character of the voluntary agencies in recent times. In the past, such agencies adopted a religious oriented mass approach, in an informal atmosphere. However, at present, the agencies adopt a nationalist oriented group approach, in a formal atmosphere. The objective of the current approach is a socio-economic development of the specified target group, through paid, whole time and formally trained workers. They raise funds from the masses, take interest in government/international aid and collect fees for the services rendered (Padhy, 1986). The earlier approach stressed on the programmes of education, medicine and social reforms in their action plans. The services provided by its members were honorary and free of cost to the beneficiaries.

It is difficult to make a specific distinction between a voluntary agency and an NGO in the Indian context. An NGO may be a body or an institution registered under the Societies Registration Act[3], Cooperative Societies Act, Public Trust Act and the Companies Act constituted with a general body, executive council, chief executive, paid staff and volunteers. Such institutions/organizations may concentrate their work at the local, district or state levels. They will specialize in areas like formal education, adult education, and women's education, setting up hospitals and dispensaries and other social service schemes. Around 10,000 NGOs are working in the field of social welfare alone, which got impetus from the 1950s onwards, with the establishment of the Central Social Welfare Board[4]. This body provided financial assistance for promoting and strengthening the NGOs in the field of social welfare (Franda 1982). Along with that, the introduction of the National Service Scheme[5] in the colleges and the Universities and the establishment of the Union Department of Youth Affairs and Sports played a crucial role in the promotion of voluntary action by the youth and to promote their participation in development. In the 1970s, the voluntary agencies were set up with an aim to implement the developmental projects under the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP)[6]. As part of this programme, the educated young families moved to the rural and tribal areas and empowered the rural poor through the NGOs. In spite of this, an analysis of the NGOs working in different fields such as social welfare, rural development and other areas indicate that they are unevenly distributed field wise. For example, the majority of the NGOs concentrate in the metropolis and very few of these are working in the rural and tribal areas (Chowdhary, 1988).

A large number of voluntary organizations have come into existence in the field of rural development at the national level during the past two decades. These fall into three categories. The first category consists of The Techno-Managerial Voluntary Agencies, which work on the principle that the process of rural development can be accelerated through modern management techniques and technology. The second division is the Reformist Voluntary Agencies, which try to bring about changes in the social and economic relationship with the existing political framework; and finally there are the Radical Voluntary Agencies, which seek to challenge the existing production relations. They also undertake some economic, health or educational programmes as an 'entry point' to mobilize masses for political action (Jain, Krishnamurthy & Tripathi 1985). The Voluntary organizations and movements started for the purpose of protection of environment like the 'Chipko Andolan'[7] (hug the trees) led by Sunderlal Bahuguna, the Narmada Valley Protection Movement[8], led by Medha Patkar etc., are also included in this category.

The NGOs have an indispensable role in the development of India. The contribution of the NGOs in India has been substantial in the areas of education –

both formal and non-formal, health and medical services, social welfare services, youth development etc. They have been known for their virtues of dedication, flexibility, self-reliance and nearness to the community. However, because of the interaction with the government and the introduction of professionalism in their services, it seems that these virtues have eroded to a large extent.

Since the NGOs have started getting the government funds, their flexibility of operations has also diminished. This is because they have to maintain a number of records and registers and engage themselves in much paper work that they have not done before. In fact, some of the NGOs at the national level are more bureaucratic in their functioning when compared to the governmental agencies. The utilization of the grants calls for rules and regulations which have not only stood in the way of flexibility in their operations, but also initiative, experimentation and self-reliance for which the NGOs were known (Chowdhary, 1985). Having, with such power and patronage, some of the NGOs have become highly politicized and tend to stick to the side of the power elite, than to the deserved people whom they are actually supposed to serve. The politicians have also developed vested interests in these organizations and use them for their political gains rather than helping them to freely accomplish their goals of serving the client groups.

The NGOs should also take interest to show how the indigenous resources could be used, how human resources, rural skill and local knowledge which are grossly under-utilized at present could be used for their own development. It is the duty of the NGOs to demystify technology and bring it in a simple form to the rural poor and to train a cadre of grassroot workers who believe in professionalizing voluntarism. They should also take interest to mobilize financial resources from within the community with a view to make the communities stand on their own feet and also to mobilize and organize the poor and generate awareness to demand quality services and impose a community system of accountability on the performance of village level government functionaries (Government of India, 1985). The Seventh plan has given special importance to the role of the NGOs in rural development. An amount of Rs. 150 crores has been allocated for the first time, as financial assistance to the voluntary associations in their endeavour to uplift the rural poor. The government of India has also encouraged the involvement of international voluntary agencies through coordinating organizations like the Central Social Welfare Board and the People's Action for Development (PAD), presently known as the Council for Advancement for People's Action for Rural Technology[9] (CAPART) (Ahmed, 2001).

One is the social welfare role of the NGOs, where the focus is for relief and charity. Such NGOs can be seen as initiating internal programmes and projects. Another role is the mediatory role, where communication as a skill is important for development and social action. The NGOs which function with this goal can be seen

as participating or taking up external programmes and projects. Some NGOs have the consultative role, where documentation and dissemination of information and expertise is critical. Local experts/professionals/resource persons play major secondary roles. Besides these, the NGOs are also involved in development and operation of infrastructure. The community- based organizations and cooperatives can acquire, subdivide and develop land, construct housing, provide infrastructure and operate and maintain infrastructure such as wells or public toilets and solid waste collection services (Davies, 2014). Supporting innovation, demonstration and pilot projects is yet another initiative of the NGOs. They have the advantage of selecting particular places for innovative projects and specify in advance the length of time which they will be supporting the project - overcoming some of the shortcomings that governments face in this respect. They also play a major role in facilitating communication. The significance of this role to the government is that NGOs can communicate to the policy-making levels of government, information about the lives, capabilities, attitudes and cultural characteristics of people at the local level.

The NGOs can facilitate communication upward from people to the government and downward from the government to the people. They also engage in research, monitoring and evaluation. Innovative activities need to be carefully documented and shared - effective participatory monitoring would permit the sharing of results with the people themselves as well as with the project staff (Cousins, 1991). Major national human rights NGOs are People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL), People's Union for Democratic Rights (PUDR), Child Rights and You, Bandhua Mukti Morcha, Red Cross, Community Support Concern (CSC), the Centre for Education and Communication etc.

Human Rights NGOs in Jammu and Kashmir

The State of Jammu and Kashmir emerged as a volatile area right after the Partition in 1947. Soon after the Partition, both India and Pakistan came up with the claims for Kashmir and thus started the Kashmir dispute, which has not been settled till date. The State has gradually turned out to be a region where the human rights violations are at their height. This article focuses on the role of the human rights NGOs in Kashmir and examines the extent to which these NGOs function for protecting and promoting the human rights in this region. Terrorism and the anti-terror measures adopted by the State have inflicted sufferings to a large portion of the Kashmiri society. Human rights violations and abuses have been regularly reported from the Kashmir Valley. These violations and atrocities have taken place there at an alarming rate. The Central and the State governments have taken many steps to restore peace and tranquility in this region (Noorani, 2011). The human

rights NGOs in Kashmir also play a pivotal role in this venture. Besides these, the national and the international NGOs also contribute much for restoring peace and order in Kashmir. Though the human rights NGOs, especially the local human rights NGOs, have become crucial to the human rights movement, the fact is that very little attention is given to analyze their operations or to set out a framework in which their roles are critically examined.

Large number of human rights violations has taken place here after the independence. Hence the NGOs have ample scope for flourishing in this region. There are several NGOs that are working to help the citizens of the State and to give all possible contributions to social as well as the economic development. They also work for the well being and the development of the people (Kishwar 2003). The NGOs working here may be classified as the international NGOs, the national NGOs and the local NGOs. The international NGOs like the Amnesty International (AI), Human Rights Watch (HRW), Red Cross etc. always take care to analyse the human rights situations in this region. They make necessary reports and give suggestions to the government and to other concerned authorities. The national NGOs like PUCL, PUDR and others also report the human rights situation there and play a major role in making known to the wider world the concrete condition prevailing there. There are many local NGOs, which have a clear role for protecting and promoting the human rights in Jammu and Kashmir. The major local NGOs are the Association for Social Health in India (ASHI), the Human Welfare Foundation, the Jammu Kashmir Development Action Group (JKDAG), the Kishtwar Child Welfare, the Catholic Social Service Society (CSSS), the Manava Seva Socity (MSS) etc.

Role of International, National and Local NGOs in Kashmir

The national and international human rights NGOs are performing a significant role in documenting and sensitizing the human rights violations in Kashmir. The main function of the international and the national NGOs in Kashmir is to prepare up to date reports on the human rights situation and to analyse the range of human rights violations taking place there. Through these reports, the world comes to know about the human rights situation in the State. The researcher's informal discussion with the volunteers of AI and PUCL functionaries at different areas of Kashmir and officials located at the headquarters in New Delhi ascertain the above fact. The expert team of these NGOs visits the area where serious human rights violations have taken place. Following this, the team makes reports on their first hand assessment. In this way, they make the society aware of the Kashmir issue by preparing reports on the basis of the survey conducted, regarding the conditions in Jammu and Kashmir. Such reports are circulated as widely as possible so that the people and the Government are made conscious of the facts. Thus, fact-finding and publicity task

are the major contributions of these NGOs (Indian Institute of Human Rights 2007). Since the adoption of the UDHR by the UN General Assembly in 1948, the countries across the world provide extensive importance to the reports made by these NGOs and remain vigilant. The Central Government and the State Government of Jammu and Kashmir have been forced to bring about some policies and laws on the basis of these reports. Thus AI and PUCL have a significant role to ensure the protection and promotion of human rights in Jammu and Kashmir.

The AI and PUCL take special interest in bringing to the notice of the world, the human rights violations like mass killing, rape and molestations, enforced disappearances, illegal detentions, ethnic cleansing of the Hindus and the Sikhs etc. For example, in 2010, the AI published a report regarding the illegal detention of a political leader, Shabir Ahmad Shah. The AI, after going through this case, requested the Government to withdraw the PSA. It also suggested that those held in custody illegally should be provided with the opportunity to meet their relatives. Necessary requirements should be made for legal counsel as well as medical examination (AI, 2011). Another report of the AI deals with the Draft of the J&K Police Bill, 2013. In its report, it conveys its deep concern that if the Bill is passed into law in its current form, it might make the perpetual exemption from punishment for human rights violations that witness in the State (AI, 2013). In another report of the AI, regarding the illegal detention and harassment of a teenager boy Mushtaq Saleem Beigh, it demands the State authorities to immediately end the detention of the boy if he is not being held on the charges of a recognizably criminal offence. The AI takes special interest in bringing to the notice of the world the abuses against children and it urges to protect their rights (AI, 2012). Similarly, the PUCL reports and press release have a profound influence on the national policy makers and the general public in the country. In 1990, a report was drafted by the PUCL regarding the Kashmir situation on the basis of a team visit. The team members got an opportunity to meet and communicate with a large number of people, which helped them to know about the extent of the human rights violations committed by the security agencies in the State. The team found that the reason behind the anguish of the people of the Kashmir Valley against India was because of the continuous curfew imposed in Srinagar. After this report came out, some significant changes took place in the Government's policy towards the State. The curfew was lifted by the Government. Attempts were made to ensure the supply of the medical and the essential commodities in the area (PUCL, 1993). It is evident from these reports that the AI and PUCL function to protect the civil and political rights in Jammu and Kashmir.

The local human rights NGOs are performing a major role in widening the notions of human rights in Kashmir. The two local NGOs, i.e., CSSS and JKDAG, were taken for analyzing the role of the local human rights NGOs in Kashmir. The

frequent interaction with various stakeholders involved in human rights issues in J&K, confirmed the above fact. The field interaction with various sections of the civil society groups and the Government officials reveal that the local NGOs were performing a significant role in protecting human rights and in widening the notions of human rights in the State. The local NGOs in Kashmir concentrate on promoting human rights and social development in the urban as well as the rural communities. In addition, they also take part in the social welfare programmes organized by the Government. Their thrust areas include betterment of the children, women empowerment, promotion of education and healthcare, setting up small scale industries, generating job opportunities for the poor, disaster management, human rights awareness, provision of shelter for the needy and the helpless, creating awareness among the public and so on. Besides these usual activities, they also take care in setting up old age homes for elderly persons, charitable homes for physically handicapped and mentally challenged persons, and organizations for the upliftment of the rural children and women (Sikand, 2004). They also put effort for the betterment of the backward and the deprived communities, and for the eradication of poverty and health related issues.

The focus of CSSS is the organizing of various activities that aim at community development. Keeping this in mind, it takes care to set up Village Health Committees and Self Helps Groups that strengthen the villagers. The NGO also organizes adult literacy classes, remedial classes for the economically backward students, Entrepreneurship Development Programmes for the youth, health awareness camps and social awareness programmes for the villagers and so on. It also conducts counselling programme for women and adolescent girls. CSSS has gained the attention of the country because of its rehabilitation of the HIV infected patients, differently abled children and that of the victims of the earthquake in the Uri region of the Baramulla district. The empowerment of women through the formation of Mahila Mandals is also a notable initiative of the CSSS (CSSS, 2014-2015).

JKDAG's activities focus to bring about a profound social change, resulting in total transformation of the society, through practicing the message of perfect love. Establishment of child care homes and educational institutions is one of the major activities of JKDAG. It promotes youth development and women empowerment. The NGO's work in providing rehabilitation to the victims of the flood that hit Jammu and Kashmir in 2014 was commendable. The local NGOs in J&K are mainly focusing on the promotion of social, economic and cultural lives of the Kashmiri population. They also generate awareness against the various social evils like dowry, domestic violence, religious intolerance, illiteracy, etc. They also take up the issues like environmental degradation, lack of proper education, absence of basic facilities like food, medicine, clothes, increase in the rate of unemployment, the menace of poverty

and child labour, molestation of women, female foeticide and so on (JKDAG, 2014-2015).

In Jammu and Kashmir, international, national as well as the local NGOs are functioning in a cordial atmosphere. International and national NGOs in J&K mainly focus on the protection and promotion of civil and political rights and the local NGOs concentrate on economic, social and cultural rights. The recommendations and the findings of the NGOs like the AI and the PUCL regarding the area of Jammu and Kashmir have been given due consideration by the civil society groups and the Central and the State Governments. The local NGOs mainly function to consolidate and further advance the initiatives of the national and the international NGOs regarding human rights. They also ensure that the people of Jammu and Kashmir are benefited by such initiatives. The operational hardship and other difficulties encountered by the NGOs from the Government agencies are often redressed by the independent functioning of the judiciary in the State. Judiciary has a prominent role for the protection and safeguard of the rights of the Kashmiri people. Thus, most local NGOs depend on the Judiciary for getting redresses of their grievances.

Conclusion

NGOs in India have been trying to sensitize, organize and mobilize people at village, local community level and various other levels, and also interested groups particularly the poor to enable them to pursue self- development, fight for their rights and apply pressure on the government where needed. All these involve a process of education, organization, struggle and reconstruction. Although NGOs have been quite successful in bringing to the attention of the Government, some of the burning problems in respect of development, poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, ill- health, disparities, incidence of bonded labour, human rights violations, women's rights, peace and social cohesion and communal harmony, equal opportunity to different social culture, ethnic and regional groups to pursue development and contribute to national regeneration, in the absence of any comprehensive study on the influence of NGOs on the formulation and implementation of policies in India, it is difficult to evaluate their influence on policy processes. Despite this, the impact of various NGOs in certain specific areas is indeed discernible.

International and national NGOs attempt to maintain a peaceful atmosphere in the State of Jammu and Kashmir. At times, it is through the reports of these NGOs that the world comes to know about the grave human rights violations taking place in the State. These reports bring to light the real situation in Jammu and Kashmir. National and international NGOs make the people of Kashmir aware of their rights and to come forward to report the violations of their rights to the Government with courage. It is appreciable that these NGOs have assisted in preventing the menace

of human rights violations. Local NGOs can adapt well in to the local situations; easily respond to the local needs and as a result are comfortable to carry out their projects anywhere. They possess a good understanding with people, which is in fact essential while catering to their needs. For the NGOs to promote local innovations and to come up with solutions to local problems, they must make some of the following features as part of their activities. They should take special interest in building the innovative capacity of the local leaders and the organizations; in providing support to experimentation, documenting new approaches and in spreading these approaches in the areas that are under target. Besides these, the local NGOs should take steps to provide international acclaim to these innovations. They should make facilities for peer exchange. In addition, striving for the creation of a forum for policy makers to learn about the innovations and incorporating these innovations into their policies should also be one of the missions of these NGOs. So, in Jammu and Kashmir, international, national as well as the local NGOs have significant role and functioning in a cordial atmosphere to make peace in that region.

Notes

1. Brahmo Samaj is the societal component of Brahmoism, a monotheistic reformist and renaissance movement of the Hindu religion. This movement was started at Calcutta on 20th August, 1828 by Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Debendranath Tagore. Arya Samaj is a Hindu reform movement founded on 7th April, 1875. It was founded by Swami Dayananda, an ascetic who believed in the infallible authority of the Vedas, and emphasized the ideals of brahmacharya (chastity). Prarthana Samaj which meant 'Prayer Society' in Sanskrit, was a movement for religious and social reform based on the earlier reform movements which was started in Bombay. It was founded by Dr. Atmaram Pandurang in 1867. Ramakrishna Mission is an organisation which forms the core of a worldwide spiritual movement known as the Ramakrishna Movement or the Vedanta Movement. It is a philanthropic, volunteer organisation founded by Ramakrishna's chief disciple Swami Vivekananda, on 1st, May, 1897. The Theosophical Society is an organization which was formed in 1875 in New York City, US. Its main aim was to advance theosophy. It was started by Helena Blavatsky, Henry Steel Olcott, William Quan Judge and others. Its initial objective was the study and elucidation of Occultism, the Cabala etc.

2. The Constitution of the All-India Spinners' Association (Mahatma Gandhi) - An organization called the All-India Spinners' Association was established with the consent of the All-India Congress Committee, as an integral part of the Congress organization, but with independent existence and powers. It emerged as a result of the discussion for the establishment of an expert organization for the development of hand-spinning and khaddar. Such development was not possible without a permanent organization, unaffected and uncontrolled by politics, political changes or political bodies.

3. The Indian Societies Registration Act of 1860 was enacted under the British Raj in India, but is largely still in force in India today. It provides for the registration of literary, scientific and charitable societies. Under the Act societies may be formed, by way of a memorandum of association, by any seven or more people associated for any literary, scientific or charitable purpose. The memorandum of association has to be filed with the

Registrar of Societies. The memorandum has to contain the name of the society, its objects, and the names, addresses, and occupations of the members of the governing body, by whatever name it may be called, duly signed for consent by all the members forming the society. A copy of the rules and regulations of the society also has to be filed along with the memorandum of association. A fee of Rs. 50 is payable in cash, for registration. According to section 20 of the Society Act, 1860, a society registration can be done for the purposes of Promotion of fine arts, Diffusion of political education and Grant of charitable assistance.

4. The Central Social Welfare Board is the key organisation in the field of social welfare in India. Created in 1953 it comprises of a full-time chairperson and members representing state and union territories. Its general body consists of 51 members headed by the chairperson. The board assists in the improvement and development of social welfare activities. Its functions are: To survey the need and requirements of social welfare organisations, to promote the setting up of social welfare institutions in remote areas, to promote programmes of training and organize pilot projects in social work, to subsidies hostels for working women and the blind, to give grants-in-aid to voluntary institutions and NGOs providing welfare service to vulnerable sections of society and to coordinate assistance extended to welfare agencies by Union and state governments.

5. The National Service Scheme is an Indian government sector public service program conducted by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports of the Government of India. Popularly known as NSS, the scheme was launched in Gandhiji's Centenary year in 1969. After independence the University Grants Commission, headed by S. Radhakrishnan, recommended the introduction of voluntary national service in academic institutions. This idea was again considered by the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) at its meeting in January, 1950; after examining the idea and the experiences of other countries in this field, the board recommended that students and teachers should devote time to voluntary manual work. In the draft first Five-Year Plan adopted by the government in 1952, the need for social and labour service by Indian students for one year was stressed. In 1958 Jawaharlal Nehru, in a letter to the chief ministers, considered the idea of social service as a prerequisite for graduation. He directed the Ministry of Education to formulate a suitable scheme for the introduction of national service into academic institutions

6. The Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) is a rural development programme of the Government of India which was launched in the financial year 1978 and extended throughout India by 1980. It is a self-employment programme intended to raise the income-generation capacity of target groups among the poor. The target group consists largely of small and marginal farmers, agricultural labourers and rural artisans living below the poverty line. Within the target group, there is an assured coverage of 50 per cent for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, 40 per cent for women and 3 per cent for the physically handicapped. Priority in assistance is also given to the families belonging to the assignees of ceiling surplus land, Green Card holders covered under the Family Welfare Programme and freed bonded labourers. The objective of IRDP is to provide suitable income-generating assets through a mix of subsidy and credit to below-poverty-line families with a view to bring them above the poverty line.

7. The Chipko Movement was a battle waged by the village folk of Garhwal in Uttarakhand against commercial forestry. Chandi Prasad Bhatt was the founder of the Chipko Movement, which was born in the Alakananda Valley and soon spread to different parts of India. Its main aim was the fostering of love towards trees in the harts of humans. The village folk embraced the trees to prevent others from cutting off the trees and that's how the term 'Chipko', i.e., 'to stick' came into being. In fact, there was a massive participation

of the womenfolk to carry out the protests, which upheld their rights to make use of the forest for their daily needs of firewood and fodder without damaging the environment. The relevance of the Chipko Movement is that it has led to an awakening of concern for nature, inspiring similar movements in different parts of the country.

8. Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA) is a social movement that has been formed to protest against a number of large dams being built across the Narmada River, which flows through Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh. Sardar Sarovar Dam in Gujarat, one of the biggest dams on the river, became the first focal point of the movement. This movement consisted of the adivassis, farmers, environmentalists and human rights activists. Their mode of protest includes hunger strikes and receiving support from noted film personalities. The leading spokespersons of the movement are Medha Patkar and Baba Amte, which bagged the Right Livelihood Award was bagged by NBA in 1991.

9. Council for Advancement of People's Action and Rural Technology (CAPART) was launched in 1986. It works as a nodal agency for catalyzing and coordinating the emerging partnership between voluntary organizations and the Government for sustainable development of rural areas. The initiatives of CAPART are i) to encourage, promote and assist voluntary action for the implementation of projects intending enhancement of rural prosperity. (ii) To strengthen and promote voluntary efforts in rural development with focus on injecting new technological inputs.

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Indigenous Land Rights and Conservation Conundrum

Jenni K. Alex and Xavier Kurian P.

Abstract

Indigenous communities comprise roughly one third of the world´s poor and their territories overlap with all the biodiverse regions of the world. The issue of indigenous land rights and anti-conservation movements are complementary which questions the every action related to conservation. The indigenous communities suffer human rights abuses from governments, civil conflict and protected areas imposition on their territories without prior informed consent. The relationship between protected areas and community land rights is important not only in human rights perspective but also in biodiversity conservation at global scale. Land and natural resources are fundamental to the existence, livelihood, cultural heritage, identity, and future opportunities of Indigenous Peoples and local communities for survival. The declaration of more and more protected areas is important for biodiversity conservation but most often relocation, eviction and ban on customary practices and even rituals has tremendous reverberations on Indigenous Peoples and local communities who are the real stewards of Earth. Thus, secure rights to land and resources are essential for enabling people to exercise their traditional knowledge and management systems, defend against external threats, and govern their lands to meet the long-term needs of current and future generations.

Key Words: Sustainable Development, Conservation, Land rights, Eviction

Introduction

The quest for notification of more and more areas for pristine nature conservation for wildlife and habitats, broader landscapes, and climate change are on the rise globally. Historically, protected areas have been established as part of broader processes of expropriation of community lands, and have therefore been a flashpoint for conflict between conservation agencies and indigenous communities. Springer and Almeida (2015) has well studied about the issues in connection with protected areas and the land rights of indigenous population where the

understanding of diverse tenure situations that exist within and outside protected areas and to direct attention to the issues associated with community land and resource rights in various conservation initiatives. In short, protection, preservation and management of ecosystems, habitats and wildlife in maintaining biological diversity is a cross-cutting and double edged issue, especially in developing world. In a 2006 global overview of evictions from protected areas Brockington and Igoe (2006) opined that most protected areas in which physical relocations have occurred were established before 1980. In addition to the direct impacts of eviction, restrictions and ban on access to and the use of vital resources, access to cultural and sacred sites, livelihood deprivation have led to the penury of customary rights and also the erosion of traditional cultures.

Conservation in colonial period: Confiscation and exclusion

Colonialism is premised on exploitation of colonized people, their territories and resources brutally where the acquisition of new lands and natural resources are of overriding influence. Indigenous people and other local communities were considered as objects that needed to be subdued, detached or egested for exploiting their labour and assure unshackled access to their lands and the "productive" use of resources (Murphy, 2009 and Ongolo *et al.*, 2018). This separation of indigenous peoples from their natural environments has devastating consequences for indigenous peoples and the environment. In due course, protected areas began to be established in an era of broader colonial conquest and confiscation of the lands and territories of Indigenous Peoples has begun with enough support from concerned governments. During the colonial period, land was claimed, especially common land, for the state, without regard for the existing rights of ownership and use under customary tenure. In establishing the first "modern" protected area in 1872 (Yellowstone National Park) and another in 1890 (Yosemite National Park), the United States government violently expelled the Native Americans from both of the areas who lived in and depended on the natural resources in the areas for even centuries (Dowie, 2009). The whole action has contributed the formation of pristine "wildernesses," devoid of any human interference.

Land Rights and conservation: The world Experience

The issue of land rights, conservation, and justice is a global challenge that requires concerted efforts from governments, civil society, and the private sector. According to the United Nations, around 2.5 billion people depend on land and natural resources for their livelihoods, and more than 80% of the world's biodiversity is found on indigenous and community lands. However, these lands are often under threat from declaration of new protected areas, large-scale infrastructure projects,

extractive industries, and commercial agriculture, which can lead to land grabs, displacement, and environmental degradation. To address these challenges, an array of international agreements and initiatives are proclaimed, where these frameworks recognize the importance of protecting the rights of indigenous and local communities.

One of the most significant challenges associated with land rights and conservation is the conflict between conservation and development. Many development projects, such as infrastructure development, mining, and agriculture, require the use of land and natural resources that are also critical for conservation (CBD, 2020). This often results in conflicts between conservation objectives and economic development goals, with local communities and indigenous people (Bennett et al., 2017). In some cases, conservation projects have resulted in the displacement of local communities and indigenous people from their traditional lands and resources (Garnett et al., 2018). These communities are often excluded from decision-making processes and do not receive compensation for the loss of their land and livelihoods (Harrison, 2015). This has resulted in human rights violations, poverty, and social unrest (Garnett et al., 2018). Thus, there is a need for transformative change that promotes sustainable and inclusive development which requires strong political will, effective governance systems, and the participation and empowerment of indigenous and local communities. It also requires a shift towards a more equitable and sustainable economic model that recognizes the value of natural resources and prioritizes the well-being of people and the planet.

Land Rights and conservation: National status

The issue of land rights has been in the limelight for decades, but it has been intensified in recent years due to increasing conflicts over land, displacement of indigenous peoples, due to various conservation initiatives. India has been implementing various policies and laws to address the issue of land rights and conservation, but the results have been mixed. In India, land rights, conservation, and justice are intertwined issues that are shaped by the country's complex social, political, and economic context. The rights of indigenous people are often undermined by the lack of legal recognition of customary land rights, weak governance systems, and the encroachment of large-scale infrastructure projects and commercial agriculture. India also faces unique conservation challenges. The rapid pace of development, coupled with climate change, has led to the loss of biodiversity. The Indian government has implemented various conservation measures, including the Wildlife Protection Act and the Forest Conservation Act, to protect the country's biodiversity. However, these measures have also been criticized for their failure to take into account the needs and aspirations of local communities.

Conservation efforts in India have sometimes resulted in the displacement of local communities who depend on those lands for their livelihoods. In many cases, these communities have been denied access to the forests and other natural resources that they have traditionally depended on for their survival. The Forest Rights Act of 2006 was enacted to recognize and vest forest rights and occupation in forest land in forest-dwelling Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers who have been residing in such forests for generations but whose rights have not been recorded. This act recognizes the land rights of local communities and has been seen as a positive step towards justice and conservation. However, its implementation has been uneven, with many communities still struggling to gain recognition of their land rights. Moreover, there are concerns that the act may not be sufficient to protect the rights of forest-dwelling communities in the face of powerful economic interests (Saxena, 2016).

Overall, the interlinkage among conservation, people and land rights in India is complex and multifaceted. Efforts to promote conservation must take into account the rights and needs of local communities, and efforts to promote justice must consider the ecological and environmental context in which communities live.

Challenges for the Interlinkage

India is home to many conservation and biodiversity hotspots, but at the same time, it faces a significant challenge of balancing conservation with social justice and land rights. The country is inhabited by diverse communities, and the management of natural resources is intricately linked with their lives and livelihoods. The conservation policies and practices often infringe upon the land rights of indigenous and marginalized communities and lead to conflicts between them and the state. Here are some of the serious problems of reconciliation for conservation, justice, and land rights in India and highlights some of the recent developments in this regard.

- *Conflict between Conservation and Indigenous Communities*

  The conservation policies and practices in India often disregard the traditional knowledge and practices of the indigenous communities, who have been living in harmony with nature for centuries. The Protected Area (PA) network, which is one of the main strategies for biodiversity conservation in India, has been criticized for its displacement of indigenous communities from their lands and resources (Fanari, 2019a). The communities often face restrictions on their access to forest resources, which affects their livelihoods, cultural practices, and social identity (Fanari, 2019b).

- *Exclusion of Marginalized Communities from Decision-making*

  The marginalized communities, such as Dalits, Adivasis, and women, are often excluded from the decision-making processes related to natural resource management. The Forest Rights Act (FRA) of 2006, which aimed to give legal recognition to the land and forest rights of the forest-dwelling communities, has been criticized for its poor implementation and inadequate protection of the rights of the marginalized communities (Mishra & Upadhyay, 2021).

- *Inadequate Compensation and Rehabilitation*

  The displacement of communities from their lands and resources often leads to loss of livelihoods, social dislocation, and cultural erosion. The compensation and rehabilitation measures provided by the state are often inadequate and do not address the long-term impacts of displacement. The lack of alternative livelihood options and inadequate access to basic services, such as health and education, further exacerbate the situation (Rangarajan and Shahabuddin, 2006).

- *Recognition of Community Forest Rights*

  The recent amendment to the Indian Forest Act (IFA) of 1927 has recognized the community forest resource rights of the forest-dwelling communities. This amendment is expected to provide legal recognition and protection to the traditional rights of the communities over their forest resources (Government of India, 2019).

- *Decentralization of Forest Governance:*

  The Joint Forest Management (JFM) program, which aimed to involve local communities in the management of forest resources, has been expanded to include the Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs) and Van Panchayats (VPs). These committees have been given the power to manage and protect the forest resources and share the benefits with the communities (Pandey and Negi, 2016).

- *Conflicting Interests*

  One of the primary challenges is the conflicting interests of different stakeholders. On the one hand, conservationists aim to protect wildlife and natural resources, while on the other hand, local communities seek to exercise their rights over land and resources (Bhagwat et al., 2019).

- *Lack of Trust*

  Another significant problem is the lack of trust between conservationists and local communities. This mistrust stems from historical injustices and

the perception that conservation policies often prioritize the interests of outside actors over local communities (Rangarajan, 2018).

- *Inadequate Legal Frameworks*

  There is a lack of adequate legal frameworks to address the complex issues related to conservation, justice, and land rights in India. The existing laws and policies often do not adequately protect the rights of local communities or address their concerns.

- *Ineffective Communication*

  Poor communication between stakeholders is also a significant challenge. Many conservation initiatives fail to effectively communicate their goals and objectives to local communities, leading to misunderstandings and resistance (Rangarajan, 2018).

- *Limited Resources*

  Finally, limited financial and human resources often limit the effectiveness of conservation initiatives. Many conservation projects are underfunded, and the lack of resources makes it challenging to implement effective programs that take into account the needs and interests of local communities.

Reconciling strategies

The interlinkage between conservation, justice, and land rights in India is complex and challenging. There have been conflicts between conservationists and local communities over the use and management of natural resources. The implementation of the Forest Rights Act and other legal instruments aimed at protecting the rights of forest-dwelling communities is critical in ensuring a just and sustainable approach to conservation in India. However, there are also strategies that can be employed to promote reconciliation and balance the interests of conservation, justice, and land rights in India.

Participatory Governance

Participatory governance is a key approach to promoting sustainable development and addressing complex challenges related to land rights, conservation, and justice. The following are some examples of how participatory governance can be applied in these areas .Participatory governance is a strategy that involves involving local communities in the decision-making process for conservation initiatives. This can be achieved through the formation of local committees or cooperatives that have a say in the management of natural resources. By involving

local communities in the decision-making process, conservation initiatives can be designed in a way that addresses the needs and concerns of these communities. (Nagendra and Ostrom, 2012). The following are some examples of how participatory governance can be applied in these areas:

- *Land use planning*

  Participatory land use planning involves engaging local communities in the planning and decision-making processes related to land use. This approach can help to ensure that local communities have a voice in how land is used and can help to address issues related to land tenure and access.

- *Natural resource management*

  Participatory natural resource management involves working with local communities to manage and conserve natural resources. This approach can help to ensure that local communities have a stake in the conservation of natural resources and can benefit from sustainable resource use.

- *Environmental impact assessments*

  Participatory environmental impact assessments involve engaging local communities in the assessment of potential environmental impacts of development projects. This approach can help to ensure that local communities are aware of the potential impacts of development projects and can provide input into decision-making processes.

- *Conflict resolution*

  Participatory conflict resolution involves engaging local communities in the resolution of conflicts related to land rights, conservation, and justice. This approach can help to ensure that conflicts are resolved in a fair and equitable manner and can help to build trust and consensus among stakeholders.

- *Monitoring and evaluation*

  Participatory monitoring and evaluation involves engaging local communities in the monitoring and evaluation of conservation and development projects. This approach can help to ensure that projects are responsive to local needs and can help to build accountability and transparency (Cooke and Kothari, 2001).

Community-Based Conservation

Community-based conservation is an approach that involves empowering local communities to manage and protect natural resources. This approach recognizes the traditional knowledge and practices of local communities, and involves them in the conservation process. Community-based conservation has been successful in

several parts of India, where local communities have been recognized for their efforts to protect traditional agricultural practices and local plant varieties. (Baviskar, 2008). The examples of community-based conservation can be applied in these areas:

- *Land tenure*

  Community-based conservation can help to secure land tenure for local communities by recognizing and protecting their traditional rights to land and resources. This can help to address issues related to land grabbing and displacement and promote more equitable land use.

- *Sustainable resource use*

  Community-based conservation can help to promote sustainable resource use by working with local communities to develop and implement resource management plans. This can help to ensure that natural resources are used in a way that is environmentally sustainable and socially equitable.

- *Ecotourism*

  Community-based conservation can help to promote ecotourism by working with local communities to develop sustainable tourism activities. This can help to provide economic opportunities for local communities while also promoting conservation and environmental sustainability.

- *Capacity building*

  Community-based conservation can help to build the capacity of local communities to participate in decision-making processes related to land rights, conservation, and justice. This can help to ensure that local communities have the knowledge and skills necessary to advocate for their rights and interests.

Payment for Ecosystem Services

Payment for ecosystem services (PES) is a strategy that involves compensating local communities for their efforts to conserve and protect natural resources. This can be achieved through the provision of financial incentives or other benefits, such as access to education or healthcare. PES has been successful in several parts of the world, and has the potential to promote reconciliation between conservation and local communities in India. (Pagiola, 2008). This approach recognizes the economic value of ecosystem services, such as carbon sequestration, watershed protection, and biodiversity conservation, and promotes the involvement of local communities in decision-making processes related to land rights, conservation, and justice. The following are some examples of how PES can be applied in these areas:

- *Biodiversity conservation*

  PES can help to promote biodiversity conservation by providing financial incentives to landowners or communities for the conservation of endangered species and habitats. This can help to protect biodiversity hotspots and promote the sustainable use of natural resources.

- *Climate change mitigation*

  PES can help to mitigate climate change by providing financial incentives to landowners or communities for the sequestration of carbon in their forests or agricultural lands. This can help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote the sustainable use of natural resources.

- *Equity and justice*

  PES can help to promote equity and justice by ensuring that the financial benefits of ecosystem services are distributed in a way that is fair and equitable. This can help to address issues related to social and economic inequality and promote more inclusive and participatory decision-making processes

Community Forest Management

Community forest management is an approach that involves empowering local communities to manage and protect forests. This approach recognizes the traditional knowledge and practices of local communities and involves them in the conservation process. Community forest management has been successful in several parts of India, including Uttarakhand, where local communities have been recognized for their efforts to protect forest resources. (Bhattacharyya, 2016).

Inclusive Conservation

Inclusive conservation is an approach that recognizes the rights of local communities and involves them in the conservation process. This approach seeks to balance the interests of conservation and the rights of local communities, and recognizes the importance of traditional knowledge and practices. Inclusive conservation has been successful in several parts of India, including Nagaland, where local communities have been recognized for their efforts to protect biodiversity. (Pathak & Green, 2016)

Recognition of Traditional Knowledge and Practices

The recognition of traditional knowledge and practices of local communities is critical in ensuring a just and sustainable approach to conservation in India. This

involves the incorporation of traditional knowledge into conservation policies and practices, and the recognition of the rights of local communities to manage and protect natural resources (Dutta, 2018).

Strengthening of Legal Instruments

The implementation of legal instruments aimed at protecting the rights of forest-dwelling communities is critical in ensuring a just and sustainable approach to conservation in India. The Forest Rights Act of 2006, for example, recognizes the rights of forest-dwelling communities to manage and protect forests, and provides a legal framework for the recognition of their land rights.

Collaborative Governance

Collaborative governance involves the cooperation of different stakeholders in the management and protection of natural resources. This can be achieved through the formation of local committees or cooperatives that have a say in the management of natural resources. By involving local communities and other stakeholders in the decision-making process, conservation initiatives can be designed in a way that addresses the needs and concerns of all stakeholders. (Arora-Jonsson, 2014). Collaborative governance can contribute to promoting land rights, conservation, and justice in the following ways:

- *Inclusive decision-making*

  Collaborative governance can promote more inclusive and participatory decision-making processes by involving a diverse range of stakeholders in natural resource management. This can help to ensure that the needs and interests of local communities are taken into account and that conservation efforts are socially and environmentally sustainable.

- *Shared responsibility*

  Collaborative governance can promote shared responsibility for natural resource management by involving different stakeholders in the planning, implementation, and monitoring of conservation activities. This can help to promote greater accountability and transparency in natural resource management and ensure that conservation efforts are effectively implemented.

- *Conflict resolution*

  Collaborative governance can help to resolve conflicts related to natural resource management by promoting dialogue and negotiation between different stakeholders. This can help to build trust and foster greater

cooperation between different groups, and ensure that conservation efforts are implemented in a way that is socially and environmentally sustainable.

- *Capacity building*

    Collaborative governance can promote capacity building among different stakeholders by providing opportunities for training, education, and knowledge-sharing. This can help to build the skills and knowledge necessary for effective natural resource management and ensure that conservation efforts are implemented in a way that is technically sound and socially equitable.

- *Innovation and learning*

    Collaborative governance can promote innovation and learning by creating opportunities for experimentation, adaptation, and feedback. This can help to foster a culture of learning and continuous improvement in natural resource management, and ensure that conservation efforts are adapted to changing circumstances and emerging challenges (Ansell, & Gash, 2007).

Legal Recognition of Land and Resource Rights

The legal recognition of land and resource rights is critical in ensuring a just and sustainable approach to conservation in India. The Forest Rights Act (2006) and the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act (2008) are legal instruments aimed at protecting the rights of forest-dwelling communities in India. These laws recognize the customary rights of these communities to use and manage natural resources and are crucial in promoting a just and sustainable approach to conservation in India (Borikar & Kishore, 2014).

Conclusion

The past few decades has witnessed mushrooming of protected areas (wildlife sanctuaries/national parks/tiger reserves/community reserves) for environment and species protection. But, the indigenous communities who are the real owners of these land are facing incessant harassment, aimed at silencing their leaders and stopping them from organising themselves for their rights in homeland. The indigenous peoples rights to scared spaces and right to observe their cultural and social traditions, customary rights are being deliberately obstructed by the authorities which pave the way for social discontent and livelihood deprivation often results in anarchy. These communities have constitutional rights to these practices, whether they live inside or outside any forested area, just like people from other religions have constitutional rights to practice and propagate their own rituals. Addressing these underlying issues can help ensure that conservation efforts benefit both the

environment and the people who depend on it. It should be noted that the forest peoples have been persistent in the fight for their rights and against the anti-human model of 'fortress conservation' that destroys not only their life and livelihood but also the forest that is meant to protect life on earth. Unfortunately, their struggle is hardly known and their voices are often drowned by the dominant anti-people conservation narratives.

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A Conceptual Understanding of Sustainable Development and Energy Security in International Relations

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Abstract

   In this article an attempt has been made to understand the essential link between energy security and sustainable development. Sustainable development is one of the dimensions of development. Providing affordable, uninterrupted and clean energy is a critical part of achieving the goal of sustainable development by any modern state. Therefore, a conceptual clarification of sustainable development and energy security is necessary to bring out the complexity of the concept.

Origin of the concept 'Development' and 'Sustainability'

The earliest notions about development originated in pre-modern times predominantly during the classical Greco-Roman period and the transformation of the way of thinking about history and progress was due to the linear conception of time expressed in Hebrew and Christian theology (Von Wright, 1997). Augustine in the *City of God* portrayed the advancement of humankind in terms of successive emergent stages that was based on a six-stage scheme of human history (Augustine, 1871). The Christian concept of development in the medieval age included millennialism, utopian ideals, and a sense of urgency to improve this world in preparation for life in the next. Two crucial lines of thought about human progress were established in Europe by the 13th century: awareness of the cumulative advancement of culture and a belief in a future golden age of morality on this earth. During the Renaissance, ideas of cyclical recurrence were propagated, but reformation thinkers recovered their belief in the linear progress of humanity (Nisbet, 1980).

During the Enlightenment period, the concept of development was initially articulated in 1683 by French scientist Fontenelle, who claimed that "humanity had begun a path of inevitable and endless progress thanks to new science and increased

technology" (Von Wright, 1997, p. 3). Development as a concept reached the West as a result of the works of Turgot, Condorcet, Saint-Simon, Comte, Hegel, Marx, Spencer, and many others who became the dominant figures of the Enlightenment and the period that followed it (1750 – 1900) (Von Wright, 1997).

In the proceeding era, the link between development and modern, empirical, and exact science got consolidated and the conviction that science was the golden avenue to the future and would give humankind mastery over nature grew stronger (Nisbet, 1980 & Von Wright, 1997). With advent of the Industrial Revolution by the beginning of the 18th century, human progress began to be inextricably connected to economic success and material advancement which, in turn, irreversibly reshaped human cultures. On the other hand, development based on material benefits led to the environmental degradation caused by the exploitation of raw materials on an unprecedented global scale (Goudie, 2000; Boyden, 1993). As a result, worries about sustainability have grown.

The term 'sustainability' was first coined in German forestry circles by Hans Carl von Carlowitz in *Sylvicultura Oeconomica* in 1713. Carlowitz promoted sustainability in the use of forest resources, which included finding a balance between cutting old trees and guaranteeing that there have been a sufficient number of new trees to replace them (Van Zon, 2002). John Stuart Mill provided a brief chapter on the 'Stable State' in his 1848 book *Principles of Political Economy*, which meant a stagnant situation of wealth and population but not human development. "I sincerely hope, for the sake of posterity", he wrote, that the world population "will be content to be stationary, long before necessity compels them to it," he wrote (Mill, 1883, pp.452 – 454). George Perkins Marsh's *Man and Nature*, published first in 1864, explained the fountainhead of the conservation movement. Marsh stated: "Man has long forgotten that the world was entrusted to him only for the sake of usufruct, not for consumption or trash" (Lowenthal, 1958, p.36). Alfred Russel Wallace in his *Our Wonderful Century: Its Successes and Failures*, published in 1898, included a chapter on the overexploitation of Earth's resources. He mentioned the damage done by the continuous destruction of the stored-up products of nature and regarded the uncontrolled extraction of non-renewable resources including coal, oil, gas, and minerals, and also the exploitation of the rain forests as an 'injury done to posterity (Wallace, 2014).

Based on the above observations, the origins of the notion of sustainability can be traced back to modernity. Population expansion coupled with increased consumption during and after the industrial revolution, and the threat of depletion of crucial resources such as wood, coal, and oil all contributed to a greater understanding of the need to manage resources responsibly over time.

Sustainable Development and International Relations

'Sustainable development', evolved out of rising awareness about ecological disasters, seems to be one of the crucial elements that shaped the global history in the late 20th century (Pisani, 2006). It is one of the dimensions of development and reveals a linkage between environmental policies and development strategies. In this context, it is very important to analyse the word 'sustainable' which comes before development, and for that, it is vital to understand the linkage between environmental policies and developmental strategies. When environmentalists began arguing about the effect of economic expansion on the environment in the 1960s, the notion of sustainable development was born. Various definitions of sustainability and sustainable development have been proposed and debated since then. On 19th December 1983 UN General Assembly established a special commission known as World Commission on Environment and Development chaired by Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland, who was nominated by UN Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar. Popularly known as Brundtland Commission, it submitted its report in 1987 titled *Our Common Future* which defined the philosophy of Sustainable Development as "humanity can make development sustainable to ensure that it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (Brundtland & World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987, p.8).

According to World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED)[1], sustainable development is a process of change in the exploitation of resources, the direction of investment, the orientation of technological developments, and in the present without affecting future needs (Brundtland & WCED, 1987). The development is a continuous effort toward building a comprehensive and adaptable future for people and the planet. Harmonising three main components, economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental management is critical for achieving sustainable development. The word was first coined in a book on the UN Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment in 1972 and it was the first attempt by the UN to integrate its objective of economic development with an awareness on ecological conservation. The word was used in the title of a study released in 1980 by the IUCN, WWF, and UNEP titled *World Conservation Strategy-Living Resource Conservation for Sustainable Development* (1980). The United Nations had several projects since the 1970s on sustainable development. The 1992 Rio Conference led to the first United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and a general outline of sustainable development policies for the 21st century, known as 'Agenda 21'.[2]Though scientific on the dangers posed by anthropogenic climate change following the Rio Conference, the Kyoto Protocols (1997), and the Copenhagen Accord (2009) helped refine the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate

Change, but these changes did not produce any binding effective international regulations to limit Greenhouse gas emission. The Johannesburg Declaration on sustainable development was adopted during the United Nations Earth Summit in Johannesburg in 2002. It was an international accord on the environment and sustainable development. Mostly, the accord reaffirmed the principles of the 1992 Earth Summit's 'Agenda 21'. Thereafter, the United Nations sponsored the second Rio de Janeiro summit, nicknamed Rio+20, in 2012, to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the first Rio summit. The Rio+20 conference was severely criticised for not enforcing anything to reduce Greenhouse gas emissions. It only spoke about poverty eradication and a sustainable environment. The conference adopted the famous 17 sustainable developmental goals from 2015.

The Paris agreement, a legally binding international treaty adopted by 196 parties in COP21 on 12 December 2015 was a milestone in the history of the collective fight against climate change and to create a conducive condition for sustainable living and a low carbon future. This treaty agrees to keep the rise in mean global temperature well below the preindustrial level i.e., $< 1.5\ ^{o}C$ thereby reducing the harmful effects of the climate crisis and encouraging signatory parties to achieve net-zero emission voluntarily through a self-declaration known as intended nationally determined contributions (INDC). Unfortunately, the entire humanity has reached a point where deeds of minority countries have forced the rest to think about sustainable use of resources and limiting the climate crisis, and act accordingly. This metamorphic situation makes it the responsibility of rich industrialised countries to provide justice to underprivileged countries in the form of funding and transfer of technology to mitigate the climate crisis and for sustainable living (The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, 2015).

Concept of Security in International Relations

During the Cold War, the dominant security paradigm was tied to realism theory, which concentrated on three 'S': *Security*, *Survival*, and *Self-help* via military means. Military difficulties were associated with power in this security philosophy. On a variety of fronts, the conventional idea of security has been called into question. The critique of the realist school of security throws light on its nearly exclusive concentration on military danger by overlooking a variety of topics that could be incorporated into the idea of security. Others have questioned the concept's state-centric approach, preferring a multi-level security analysis. Traditional approaches and definitions of security have also been criticised for being ethnocentric, which means they are rooted in their cultural contexts. Highly industrialised and modernised democracies of the West and feminist critics of security studies, criticise the masculinist underpinnings of security, alleging that security promotes patriarchal

power relations and hence, it undermines the security of women. Advanced security research has also emphasised the importance of framing specific challenges as part of the security problem. According to this viewpoint, security risks are problems that are produced as such by some actors via statements and specialised actions of security experts. In the process of securitisation, the existential threat needs immediate response or special measures to fight the threat (Baylis et al., 2004).

Since the end of the Cold War, scholars of International Relations have been debating the future of national and international security. The new research agenda has broadened its scope. Many academics focused on the influence of problems like deterrence and military power, which allow for the development of a multi-faceted security paradigm. The relations between states and non-state players in the international system and the growth of criminal networks and transnational crimes as an effect of globalisation were the most important topics in this.

The academics specialised in international relations particularly security studies have proposed that the idea of security should be 'broadened' and 'deepened.' Each of these arguments addresses a distinct issue. The broadening debate is focused on the source of security threats (Krause & Williams, 1996). The experts who emphasise the significance of broadening the definition of security are in favour of including topics or sectors other than the military. The dispute is mostly over the referent object of security, which is intensifying. In this regard, it has been asked whether organisations other than the state should be allowed to claim security threats, ranging from individual or human security to international or global security, with regional and social security as plausible intermediary stages. This scholarly discussion over security's 'broadening' and 'deepening' reveals security's contentious character. Various features of alternative security approaches have been questioned to differing degrees. It is stated that adding additional dimensions and degrees of security may not be particularly effective, since it may jeopardise the term's conceptual coherence and make it meaningless. As a result, there is no agreement on the analytical utility and operability of various security concepts, and the idea of security is still remains disputed.

With the end of the Cold War, a new phase of political theories came in various issues in international relations, especially in security, which was an important topic of security studies that wanted to redefine security more broadly and accurately. With the fall of the Soviet Union, experts of International Relations began highlighting the need for developing a wider understanding of security that is not limited to military threats. The need to revisit the ideas of security in international relations was prompted by an array of factors at the global scale that developed in the early 1990s. They include the proliferation of new nation-states, the resurgence of the UN, the rise of China, increasing number of intrastate conflicts, proliferation

of nuclear weapons, issues related to energy security and environmental sustainability etc. A new dimension to the concept of security in international relations was given by the concepts related to a slew of issues like conflicts over ethnicity, religion and separatism, terrorism and human rights issues and international conflicts over water, conflicts over energy sources, environmental and health issues, problems of poverty and hunger (Lang Jr. & Beattie, 2009). By the 21st century, globalisation became the driving force in the transformation of the global security landscape. The connection between societies and states led to a contraction of space and time which created global challenges and reduced the ability of the state to handle global security threats and dangers by itself.

The Socialist bloc was disbanded in the early 1990s and subsequently international relations entered a unipolar phase. It reduced international military conflicts and led to a period of relative stability by and large devoid of violence and wars, paving the way for the concepts of globalisation and liberalism to spread. This, in turn, led to the emergence of new concepts like human rights and cultural identity and such novel ideas began to be advocated by several American academics. For instance, Samuel Huntington (1997) argued that the era of ideology has passed, and the world today has only normal states marked by cultural struggle. As a result, the dominant axis of conflict in the future will be cultural and religious divides (pp. 52-53). He believes that the notion of distinct civilizations as the greatest level of cultural identity will become more relevant in analysing conflict potential. The notion of security in international relations was given a new dimension by these new cultural, religious, racial, and ethnic elements.

The Concept of Energy Security in International Relations

In contemporary International Relations, the notion of security has remained a significant problem. At the same time, the fact that International Relations are divided into highly competing areas makes precise definitions for concepts extremely difficult. Traditionally, security has been related to the military force. However, in the modern world, in terms of security factors, issues such as economic and welfare, are increasingly considered important (Al Rodhan, 2007).

The term 'security' relates to a variety of concerns, goals, and ideals, and it often represents the tensions between ideas in international relations. Academic dispute over the conceptualisation of security continues, notably at the level of analysis and the scope of security research. In contemporary International Relations, the area of security studies is not limited to issues of deterrence and nuclear weapons, like in the Cold War period. Energy security is one such area regarded as part of non-traditional security that attained a predominant position in security studies after the Cold War. Even during the time of the Cold War, the issue of energy security got

wider attention in connection with oil nationalisation and the subsequent creation of OPEC.[3]

Energy is essential for social and economic development. As a result, energy has had a vital position in the economic growth and social advancement of countries all over the globe since the turn of the century. As there is no standard definition for energy security, scholars and institutions have interpreted it based on particular socio economic and political conditions. One of the comprehensive definitions of energy security was given by International Energy Agency (IEA). It defines energy security as "adequate, affordable, and reliable access to energy fuels and services, it includes the availability of resources, decreasing dependence on imports, decreasing pressures on the environment, competition and market efficiency, reliance on indigenous resources that are environmentally clean, and energy services that are affordable and equitably shared"(IEA, 2019). For Brown and Sovacool (2007) it is "adequate energy supply and affordable prices as well as social and cultural sustainability and environmental preservations". According to Florini (2008) energy security is "reliable and affordable access to energy supplies". The Asia Pacific Energy Research Center (2007) proposes an energy security definition that states "ability of an economy to guarantee the ability of energy resource supply in a sustainable and timely manner with the energy price being at a level that will not adversely affect the economic performance of the economy, spread across the four As of availability, accessibility, acceptability, and affordability".

Across the world, the energy scenario is dominated by fossil fuels such as oil, gas, and coal now provide more than 80% of the world's energy needs. The worldwide stocks of these rare and non-renewable resources are very restricted, and they are concentrated in a few nations throughout the globe, notably the Middle East, which is one of the world's top energy producers. At the same time, this is the world's primary source of war. During times of strife and war in this volatile area, there have been several instances of access to energy supplies being denied. This occurred in 1973, during the worldwide energy crisis amid the Arab Israeli War and the Arab oil embargo on Europe, Japan, and the United States. Due to a scarcity of supply and high prices of petroleum products, the globe experienced economic and social upheavals.

The oil crisis of 1973 prompted a rethinking of the idea of energy security. The crisis exposed the fragility of major nations' economies while dealing with energy emergencies. Therefore, there is a necessity to have energy security as well. A new concept of energy security soon emerged to maintain constant supplies of energy, particularly from the Middle East, as it has the largest reserves of oil and gas in the world (Irie & Kanda, 2002). To achieve cooperation and coordination between the Petroleum Exporting Countries, OPEC was founded in 1960, to have a stable international oil market and eliminate harmful sudden fluctuations in price and

entertain the interests of the member states permanently to attain steady income and secure a steady supply of energy to the oil-importing countries (Khusanjanova, 2011).

The term energy security is a concept that varies from one country to the next, depending on the needs of the country in question. The uninterrupted access to international energy markets for the selling of energy resources is referred to as energy security by energy-exporting nations. Energy security for importing nations refers to ensuring access to a steady supply of energy at reasonable rates to ensure economic development and social progress. For the U.S., energy security means self-sufficiency in energy rather than dependence; for China, it might mean buying stakes in foreign oil fields; for Russia, it is under constraints of foreign investment regulations in domestic oil and natural gas; while for Japan, reducing its scarcity of domestic resources through diversification is the aim. It is the nature of nations to have their energy demands, but if genuine energy security is to be achieved, all of these needs must be met. For India, for example, the crucial importance of this idea is the growing need for imports due to the increasing imbalance between demand for energy and supply from indigenous sources.

Approaches to Energy Security in International Relations

A consensus appears to exist on the issue of energy security, which has gained prominence since the energy shocks of the 1970s (Choucri & Ferraro, 1976). Since then, energy security has been a part of the discussions surrounding IR theories. A survey of existing IR theories indicates five basic approaches. The first one is a rational approach on international political relations, based on structural inequalities between energy-producing and energy-consuming states. The institutionalist or neoliberal approach looks at how effective international economic institutions are in enhancing security, particularly energy security. The third approach is the critical security studies approach, a comprehensive non-traditional security approach that encompasses not only sovereign states, but also individual as the referent object of security. The fourth approach, known as constructivism, presents energy security as a part of an unstructured problem with the actors involved having different perspectives. The political economy approach is the fifth approach to energy security developed by scholars like Susan Strange which explains that the existing approaches are narrow since they only consider energy security from the political, economic, and international perspectives.

Neo-Realist approach to Energy Security

Energy security challenges have evolved over a period as the human population multiplied and as our needs also increased, therefore energy security also faced

various challenges**.** It is a byproduct of several complex factors, which means factors that are having their own contested realms and hence, there is no single solution to any issue that arises out of them, viz., international trade, supply and pricing of oil and geopolitics are also part of this paradigm.The contemporary energy scenario is based on fossil fuels such as Coal and Oil which guard the contours of world politics and the supremacy of international business. But the bare side is that there are new avenues for attempts to discover new sources of energy also. But the other side of it is that new energy avenues are emerging as a result of the attempts to discover new sources of energy.

Kenneth Waltz, who belongs to neo-realist stream or structural realism argues that the international system operates by its structural authority. The Waltzian system implies that nations would fight for survival under an international system devoid of any worldwide authority. This structural position is named 'anarchy'. He predicted that there will not be any change of power in the west due to the oil shocks, provoked by the Arab export embargo. But the oil shocks of 1973 made energy security an important matter of concern for many developed countries. He claims that the geopolitical tactics related to energy of the main Western powers are consistent. Political actors change, and the national strategy remains (Waltz, 1979, pp. 117-195). They are strongly in favour of national interests dictating energy policy, and bilateral agreements take precedence over international agreements. As a result, while analysing security, it may be classified into two categories: defensive (in response to danger) and offensive (profit maximisation in interactions with other actors) (Grafstein, 2002, pp.139-165). The Waltzian definition of security is primarily defensive: it arises from society's anarchical nature. But energy security is offensive. Since it is the weak spot of the Western governments, they choose to resort to the aggressive approach. In the global landscape, energy security exists in tandem with contemporary challenges as well as opportunities. There is diversification in the global landscape which means that today's world is multipolar. In contemporary international relations, oil and gas pipelines are instruments of hybrid warfare along with other issues such as sudden price shocks. And there are a number of other vulnerabilities that leads to crisis diplomacy. With globalisation, the markets have become integrated and therefore technological innovations also have an impact on energy security. Therefore, the term energy security is ubiquitous, and the fact is that there are serious concerns about energy resources, particularly the limited supply of fossil fuels compared to the unlimited demand, and these vulnerabilities have a significant impact on the country's energy security.

Neo-Liberal approach to Energy Security

From the growth of globalisation and the interdependence theory of the international community, neoliberal thinkers such as Robert Keohane and Joseph

Nye stress the necessity of international institutions and the role of non-state actors in the creation of international energy systems. The framework of international laws, norms, and international system make up international institutions. They think that by regulating state behaviour, international institutions play an important role in international cooperation. Through collaboration and agreements, the states would build mutual trust and minimise fears. They strongly believe that international institutions in the energy sector promote international collaboration in the interconnected world of energy, particularly on the question of energy security.

Joseph Nye (2009) analyses the significance of interdependence issues in the oil crisis in his book *Understanding International Conflicts: An Introduction to Theory and History*. He noted that from the 1940s to 1970 the 'seven sisters'[4] of global oil firms and oil-producing nations were interdependent for more than 20 years after the War. The international oil system, with multinational oil firms at its heart, collapsed in the 1970s with the nationalisation of oil resources by oil-producing countries, causing the multinational oil companies to face stiff challenges and lose their dominance over the sector. Thereafter, the creation of OPEC, a platform of oil-producing countries eventually reduced the bargaining capacity of multinational oil companies in the oil exploration sector. Followed by OPEC, the creation of the International Energy Agency (IEA) in 1974, for better coordination among energy importing countries, helped produce a conducive atmosphere for setting rules and regulations and interventions in the global energy markets whenever there is a crises, which is still playing a vital role in shaping energy industry over the years.

In the *Understanding International Conflicts: An Introduction to Theory and History*, Nye goes on to say that there is an indirect link between oil dependency and security interdependence. Even in the information era, oil is still highly vital. The creation of a worldwide economic interdependence network will increase political concerns even though there are benefits related to it. In the age of economic globalisation for an interconnected world, oil is indispensable as a source of power (Nye, 2009, pp. 250-253). In *After Hegemony* (2005), Robert Keohane, examined the significant consequences of dependency on international cooperation in the realm of global energy. He claimed that energy dependency led to substantial changes in the worldwide petroleum system from the mid-1960s until 1983. Oil producers started to play a role in the global crude oil market, which was becoming to get more integrated. The old oil system, with the 'seven sisters' representing the international oil giants of the United States and Europe as the core, was shattered, and Western international oil capital lost power over oil-producing nations. World oil prices drove up in the 1970s due to the interference of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). The Western industrial nations used a short-sighted approach to pursue their interests during the oil embargo. As a result of this, the

official price of oil climbed three times higher, and governments appeared to be trying to assist themselves. The chaotic phase continued until the establishment of the International Energy Agency in 1974. Robert Keohane in his work *After Hegemony* remarked that "the old oil mechanism shattered in the early 70s; and the International Energy Agency-centric consumer petroleum mechanism became the model of cooperation" (Keohane, 2005, p. 212).

By promoting and protecting global energy security through collective and collaborative action, the International Energy Agency created a new perspective on the concept of energy security. This concept was not limited to a single country as it is believed that energy security can only be achieved through collective international action for the protection of economies from future disruptions and it became an international concept. The most important goal of the International Energy Agency is to provide recommendations to assist member states in improving their energy security by developing emergency oil reserves. Its primary (albeit limited) objective is to maintain connections between states, governments, and oil companies, achieve agreements, and lower the cost of cooperation by sharing critical information and establishing successful coalitions. The evolution of the international oil pricing system had helped the international community to overcome the global oil crisis from 1979 to 1983, demonstrating the importance of international oil cooperation institutions such as the International Energy Agency, especially during the Gulf crisis and the Gulf War. However, a small number of member countries of the IEA act as a stumbling block to an effective engagement at a greater level.

Critical Security Approach to Energy Security

The inadequacies of neo-realism and neoliberalism in understanding and forecasting international politics were exposed during the post-Cold War period. In the area of international security studies, many non-mainstream schools arose such as 'critical security research' which differed from a standard security research camp. The scholars in the critical security tradition challenged traditional security theory's research orientation, questioned the state as the primary referent of security research, shifted the attention from sovereign states to people and society, and argued that safety is not only for specific sovereign states but for people and societies as well. David Baldwin proposed the concept of "multidimensional research into international security", advocating for a multifaceted, broad-based integrated security research framework that includes political, economic, military, environmental, and social security, among other things. Economic security is becoming more important among the components. Thus, he emphasises that security is "interdependent "with different aspects and issues such as the environment, population, migration, drug trafficking, and international terrorist activities and are included in the research studies (Baldwin, 1997).

According to Paul B. Stares, the non-traditional idea of energy security is particularly associated with the effect of current energy policies on people's wellbeing and ecosystems. The Copenhagen School, the extension of critical security tradition, see energy security from a broader perspective. They include consumption, scarcity, unequal distribution of energy resources, and the management of energy catastrophes and accidents (related to nuclear energy, oil transportation, and petrochemical industries). The school is concerned about the impact of energy challenges on the environment, such as climate change, species extinction, deforestation, soil desertification and other types of erosion, ozone layer depletion, and other forms of pollution (Yu & DAI, 2018).

The Securitisation approach to Energy security

In the 1990s the Copenhagen School of security studies reinvented the idea of security. They defined security as "the outcome of the political perception of the danger, a process known as securitisation, rather than a direct effect of the threat" (Buzan et al., 1998, p.7). The proponents of this school urged the necessity for evolving a conceptualisation of security that is more particular than a threat or issue. That was the reason for describing security as a response to the threat which is non-linear. The Copenhagen School considers anarchy as an important aspect of the international system which also explains governments' approaches toward security and the school has inherited the realist viewpoint on international relations. Furthermore, according to this approach, the term security includes five separate sectors: political, military, economic, social security, and environmental security. Environmental security which is important in the context of a perilous climate crisis has been defined as the preservation of the ecological biosphere (Buzan, 1991, pp. 19-237).

The Copenhagen School proposes a multi-level approach to international politics that divides the world into four levels: international, regional, national, and internal. The international system has the highest degree of security concern on the globe. The national or state-level is called the *unit level* as it is the link between traditionally separated fields of international and national security (Wilde, 1995, p. 88). The internal (sub-state) level of this classification contains local regulations and sub-national security perceptions. However, the important level for security studies is the *sub-system*. A sub-system is defined as a group of geographically linked states, and "whose primary security concerns link them together sufficiently closely that their national securities cannot realistically be considered separately from one another" (Buzan, 1991, p.190). These sub-systems, according to Buzan, are Regional Security Complexes (RSC), which changed over time while maintaining their geopolitical and historical roots: the Middle East, South Asia, Europe, and so on.

According to Buzan and Waever, security interdependence is usually formed by forming security complexes of region-based clusters as threats occur more from short distances. Within such complexes, the process of securitization[5], and security interdependence between participants is more intense than between those outside of them. This school of thought places 'energy security' in place of 'securitization' phenomenon that appeared due to three challenges. They are the assurance of energy supplies; assurance of secure energy extraction, transportation, and consumption; and improvement in energy efficiency for environmental, economic, and social purposes.

By broadening the concept of security, particularly the environmental security including sustainable energy mechanism, Barry Buzan states that "energy policy should be securitized and has to be handled as a security matter". It is a multidimensional problem involving political, military, economic, societal, and environmental sectors at different levels viz; international, national, and individual, and different actors including states, international institutions etc. In short, energy should be recognised as a security issue linked to other security sectors.

The Constructivist approaches

It believes that a significant part of IR is historically and socially constructed and dismisses the grand theoretical narratives which say that IR is impacted by human nature and by the grand structures of world politics. The concept of social constructivism can be traced back to the ideas of Italian philosopher Vico, who maintained that "the natural world is created by God, but the historical world is created by man". Immanuel Kant also suggested, "that human knowledge is filtered through human consciousness".The above views suggest that there are no objective and pure facts in social life. Human beings add meaning to their facts in social situations. The meanings are shaped by a complex mix of history, ideas, norms, and beliefs.

The two most renowned members of this school of thought are Nicholas Onuf and Alexander Wendt. According to Alexander Wendt, "social structures include material resources like gold and tanks" because "material resources only acquire meaning for human action through the structure of shared knowledge in which they are embedded". Accordingly, the basic units of analysis are various social constructs that are "real and objective, not 'just talk' and this objectivity depends on shared knowledge." Especially, social constructs exist "not in actors' heads nor in material capabilities, but in practices" (Wendt, 1995, pp. 71-81).

In the constructivist conceptual framework of international politics on energy, energy relations are created as a result of complex, dynamic, and interdependent social processes. In this scenario, this approach considers the material realities like energy demand, supply, consumption, and environment as referent objects in

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international energy markets. At the same time, the narrative about energy resources or scarcity of energy defines the meaning of these material referents. For example, the Indian establishment tries to construct a narrative on energy security/insecurity and try to develop a policy framework suitable to those imagined/constructed questions concerning energy security (energy security itself is an imagined category). There is no definite meaning for it as energy security is rather mediated by internal and external factors.

Marxist Approach to Energy Security

Karl Marx was aware of the inseparable link between human beings and nature, nevertheless the Marxist framework took labour as the sole source of value which relegated the natural resources only as a supplementary factor. Though his ideology was materialistic, it does not mean that he had paid only scant attention to environmental issues. In *The German Ideology,* Marx and Engels wrote, "We know only one science, the science of history. History can be viewed from two sides: it can be divided into the history of nature and that of man. The two sides, however, are not to be seen as independent entities. As long as man has existed, nature and man have affected each other" (Marx et. al., 1970, p.51). This shows Marx's analysis embodies ecological materialism, too. His critique of capitalist political economy is based on the accumulation of capital which grows through the exploitation of raw materials and energy, and nature is used to fuel industry and to produce the commodities for the market. So, the expansion of the capitalist system resulted in the systematic exploitation of nature and increased use of resources of energy such as coal and oil and this has contributed to the carbon emission that ultimately threatened the ecosystem. For Marx this process eventually created an 'ecological rift' which threatens the security and wellbeing of all living beings.

In short, the environmental problem faced by mankind is the result of capitalism, not human behaviour. According to the Marxist conception, capitalism as a mode of production is fundamentally rooted in the exploitation of the large majority of human beings and nature and therefore it cannot guarantee a sustainable and equitable system of living for all. Alternatively, in communism Marx visualised the convergence of the interest of human beings and nature (Benton, 2018). He further says that "Man $_{lives}$ on nature—means that nature is his body, with which he must remain in continuous interchange if he is not to die. That man's physical and spiritual life is linked to nature means simply that nature is linked to itself, for man is a part of nature" (Marx et al., 1988. p.76).

According to the Marxian perspective the ongoing discussions on energy security are largely influenced by the interest of the capitalist class. Powerful nations and monopoly companies always tried to control the production and distribution of

various energy sources. Imperialist countries often engaged in various geopolitical conflicts in different parts of the world for establishing control over natural resources. The oil politics in West Asia is a significant case in point in this regard. The powerful nations often tried to thwart the efforts of nationalisation of natural resources by various national governments in the developing world. Apart from this, by controlling and influencing financial markets and price mechanisms, powerful Western countries often attempted to endanger the energy needs of the poor and less developed nations. Neo-Marxist theories like Dependency and World System analysis provide systematic insights into the unequal nature of capitalist development in the peripheral regions in the world system.

Conclusion

Perceptions of security and sustainability are changing. The two concepts are intertwined with each other in such a way that sustainable development becomes a core area of national security, especially when considering energy security. Sustainable development and energy security highlight new challenges for research and policy. The increased knowledge of human-ecosystem dynamics, such as the consequences of global warming and climate change, drought and famine, disease and epidemics etc. compels scholars of International Relations to conceptualise security questions in a nuanced manner. Moreover, conceptualisations of two concepts, viz., energy security and sustainability are transdisciplinary issues that necessitate multistakeholder input from a wide range of sectors and expertise.

End Notes

1   In its resolution 38/161 adopted on December 19, 1983, the UN General Assembly praised the creation of a special commission that would produce a report on the environmental and that would emerge by the year 2000 and beyond, as well as proposed measures for achieving sustainable development.

https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/milestones/wced.

2   Agenda 21' is a global, national, and local plan of action endorsed at the United Nations Earth Summit in 1992 by UN organisations, governments, and major groups from areas where human activities had badly impacted the environment. More than 178 governments signed Agenda 21, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, and the Statement of Principles for the Sustainable Management of Forests during the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from June 3 to 14, 1992. https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/out comedocuments/ agenda 21.

3   The main oil producing countries - Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Venezuela - formed a permanent intergovernmental organisation in 1960. The number of member states of the organisation has subsequently increased to 13. Its goal is to coordinate policies, particularly on the supply side, and to act as a bargaining player to establish pricing for petroleum products, allowing producing countries to profit.

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4   Oil Multinational Companies from the Western world, such as Anglo Iranian Oil Companies (now BP), Royal Dutch Shell (now Shell), Standard Oil Company of California (now Chevron), Gulf Oil, Texaco, Standard Oil Company of New Jersey (now Exxon Mobil), and Standard Oil Company of New York (now a part of Exxon Mobil), had complete control over oil resources prior to nationalisation by the Gulf countries. Between 1940 and 1970, these seven firms controlled 85 percent of the world's petroleum reserves.

5   According to Barry Buzan, "the essence of the concept of securitization is that "it is by labelling something a security issue that it becomes one" (Wæver, 2004, p.13)..

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