

*INDIA'S SECURITY DILEMMA VIS-À-VIS CHINA:  
A CASE OF OPTIMUM OR SUB-OPTIMUM RESTRAINT?*

The Regional Centre for Strategic Studies (RCSS) is an independent, non-profit and non-governmental organization for collaborative research, networking and interaction on strategic and international issues pertaining to South Asia. Set up in 1992, the RCSS is based in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

The RCSS is a South Asian forum for studies, training and multi-track dialogue and deliberation on issues of regional interest. All activities of RCSS are designed with a South Asia focus and are usually participated by experts from all South Asian countries. The Centre is envisaged as a forum for advancing the cause of cooperation, security, conflict resolution, confidence building, peace and development in the countries of the South Asian region.

The RCSS serves its South Asian and international constituency by: (a) networking programmes that promote interaction, communication and exchange between institutions and individuals within and outside the region engaged in South Asian strategic studies; (b) organizing regional workshops and seminars and sponsoring and coordinating collaborative research; and (c) disseminating output of the research through publications which include books, monographs and a quarterly newsletter. The RCSS facilitates scholars and other professionals of South Asia to address, mutually and collectively, problems and issues of topical interest for all countries of the region.

Queries may be addressed to:

Regional Centre for Strategic Studies  
410/27 Baudhaloka Mawatha  
Colombo 7  
SRI LANKA  
Tel: (94-11) 2690913-4  
Fax: 2690769; e-mail: [programmes@rcss.org](mailto:programmes@rcss.org)  
RCSS website: <http://www.rcss.org>

RCSS Policy Studies 47

*India's Security Dilemma vis-à-vis China:  
A Case of Optimum or  
Sub-Optimum Restraint?*

SANKHYA KRISHNAN



REGIONAL CENTRE FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES  
COLOMBO

*Published by*  
Regional Centre for Strategic Studies  
410/27, Bauddhaloka Mawatha  
Colombo 7, Sri Lanka.  
Tel: (94-11) 2690913/4 Fax: (94-11) 2690769  
E-mail: rcss@sri.lanka.net  
Website: <http://www.rcss.org>

© Regional Centre for Strategic Studies, 2008

First published 2009

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical or photo-copying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the Regional Centre for Strategic Studies. It is distributed with the understanding that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise be sold, lent, hired or otherwise circulated without the prior consent of the RCSS.

Views expressed in materials published in *RCSS Policy Studies* are of contributors, and not necessarily of the Regional Centre for Strategic Studies.

ISBN 978-955-8051-43-6

*Printed at*  
Design Systems (Pvt) Ltd.  
23/1, 1st Maligakanda Lane  
Colombo 10, Sri Lanka

## *Contents*

1	Moderating the Sino-Indian Security Dilemma	7
2	The Evolution of the Territorial Dispute	15
3	The Sino-Indian Military Balance	33
4	Bridging the Trust Deficit in Sino-Indian Relations	55
5	Conclusion	73
	Notes & References	79
	Select Bibliography	84

**RCSS is grateful to Ploughshares Fund  
for its generous support of the RCSS Summer Workshop  
Award 2006 on which this report is based.**

## CHAPTER 1

# *Moderating the Sino-Indian Security Dilemma*

The security dilemma is a concept in international relations theory according to which the means by which one state seeks to increase its security have the unintended effect of decreasing the security of another state, which, in turn, makes a similar response having a similar effect leading to a cycle of competitive moves that could in the worst case result in conflict. This dynamic produces a dilemma among states whether or not to develop capabilities to increase their security, since it could paradoxically have the opposite effect.

The question naturally arises as to whether this dynamic is inescapable or whether it can be moderated, if not eliminated, and, if so, under what circumstances.

One school of thought suggests that this is inescapable, because states have no means of communicating that the intentions behind their acquisition of capabilities are defensive, hence other states prepare for the worst by reacting to their capabilities rather than trusting in their intentions. Indeed, the logical corollary is that instead of reactively developing capabilities in a quest for security, states should take the initiative to proactively maximize power in a quest for hegemony. This is the logic of offensive realism. Taken to this extreme, the security dilemma becomes an oxymoron. States are no longer in a dilemma since their actions are no longer limited by the possible reactions of other states.

There is another school of thought, deriving from defensive realism, which suggests that the security dilemma can be moderated to pave the way for cooperation. Robert Jervis drew attention in a pioneering paper almost 30 years ago to the influence of the offence–

defence balance on the security dilemma. According to Jervis:

When we say that the offence has the advantage, we simply mean that it is easier to destroy the other's army and take its territory than it is to defend one's own. When the defence has the advantage, it is easier to protect and to hold than it is to move forward, destroy and take.<sup>1</sup>

If the balance favoured the defence, then additional increments in capabilities by either side would not be zero-sum, and both sides could retain a high level of security.

Glaser and Kaufman define the offence–defence balance as ‘the ratio of the cost of the forces the attacker requires to take territory to the cost of the forces the defender has deployed’.<sup>2</sup> While estimating an absolute quantitative value of the offence–defence balance is a complicated exercise, it should be feasible to make a qualitative evaluation of it relative to an earlier time period. While the offence–defence balance is usually studied at the systemic level with the identification of generic factors such as technology and geography that could favour offence or defence by any side, this study will look at the balance at the dyadic level between China and India, and identify specific factors favouring China in the role of offence and India in the role of defence.

However, the offence–defence balance does not tell the whole story. The relative distribution of latent power also has to be factored in. If one side's latent power increased significantly relative to the other, that could give it the opportunity to overturn the offence–defence balance, unless the other side took remedial action. As Glaser and Kaufman note, ‘power imbalances can sometimes overwhelm the offence–defence balance. Even if defence has a large advantage, a much wealthier attacker might still be able to outspend a defender by a sufficient margin to gain an effective offensive capability’.<sup>3</sup>

In addition, defensive realism suggests that the intentions behind the acquisition of capabilities also influence the security dilemma, because intentions can be communicated and discerned through signalling. Jervis proposes that states can signal their defensive intentions if ‘defensive weapons and policies can be distinguished from offensive ones’.<sup>4</sup> While it is arguable whether weapons lend

themselves to categorization as offensive or defensive, policies may do so. According to Glaser, while structural realism:

posits a world in which states do not rely on the internal characteristics of other states...to divine their motives...if, however, states can rely on sources of information beyond those that structural realism allows, they may be able to reduce uncertainty further and thereby mitigate the security dilemma.<sup>5</sup>

He adds elsewhere that 'states can try to communicate their benign intentions via three types of military policies: arms control, unilateral defence and unilateral restraint'.<sup>6</sup> However, this presumes that both states are status quo powers. If either or both are power seekers rather than security seekers, then the security dilemma will indeed be inescapable.

Turning to the specific case of the Sino-Indian security dilemma, there is an unusual asymmetry about it. A security dilemma exists when both sides inadvertently threaten each other. But Chinese actions have decreased Indian security more than vice versa, and this appears to be not entirely inadvertent. There are two sources of Indian insecurity which need to be moderated in order to realize the full potential for cooperation. The first relates to China's growing military capabilities in the context of the unresolved territorial dispute between the two countries. This is part of the classic security dilemma dynamic in the sense that its effect on India is not by design. China's military modernization is driven by factors that have very little to do with India, but given the existence of the territorial dispute, and the perception that China is the revisionist state with respect to that dispute, India cannot ignore the possibility that China's capabilities could be redirected against it at some point in the future, however remote this may appear to be.

On the other hand, India's own military modernization does not appear to exert the same effect on China, partly because it is more measured and less expansive than China's own efforts. The perception that India is the status quo state with respect to the territorial dispute could also explain why China is less wary about India's military capabilities than the other way around. The one area of concern for China is possibly India's naval power in

combination with its geographic location astride China's sea lines of communication.

Certainly, this aspect of the security dilemma could be moderated if a final settlement on the territorial dispute, which has stubbornly defied resolution for over half a century, can be reached. The positions of India and China on the territorial dispute have evolved over the years, although there still remains some ground to cover before they can converge to produce a historic breakthrough. This can only happen if both sides are equally keen to expedite a settlement, which has not always been the case. The introduction of a second parallel track of negotiations between the special representatives to provide the political ballast has revived a process that had become moribund. The strategic value each side places on the territory possessed by the other also needs to be examined in order to evaluate the perception that China is more revisionist than India.

India's response could be a function of its awareness that these increments in Chinese military capabilities are not India-specific and reflect China's own unique security environment, as well as its belief that its own capabilities are sufficient to ensure a defence advantage, and its trust in China's intentions at least in the short to medium term. The concern expressed could reflect the need to take appropriate steps to ensure that the power gap between the two countries does not widen to the extent of having the potential to undermine India's defence advantage. Although India's economic growth in the decade and a half following the introduction of reforms has been impressive, it has been overshadowed by China's close to double-digit growth, which has enabled the economic gap to widen, with its attendant strategic implications.

In this connection, it has been suggested that India's military posture towards China may need to be upgraded from dissuasion to deterrence. As long as India's posture remains manifestly defensive, making it more secure—but not at China's expense—the security dilemma is unlikely to be exacerbated. Depending upon whether India has a credible minimum deterrence against China both with respect to conventional and nuclear forces, it can be concluded

that India's relative restraint is indeed optimum rather than sub-optimum. The failings that produced the outcome of 1962, and the steps taken to address those failings, will provide valuable insights to evaluate whether the offence–defence balance has shifted in India's favour since then.

Although this source of insecurity can be substantially moderated by the reassurance deriving from India's own capabilities pending a final settlement, it can be further influenced by knowledge of China's intentions. The military doctrine of China as well as its past uses of force could offer relevant insights about the instruments that it may seek to employ to address the territorial dispute with India. Indeed, there is substantial literature, but no real consensus, on the question of whether China's strategic culture is offensive or defensive. The circumstances behind China's decision to attack in 1962 need to be re-examined in order to conclude whether those circumstances were unique, or whether they could obtain once again in the future. Both sides have taken a number of confidence building measures (CBMs) in order to make this possibility remote, and it remains to be seen whether the CBMs have run their course, or more steps can still be taken.

While China's growing military capabilities have inadvertently reduced India's security, the same is not necessarily true of China's relationships with a number of India's neighbours, notably Pakistan, and, to a lesser extent, Myanmar, Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. India can very well live with these relationships as long as they are not targeted against it. There are two sources of insecurity here. One is about China using these relationships to magnify its own profile and in the process constrain India's freedom of action in what was hitherto India's zone of influence, especially in the Indian Ocean. However, there is an alternate narrative, which explains this in terms of China's desire to safeguard its sea lines of communication that transport its vital energy supplies, as well as to connect its landlocked hinterland to the sea, the so-called 'string of pearls' strategy. To the extent that this is the underlying motivation behind China's actions, India can accommodate China's interests in the Indian Ocean.

India's other source of insecurity concerning these relationships

is about the client states using China's support to develop a kind of shield to carry out actions detrimental to India's security. This is probably the more troubling aspect as far as India is concerned, since, far from being inadvertent, this appears to be a deliberate effort to undermine India's security, more in keeping with a power-seeking state rather than a security-seeking state. While China could claim that this is a quid pro quo for the benefits accruing to it, the reality is that most of these relationships are asymmetric, with the smaller partners being more dependent on China than vice versa, which means that their bargaining power is correspondingly much lower. The current lack of trust in bilateral relations thus stems from the recent historical record, which suggests the possibility that China's actions have had a negative impact on India's security by design, or at the very least that China's actions are insensitive to India's concerns.

In the face of China's growing ties with India's periphery, primarily its entente cordiale with Pakistan, India's restraint *prima facie* appears to be sub-optimal. The strategic partnership of recent vintage with the US can be viewed as a tentative response, although it is still far from being a finished article pending the final outcome of the Indo-US nuclear deal. There is also the proposed framework for a quadrilateral strategic dialogue between the major democracies of the Asia-Pacific, including Japan and Australia. While this could provide useful leverage, an attempt to overplay this hand could result in heightened competition rather than cooperation. The other option for India is to impress upon China the opportunity costs of such actions in terms of the unfulfilled potential of Sino-Indian cooperation.

This study seeks to evaluate whether India's response to its two sources of insecurity emanating from China are optimal or sub-optimal, in the sense of whether it has succeeded in moderating that insecurity to pave the way for mutual trust and cooperation. Of course, cooperation can obtain only if both are security-seeking states, in which case they still have to find a way to communicate this to each other. But if either is not, then the price for moderating one's insecurity is likely to be heightened competition, which, in

turn, will reinforce that insecurity, to produce a security dilemma that is inescapable.

The study proceeds as follows. Chapter 2 provides an overview of the progress made by both sides to resolve their territorial dispute, the hurdles that still remain, and whether India could do anything more to expedite a settlement and overcome the insecurity associated with the present stalemate. Chapter 3 evaluates whether India has a defence advantage against China and whether it needs to upgrade its defence further given that China enjoys a growing power advantage over India, which may not be reversible in the near future. Chapter 4 contrasts the nature of China's relationships with Pakistan and Myanmar, evaluates the extent to which India has employed the instruments at its disposal to moderate this source of insecurity, and finally also examines the insecurity arising from the uncertainty surrounding China's intentions. The conclusion throws light on the prospects for future cooperation between India and China given the findings of the study.



## CHAPTER 2

### *The Evolution of the Territorial Dispute*

The Sino-Indian territorial dispute extends to about 128,000 sq km of territory. Although this pales before the total area of either country, it is a fairly sizeable chunk in absolute terms—more than three and a half times the size of Taiwan, to give an illustration. Certainly, the area in question is comfortably larger than in any of China's other land disputes. The longevity of the dispute, which is now into its sixth decade, is also remarkable, considering that China has successfully resolved frontier disputes with all its other neighbouring states, with the exception of Bhutan. In the 1950s, the territorial imperative was at its most acute, with both countries zealously guarding their sovereignty, having just recovered from various colonial depredations, whose memories they had internalized. This precipitated the 1962 war and the subsequent cooling of relations until Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's visit to China in 1988. With the *détente* now 20 years old, the territorial dispute should be ripe for the plucking. But is it?

Both sides have agreed not to let the dispute come in the way of progress across other facets of their relationship, especially their burgeoning commercial ties. This does not mean that the boundary issue is currently on the backburner, as was the case in the early stages of their rapprochement. The slow progress has given rise to speculation whether either or both sides are deliberately dragging their feet. Until recently, China had counselled patience on the border issue, leaving it to future generations, while advocating gradual improvement in other aspects of bilateral relations. But since 2005, both sides are 'convinced that an early settlement of the boundary question will advance the basic interests of the two countries and should be pursued as a strategic objective'.<sup>7</sup> The resolution of the dispute will finally and irrevocably exorcise the phantoms of 1962,

create a solid foundation for mutual trust, unleash the full potential for cooperation, and usher in the complete normalization of the bilateral relationship.

It is not the intention here to sit in judgement on the relative merits of the cases of India and China. Both sides have adduced copious evidence for their respective claims based on custom and tradition, as well as in treaty. But if a settlement is to be reached, it will be on the basis of political pragmatism, not legal quibbling. A brief note on the historical origins of the positions of both sides is followed by an overview of the missed opportunities during the Nehru–Zhou period, and, finally, an evaluation of the pace and direction of the negotiations in the post-détente phase.

#### ORIGINS OF RIVAL CLAIMS

The major difference in the stands of the two countries once the dispute broke into the open in the 1950s was that India believed that the boundary in both the west and the east had already been delimited, and only remained to be demarcated on the ground, while China insisted that no such delimitation had taken place. India believes that it had a sound legal basis for its claims, and has put forward a variety of points in support. On the other hand, China has not emphasized the legality of its own claim as much. Whatever legal points it put forward were pro forma as a counter to the Indian claim, and China's claim was mostly based on picking holes in the Indian case, which was by no means foolproof. Instead, China's position has been that any understandings reached during the colonial era have to be renegotiated between the two sovereign states in order to establish their legitimacy.

This discussion will focus on the western and eastern sectors of the boundary since the disagreement over the middle sector is relatively trivial. According to India, its claim line in the western sector was sanctified in custom and tradition as early as the tenth century, and reaffirmed by the 1684 Treaty of Tingmongsang between Ladakh and Tibet and the 1842 treaty between the Dogras and the Tibetans. But it was the British who did the most to

formalize a modern frontier between India and Tibet, ever since they captured Kashmir from the Sikhs in 1846 and ceded it to the Dogras, while maintaining their suzerainty over the region. The impetus for this was the need to secure India from a hypothetical Russian advance during the Great Game that was played out in the nineteenth century.

As Maxwell has noted:

There were two principal schools of frontier policy: first, the forward school, which wished to see Britain advance to meet the Russian threat directly and as far away from the plains as possible; second, the moderate school, which... suggested that the limits of British power should be set where they could more easily be supported, and proposed that the aim of keeping Russia back could best be served by interposing a third power between the lion and the bear.<sup>8</sup>

China's designated role in the game was thus to be the buffer between Britain and Russia.

In 1865, a surveyor named W. H. Johnson visited the Aksai Chin Plateau and included the region, as well as the upper courses of the Yarkand and Karakash river systems, within Kashmir in a map he subsequently circulated. This map gained some currency, although it was limited by the disapproval of the British establishment. But in 1897, Sir John Ardagh, a Major General in the British Army, proposed the resurrection of the Johnson Line (or the Johnson-Ardagh Line as it was later called), which advanced the frontier to the Kuen Lun Range to maintain a strategic advantage in the event of a presumed Russian forward movement.

But on this occasion, it was the moderate school that won out, and, instead, a line devised by George Macartney, which by and large followed the more southerly Karakoram Range and left the Karakash Valley as well as most of Aksai Chin within China, was approved and proposed by Claude Macdonald (and hence called the Macartney-Macdonald Line) to the Chinese in 1899. While there was some informal indication from China that this would be acceptable to it, there was no official reply to the proposal.

In the eastern sector, Britain's forward policy was motivated not by Russia but by China's own advances into the tribal territory that

had served as a buffer between the two. The McMahon Line was a byproduct of the Simla Conference of 1913–14 in which Britain, Tibet and China were represented. The circumstances in which it was drawn up remain controversial. The delegates of all three parties initialled the draft treaty of the conference, and although it contained no reference to the boundary between Tibet and India, the map accompanying the treaty depicted the McMahon Line as the boundary. China argues that its delegate initialled the treaty without the consent of his government in Peking, which did not recognize it. Britain and Tibet also had separate discussions on the boundary in which the McMahon Line was agreed upon. It was not until 1937 that this line made it onto official Indian maps. By 1947, the British had extended their administration to most of this region, and independent India completed the task of filling out to the McMahon Line by occupying Tawang in 1951, without eliciting any reaction from China. In the east too, India's case is that the McMahon Line merely confirmed a pre-existing traditional boundary.

However, the dispute regarding the McMahon Line extends not only to its *validity*, but also to its *actual course on the ground*. McMahon made no reference to the use of any geographical principle in demarcating his line on the ground. The Indian government has argued that it is established practice for the boundary to follow the high watershed in the vicinity. Applying this principle would, however, push the line further north to its course on the map. India's attempts to implement this met with stiff resistance from the Chinese and were the spark for the 1962 war.

#### BORDER POLICIES IN THE NEHRU–ZHOU PERIOD

One of the great counterfactuals of modern Indian history is what if China and India had reached a border settlement before 1962, thus pre-empting the war and its bitter aftertaste, and instead prolonging the short-lived *bhai-bhai* ('brother- brother') era. This is not altogether far-fetched, since there were opportunities to resolve the dispute even then along the same lines that any settlement is

likely to emerge in the future. This section seeks to examine whether a *modus vivendi* between the seemingly irreconcilable approaches of India and China to the border issue could have been arrived at before the situation reached a point of no return.

At the Bandung Afro-Asian Conference of 1955, Zhou Enlai recognized that China's borders with its neighbours were yet to be determined: 'With some of these countries we have not yet finally fixed our border-line and we are ready to do so...But before doing so, we are willing to maintain the present situation by acknowledging that those parts of our border are parts which are undetermined.'<sup>9</sup> Mira Sinha Bhattacharjea has identified five progressive stages of China's approach to border issues: affirming and stating the problem; identifying its origins; identifying its nature; proposing modalities for its resolution while maintaining the status quo; and, finally, reaching an outcome.<sup>10</sup> The settlement of the Sino-Burmese border dispute, which Zhou Enlai considered more intractable than the Sino-Indian one, was a textbook example of the Chinese approach to border settlement.

During Burmese Prime Minister U Nu's visit to China in December 1954, the two sides released a statement that, 'In view of the incomplete delimitation of the boundary line between China and Burma, the two Premiers held it necessary to settle this question in a friendly spirit at an appropriate time through normal diplomatic channels.'<sup>11</sup> Zhou had also referred to the Sino-Burmese boundary question as a 'misunderstanding left behind by history', which absolved both sides of the blame and placed it squarely on the imperialists. When U Nu visited China again in 1956, Zhou put forward a three-point proposal, which in essence agreed to recognize the McMahon Line with minor adjustments, but without referring to it by name. This proposal was the basis for the border agreement of 1960, which was formalized through a new treaty later in the same year.

China's efforts to use the same formula with India failed to bear fruit, primarily because India did not subscribe to the view that its boundary with China was undefined. In a memorandum of 1954, Nehru took the view that the 'frontier (with China) should be

considered a firm and definite one, which is not open to discussion with anybody'.<sup>12</sup> Until 1954, India's official maps depicted the border in the western sector as extending to the Johnson-Ardagh Line, but stated that it was still undefined. Consequent to the memorandum, the maps were modified to depict a well-defined boundary with China traveling through the Karakoram Pass. The boundary west of the Karakoram Pass, which by this time lay on the Pakistani side of a divided Kashmir, approximated the Macartney-Macdonald Line. On the Indian side of Kashmir, east of the Karakoram Pass, it followed a compromise between the two lines by incorporating Aksai Chin but leaving out Karakash Valley.

The exact motivations of the Indian government in producing this hybrid line are not clear. The case built up by India in support of this line appears to have been made retrospectively by generating a formidable body of historical research culled from archival material. As late as August 1959, Nehru stated in Parliament:

We have always looked upon the Ladakh area as some vaguer area so far as the frontier is concerned because the exact line of the frontier is not at all clear as in the case of the McMahon Line...It is a matter of argument as to what part of it (Aksai Chin) belongs to us and what part of it belongs to somebody else. It is not at all a dead clear matter. I have to be frank to the House...The point is, there has never been any delimitation there in that area and it has been a challenged area.<sup>13</sup>

By defining the western boundary on its maps in 1954, India complicated the settlement by committing itself in advance to a specific line, and making the acceptance of anything less a loss of face. This may have been useful if India intended to use this line as its initial gambit in any prospective negotiations, but there was no such indication. Instead, its effect was to lead India to eschew negotiations altogether. Although Nehru had his moments of self-doubt, as the above citation indicates, this was dispelled once he was convinced of the merits of India's case drawn up by Dr S. Gopal, head of the MEA's Historical Division, and the line remained non-negotiable. The Kongka Pass clashes of October 1959, which left nine Indians from the Indo-Tibetan Border Force dead, also closed

the door for any compromise. Had the boundary not been defined, then negotiations could have taken place and any compromise settlement could have been portrayed as a win-win for both sides.

This particular region was of little strategic value to India, so choosing to put the country's national prestige and dignity on the line by disputing it (and it was a matter of choice, since there was nothing definitive that gave all of Aksai Chin to India) made little sense. Nehru himself said not a blade of grass grew there. Of course, the Chinese claim to the full extent of their claim line was equally flimsy. But because the Xinjiang–Tibet highway passed through Aksai Chin, they had a solid strategic stake over it. As Ranganathan and Khanna note, 'The India-China boundary conflict arose primarily because the two concepts, the Chinese one of strategic borders, and India's of historic borders, could not be reconciled.'<sup>14</sup>

A brief mention of the China–Pakistan settlement is instructive here. A boundary agreement between the two was reached in just 13 days of negotiations in December 1962, and it was by and large settled along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) at the time, which also happened to mirror the 1899 Macartney-Macdonald alignment. As Maxwell writes:

the most marked divergence from (the 1899) line was in favour of Pakistan giving them a trans-Karakoram boundary in one sector which had been under Chinese administration and China's concession here involved evacuation as well as departure from the watershed principle which otherwise guided the boundary makers. Thus while Pakistan gave up only map claims, China actually ceded some 750 sq. miles of territory.<sup>15</sup>

In this case, even though Pakistan had a defined claim line on the map, the dispute was amenable to settlement because the LAC lay between the claim lines of both sides, so its formalization could be seen as a mutual concession. The Macartney-Macdonald Line could have been a compromise between India and China as well, especially as it would have left most of Aksai Chin including the strategic highway within China.

With regard to the eastern sector, China intimated that it was ready to renegotiate the boundary along the McMahan alignment

without using that name. On his visit to India in 1956, Zhou told Nehru:

We studied this question and although this Line was never recognised by us, still apparently there was a secret pact between Britain and Tibet and it was announced at the time of the Simla Conference. And now that it is an accomplished fact, we should accept it...So, although the question is still undecided and it is unfair to us, still we feel that there is no better way than to recognise this Line.<sup>16</sup>

This was before India was to discover China's presence in Aksai Chin. Once this became a fait accompli, China altered its position on the McMahon Line to link it with India's recognition of Aksai Chin as part of China. During the 1960 Nehru–Zhou summit, China proposed the 'reciprocal acceptance of present actualities in both sectors'. India's view that its stated claim on the western frontier was non-negotiable made this proposal a non-starter.

At the end of his visit to New Delhi in 1960, Zhou presented a six-point statement, which proposed that both sides acknowledge that disputes existed with regard to the boundary, suggested guidelines for a final settlement, as well as that both sides maintain the status quo pending a final settlement. One of the guidelines was that 'a settlement of the boundary question...should take into account the national feelings of the two peoples towards the Himalayas and the Karakoram Mountains'.<sup>17</sup> This could have been an implicit suggestion that the boundary could be broadly aligned along these mountain chains, i.e. that it could follow the McMahon Line in the east and the Macartney-Macdonald Line in the west. Unfortunately, India never probed Zhou as to exactly what he meant, because it felt that disputes existed because China did not accept the boundary as defined by India, and not because the boundary was undefined.

India also refused to commit itself to maintaining the status quo pending a final settlement and reserved the right to advance into territory that it claimed. Because the nation's prestige had been staked over the line India claimed in the west, Nehru was forced to adopt a militarily indefensible forward policy to advance up to it, in the hope that the Chinese would do nothing, which was wishful thinking.

The role of the rebellion in Tibet in influencing the position of China on the boundary dispute also merits attention. Taylor Fravel has proposed that China's attempted compromise with India in 1960 was intended to seek a peaceful environment along the boundary, which would help it consolidate its authority in Tibet.<sup>18</sup> The rejection of its overtures contributed to China's perception—or misperception—that India was colluding with the US in supporting the Tibetan uprising, and eventually to China's decision to go to war in 1962. This was in spite of India giving up all the leverage it had on Tibet by recognizing it as a part of China in the 1954 agreement.

#### DETENTE

Ambassadorial relations were restored between the two countries in 1976 at India's initiative and three years later Indian Foreign Minister A. B. Vajpayee made an icebreaking visit to China, although it was marred by China's attack on Vietnam during his visit, accompanied by the rhetoric of teaching that country a lesson. India dropped its stand that the border dispute was non-negotiable, leading to eight rounds of border talks from 1981 to 1988. Deng Xiaoping had once again raised the prospect of a package deal in a conversation with Indian journalists in 1980, on the lines of Zhou's 1960 proposal. This was China's opening gambit in the first round of talks, but India again refused to bite. Although almost two decades had elapsed since the war, time had not yet healed Indian memories, and accepting a Chinese proposal that was turned down before the war would have, in effect, legitimized the Chinese aggression.

It was in the sixth round of talks in 1985 that China intimated a subtle shift in its position by pressing their claims in the eastern sector, which effectively meant that the package deal was no longer on the table. This was followed by China's statement in the seventh round of talks the following year that the LAC could not be the basis for a settlement. As John Garver mentions, the leader of the Chinese delegation, Liu Shuqing, said to the effect that, 'If India

were willing to make concessions in the east, China would certainly consider making a gesture in the west.<sup>19</sup> Among the reasons that Garver cites for the shift in China's negotiating strategy include the possibility that 'it was necessary to disabuse India of the idea that China had no serious claim in the eastern sector and was therefore giving up nothing by dropping that claim', or that 'some influential people in China felt that the country needed to pursue a tougher approach to settling the territorial problem with India'.<sup>20</sup>

While at the beginning of the decade it appeared that both sides had put the war behind them, an eyeball-to-eyeball face-off in 1987 briefly turned the clock back. Deng warned India twice through American emissaries with the familiar rhetoric of 'teaching it a lesson'. As in 1962, the immediate provocation was an Indian presence just north of the McMahon Line in Sumdorong Chu Valley, in line with India's belief that the McMahon Line as drawn on the map did not synchronize with topographical features on the ground. Both sides mobilized, and there were mistaken reports in the Western press of clashes having taken place. These were swiftly denied by both governments and temperatures subsequently lowered.

Following Rajiv Gandhi's 1988 visit to China, the first by an Indian prime minister in 33 years, the talks were moved to the level of a Joint Working Group (JWG). In the 1990s, as Allen Carlson has noted:

significant changes took place in the Chinese approach to Sino-Indian border relations...throughout this period the official and elite Chinese discourse on the Sino-Indian boundary literally dried up. Quite simply, the accusations against Indian transgressions of Chinese sovereign boundaries that had been the main source of official claims on such lines through the mid-1980s ceased to appear in Beijing Review after 1988.<sup>21</sup>

The primary achievement of the JWGs was the two agreements on the CBMs of 1993 and 1996. While the CBMs helped to bring down the level of military confrontation that had characterized the Sumdorong Chu stand-off of 1987 and froze the *de facto* LAC, they had little effect on the progress towards a *de jure* settlement.

The JWG also had the mandate to clarify the LAC. Until their

15th and last round of talks in March 2005, the JWG had managed to exchange maps on the middle sector, but the more contentious western and eastern sectors remained stubbornly elusive. During Prime Minister Vajpayee's visit to China in 2003, both sides agreed to create the office of the special representative 'to explore the framework of a boundary settlement from a political perspective'. The second parallel track of negotiations appears to have been instituted because the JWG mechanism was moving at such a glacial pace that both sides felt it necessary to give a political impetus to the process, by doing the spadework for a political agreement before the LAC was demarcated.

There have been some suggestions that the institution of the special representatives appears to be a case of putting the cart before the horse. There are three stages in the resolution of any boundary dispute: (1) demarcating the Line of Control (LoC) along the ground; (2) agreeing on a set of political parameters or guiding principles, and (3) reaching a political agreement, based on those principles, on a final boundary which may or may not be identical with the LoC. It may appear as if the Sino-Indian boundary dispute is more remote from resolution than the India-Pakistan one, since India and Pakistan have already demarcated the LoC along the ground as far back as 1972. However, China's approach has generally been to get the framework agreement out of the way first, which generally mirrors the status quo on the ground with minor adjustments, and subsequently demarcate the final boundary on the ground in line with the agreement. As A. G. Noorani has noted, 'China has followed a certain pattern in each of its nine major border agreements. A joint group was set up only as part of the settlement; not in preparation for it.'<sup>22</sup>

Having attempted and failed to demarcate the LAC on the ground first, the two sides have decided to approach it from the other direction. The special representatives have already met 11 times in just four years, the last meeting coming in September 2007, which is an encouraging sign, even if progress has been incremental. While the bland statements released by the special representatives at the end of each session give little away, it is clear that these talks are going to

be the engine for a future solution. Their major achievement was the Agreement on the Political Parameters and Guiding Principles for the Settlement of the India–China Boundary Question which was signed during Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao's visit to India in 2005. Thus, one of the three stages has already been expedited. The next stage of crafting a political agreement on the basis of these guiding principles is likely to be more complicated and a swift breakthrough is unlikely to occur.

India's chief pointsman in the dialogue, National Security Adviser M. K. Narayanan, has counselled patience on the progress of the talks.

Sino-India border talks is an important component but after the end of the fifth round we managed to arrive at a very remarkable step with regard to the guiding principles and political parameters. Without that you can't really go forward. Till then we were quite unclear what would be the principle on which the next steps will take place. Now, we are at the stage to create an agreed framework. That is going to take quite sometime I would presume. There is a compass for the talks. Now we know in which direction the talks are going. Naturally, both sides are not going to give in easily because there are long-standing beliefs, long-standing commitments and long-standing territorial issues. That will take time...Then the delineation of the border will become a much easier exercise.<sup>23</sup>

As mentioned earlier, the disputed territory in the western sector has greater strategic value for China than for India. IB chief B. N. Mullik recalls in *The Chinese Betrayal* that both the Army Chief and MEA officials expressed scepticism about the usefulness of Aksai Chin in a meeting in January 1959.

(Gen) Thimayya quite categorically stated that he did not consider that the Aksai Chin road was of any strategic importance nor was he willing to open any posts at Palong Karpo and Sarigh Jilganang because he felt that small army posts would be of little use and in any case he had no means of maintaining them from his base Leh...The attitude of the External Affairs Ministry was that this part of the territory was useless to India. Even if the Chinese did not encroach into it, India could not make any use of it.<sup>24</sup>

India's claim to it was based purely on national sentiment under the belief that it had historically been a part of India.

For China, however, the stakes were much higher. There were only three routes from China into Tibet, via Xinjiang, Qinghai and Sichuan, and motorable roads across all three routes were constructed only in the 1950s. Of these, the road from Xinjiang, which passed through Aksai Chin, provided the best access to western Tibet. The strategic importance of this road has diminished but not disappeared following the greater integration of Tibet to the mainland in recent times through a multiplicity of road, rail and air links. However, the rest of China's spoils in the west beyond the Aksai Chin plateau are not of the same importance. It is perhaps a portion of these regions that China may be willing to barter away if India is willing to offer something in return in the east.

In the eastern sector, similarly, the territory under dispute, the state of Arunachal Pradesh, which China calls southern Tibet, is of considerable strategic importance to its holder, India. But the difference is that this region also interests China, which has made a specific claim for Tawang as a subset of its general claim for the whole of Arunachal Pradesh, which was reiterated by the Chinese ambassador to India before the visit of President Hu Jintao in November 2006.

The importance of Arunachal Pradesh for India arises not just from its intrinsic worth but also from its role as a defensive bastion that safeguards India's north-east. As Garver puts it, 'National security concerns outweigh considerations of natural resources in India's thinking about its ownership of the southern slope (of the eastern Himalayas, i.e. Arunachal Pradesh). Simply stated, control of the southern slope is linked to the defensibility of India's entire northeast...' <sup>25</sup> This is not to say that its natural resources are negligible. It has significant untapped water resources that could be used to generate hydroelectricity. However, reports of a south-north water transfer programme in China that seeks to divert the Brahmaputra northwards at the Great Bend where it flows south into Arunachal Pradesh could endanger its water resources.

While China has stressed Tawang's cultural linkages with Tibet exemplified by the birth of the sixth Dalai Lama here in the seventeenth century, there also appear to be other considerations

behind the Chinese claim. Garver estimates that the mineral resources in Tawang could sustain one-third of Tibet's economy. He also explicates the strategic significance of Tawang.

Chinese possession of such a tract would create a second salient of Chinese territory bracketing Bhutan. This area was the PLA's main line of advance in 1962 and lies at the end of some of its shortest logistic lines extending from the Lhasa area. Moving the boundary south of Tawang would move the PLA's jump-off point for any future offensive about halfway to the edge of the Assam plain. It would also put some of the most rugged terrain behind the PLA's front.<sup>26</sup>

This suggests that it would be next to impossible for India to entertain any concessions in Tawang. In fact, the agreement on political parameters and guiding principles gives 'due consideration to the principle of mutual and equal security'. As Ranganathan and Khanna note, this implies that 'there has to be a mutual understanding on reasonably defined military requirements for the defence of each side's vital interests'.<sup>27</sup>

In any case, the importance of Tawang to China is called into question by its decision not to annex it in 1962, unlike the spoils of war that it retained in the west. Moreover, the political parameters and guiding principles also state that, 'In reaching a boundary settlement, the two sides shall safeguard due interests of their settled populations in the border areas.' While the peripheral areas of Tawang are sparsely populated, China's stated claim to the area is based on cultural linkages, and the Tawang monastery, which epitomizes these linkages, is in Tawang town. This would have to be considered as a settled population, which means that it is exempt from any territorial exchange.

The possible solutions include one side unilaterally giving up territory, both sides giving up equivalent amounts of territory, and both sides giving up their claims to territory held by the other. The first is next to impossible to envisage although there is a precedent for it: as mentioned earlier, China gave up about 750 sq miles of territory it administered as part of its 1963 border treaty with Pakistan. The second is what it would appear China is currently

pitching for. For India, the territory it holds in the eastern sector is more strategically valuable than the territory it claims in the western sector. Unlike China's claim to Tawang, India has made no equivalent claim of a specific area in the western sector. So the prospect of swapping portions of one for portions of the other is likely to have few takers in Delhi. At best, a symbolic exchange of trivial amounts of territory of no substantive value to either side may be possible. That would make it almost identical with the remaining solution, which is to settle broadly along the lines of the status quo with minor adjustments primarily to ensure that 'the boundary should be along well-defined and easily identifiable natural geographical features to be mutually agreed upon between the two sides', which is another of the political parameters and guiding principles agreed upon.

Although China has not publicly articulated cancelling out each other's claims since 1981 and maintains its claim to Arunachal Pradesh, it may still be willing to accept it provided it senses that India is in favour. India has not made any public pronouncement favouring this solution, in contrast to its informal offer to convert the India-Pakistan LoC into an international border. But if India is willing to settle along the status quo with Pakistan, it should also be able to do so with China.

The Parliament resolution of 1962 seeking to recover every inch of land is often cited as a stumbling block in India. There was also a similar resolution with regard to POK in 1994. But if the official borders of any state are to be altered, then Parliament will have to pass a law to that effect, with or without that resolution. Even if the two establishments agree, India, thus, has the additional problem of generating a national consensus. There is no sign yet that the government of the day is preparing the ground for this. Chinese Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs Wang Yi stated in 2001 that China was not sure 'if the Indian political establishment had arrived at a democratic consensus that would be required to sustain the difficult negotiations...I am not sure of the conditions concerning "mutual understanding and mutual accommodation" is agreed to by our Indian friends'.<sup>28</sup> On the other hand, this problem does not

exist for China. According to Cheng Ruisheng, former Chinese ambassador to India, 'the border dispute with India is little known amongst the Chinese population at large. There is thus no strong nationalist sentiment that would prevent the Chinese government from compromise.'<sup>29</sup>

### **Conclusion**

The two protagonists appear to still be trapped in the territorial imperative, which values territory above all other considerations impervious of the costs that such a narrow-minded focus on territory places on the overall national interest. At least in the India–Pakistan case, both countries have a perceived stake in Kashmir in validating their respective national identities as a secular vis-à-vis Islamic republic as the case may be. But even here, the dispute over the Siachen glacier represents the territorial imperative at its worst in what Stephen Cohen has described as 'two bald men fighting over a comb'. India's hitherto non-negotiable claim to Aksai Chin is only slightly less futile.

But the situation appears redeemable, perhaps even by this generation of leaders. Alka Acharya and G. P. Deshpande have written encouragingly of the transition from the JWG process, which was in the custody of the bureaucracy to the institution of the special representatives, driven by the political leaderships.

Politics has to be in command in these matters...the series of talks by the two political representatives can be a new beginning and may provide a framework for an eventual settlement. It is important that we (and the Chinese) move away from the territorial imperative to the political imperative. It is only then that the solutions may emerge.<sup>30</sup>

The resolution of the boundary dispute is inching forward in the right direction, though the most difficult and important step is still ahead. The least disagreeable outcome for both parties is the status quo with minor adjustments. China has emphasized the principles of mutual understanding and mutual accommodation for a settlement to the boundary issue. More recently, other catch-phrases have cropped up such as 'mutual adjustment', 'equal

consultation' and 'accommodation of reality'. The meaning of these abstractions has not been explicitly spelt out, and is, hence, open to interpretation, but taken together, they appear to indicate that both sides have to understand each other's sensitivities and accommodate each other by adjusting their positions in accordance with existing realities. Thus, it would appear that these principles broadly serve to reinforce the status quo.

But constraints remain to be overcome before this can gain traction. On the Indian side, the establishment needs to prepare public opinion for the cooling of the country's sentimental attachment to Aksai Chin and the adjoining areas of Ladakh that have been under Chinese occupation for five decades. Like in the case of POK, a certain amount of kite-flying on this issue will be necessary, but most importantly, the main opposition has to be taken into confidence to prevent the issue from being hijacked by petty political considerations.

China, on the other hand, has traditionally focused on a more realistic approach by filling out those areas that correspond to its vital national interests and being ready to negotiate away the rest. This has generally translated into a willingness to recognize the existing realities in the east provided these are reaffirmed under a new treaty. However, there has been a nuanced shift in the Chinese position over the last two decades, and it has begun to press its claim in the east more conspicuously than before. The optimistic view is that this could be an attempt to make the stakes in the east appear higher in order to lower India's resistance to compromise in the west. But the possibility also exists that China has reappraised the strategic value of the disputed territory in India's possession in keeping with the strategic perspective towards its boundaries that has informed its settlements with other neighbours. This would make for a much harder bargain. Pending a final settlement, therefore, India will need to maintain a cautious vigil along its borders even as it takes steps to strengthen the breadth and depth of its overall relationship with China.



## CHAPTER 3

### *The Sino-Indian Military Balance*

The purpose of this chapter is to evaluate the relative military capabilities of both sides in the context of a prospective sequel to the 1962 border conflict without reference to their intentions, which are discussed elsewhere in the study. After 1988, both sides have embarked on the road to normalization without quite reaching the end of the road. Declarations that neither side shall use or threaten to use force against the other have been made. While these are no doubt in good faith, they would have acquired greater credibility had they been followed up on the ground with a clarification of the LAC.

The risk to India does not come so much from the likelihood of Chinese troops surging across the McMahon Line once again, but from China's potential ability to exert subtle coercive pressure with regard to the boundary dispute if its military prowess significantly outstrips that of India. Even if China's intentions are benign—and there is no reason at the moment to think otherwise—if India is to continue dialogue with China from a position of equality, it needs to be reassured by its own capabilities. As discussed in the previous chapter, China appears to be less satisfied with the status quo than India. Hence, for the purposes of this chapter, China will be seen as the proactive and offensive player, and India as the reactive and defensive player.

India's draft nuclear doctrine talks about having a credible minimum nuclear deterrent. But it is equally important to maintain a credible minimum conventional deterrent. Given that the nuclear thresholds of both India and China are fairly high, there exists the strategic space to prosecute a limited war in accordance with the well-known stability–instability paradox. This chapter seeks to examine the state of India's deterrent, and whether it has the ability

to impose sufficient costs on China to deter an offensive. In view of China's growing relative economic and military power, it will also examine whether India is taking appropriate steps to upgrade its deterrent, keeping in mind that India cannot and does not need to compete with China, whose ambitions are much more expansive. Given that resources are scarce, it seeks to identify whether there are specific military assets India should be focusing on. All this presupposes that the territorial dispute remains unresolved. A final settlement of the boundary will seriously, if not terminally, weaken the premise for a prospective conflict.

#### THE EVENT AND AFTERMATH OF 1962

It will be instructive to cast a brief look here at the 1962 conflict in order to determine why India was unable to launch a successful defence against the Chinese invasion. India's inability to adequately defend itself was partly a function of its lack of preparedness, which, in turn, owed to its inability to correctly foresee the nature of the Chinese response to the forward policy. It has even been suggested that the forward policy was driven primarily by the belief that China's response would be limited by the unfavourable domestic and geopolitical circumstances in which it was placed. The country had just emerged from the disastrous economic plan known as 'The Great Leap Forward' and its associated famine, which killed 30 million people, while the Tibetan uprising of 1959 also added to China's internal instability. In June 1962, China was involved in a stand-off with Taiwan, which may have escalated but for a US assurance that it would not support a Taiwanese attack. The Sino-Soviet split, which had erupted in 1959, was also gathering momentum, leaving China diplomatically isolated.

The forward policy may have made military, if not political, sense if it had been the culmination of an operational plan that had factored in all possible consequences by concentrating forces in the rear bases for a counterattack. But the possibility of a Chinese attack was never considered, either by the political class or by the military brass at the highest levels, with the result that unit commanders

were sent on what virtually amounted to kamikaze missions. After the invasion, troops were rushed from the plains without being acclimatized to mountain warfare, resulting in sickness and adverse effect on performance. Intelligence about Chinese intentions as well on their actual mobilization (which began several months before the invasion) was also lacking. The incident that sparked off hostilities was the publicly announced order to evict Chinese forces from Thag La Ridge, which was not only militarily indefensible, but politically so as well, since the area lay north of the McMahon Line.

The forward policy, which the government had been pressing for since early 1960, was soft-pedalled by the Army until late the following year in the awareness that the military means to implement it were sorely lacking. But once Gen Thimayya left the helm as Army Chief, the government found a more compliant and less resistant audience in the army top brass, and pushed through an authoritative directive to the Army in November 1961 to put the policy into effect. Dissenting voices did not disappear after this, but they were much less likely to get through to the civilian establishment past the firewall of the Army leadership. Western Command GOC-in-C General Daulat Singh wrote a classic memo in August 1962.

Militarily we are in no position to defend what we possess, leave alone force a showdown...It is imperative that political direction is based on military means. If the two are not coordinated there is a danger of creating a situation where we may lose both in the material and moral sense much more than we already have.

The response from Army HQ was that 'we must do the best we can under the circumstances'.<sup>31</sup>

Instead of hoping for the best but planning for the worst, India hoped as well as planned for the best, and the success of the forward policy depended on China behaving as India had planned. There is an old saw that no plan survives first contact with the opponent, which is exactly what happened. To some extent, the Army, not giving its ranks adequate military capabilities to force the issue, was simply a reflection of not having those capabilities. India lacked the

wherewithal to bolster its forward units, which were systematically encircled and cut off by advancing Chinese forces, owing primarily to logistical constraints in the western sector that militated against the larger deployment of troops. This was a decisive advantage for the Chinese, who had much better transport and supply links to their forward posts. The government's failure to modernize the army after Independence was another contributor to the final outcome, with troops forced to manage with obsolete weapons and lack of adequate winter clothing. Despite representations from the Army, the government did not favour the import of much-needed equipment, wedded as it was to non-alignment. Instead, it wanted India to go down the indigenous route of production, which was not a recipe for the short term.

If that was the case, the policy needed to be changed, but the army leadership fell in line with civilian delusions, and did nothing to challenge their ignorance of the situation on the ground, which was the basis of their directives on the forward policy. China's early actions reinforced the belief that they had called China's bluff, rather than realizing that it was India that was carrying out the bluff, and a highly risky one at that. This massive error of judgement was compounded by further errors of judgement during the course of the war. For instance, India inexplicably failed to use the lull after the first stage of the conflict following the fall of Tawang to bolster its defences in the area, apparently believing that the conflict was over. Troops in Se La were reportedly asked to prepare themselves against winter rather than against the enemy.<sup>32</sup>

The one factor that could have changed the equation was air support, but this was never considered until it was too late when Prime Minister Nehru bypassed the Indian Air Force (IAF) and made a desperate plea for help from the Americans to deploy the USAF. Army HQ had earlier turned down requests from its corps commanders in both the western and eastern sectors for close air support by the IAF in the belief that Chinese retaliation could threaten their logistical supplies which were heavily dependent on airdrops. It was also felt that Indian cities outside the combat theatre could be vulnerable to aerial bombing, even though China's

capacity to undertake such missions from Tibetan bases was non-existent. While it was true that China had almost a 3:1 advantage in combat aircraft inventory, this would have been more than nullified by the fact that they had fewer airfields in the vicinity of the combat theatre, and even those airfields were at high altitude, which would have imposed limitations on their payload and range.

China's invasion in 1962 was designed to teach India a lesson for nibbling at its territory. India did learn to recognize the LAC, and, decades later, to negotiate for a final settlement, actions it refused to take before the war. However, the other lesson India learnt, which was perhaps not what China intended, was to be fully prepared for a future conflict with its neighbour. In other words, it was better to err on the side of caution than on the side of recklessness. The modernization of the Indian Armed Forces, which had been neglected before 1962, finally got the priority that it deserved. China's first nuclear test less than two years later was the main stimulus for India's own nuclear weapons programme, which began in 1967. There were at least two serious incidents on the border on subsequent occasions: the clash at Nathu La on the Sikkim–Tibet border in 1967, and the stand-off at Sumdorong Chu on the Arunachal–Tibet border in 1987. On both occasions, India gave a much better account of itself. The Army Chief on the latter occasion, Gen Sundarji, believed that India's proactive action combined with China's restrained reaction had exorcised the ghost of 1962.

### ECONOMIC POWER

Even if the existing balance of relative military capabilities is stable, changes in the power balance could undermine it, unless a serious attempt is made by the affected power to buck the trend. Various indices to measure national power have been proposed. One of the most elaborate is the Chinese concept of Comprehensive National Power (CNP), which has been defined as 'the comprehensive capabilities of a country to pursue its strategic objectives by taking actions internationally...the core factors to the concept are strategic

resources, strategic capabilities and strategic outcomes, with the strategic resources as the material base'.<sup>33</sup> The Chinese themselves do not seem to agree on how to measure CNP with the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Chinese Military Academy, China Institute of Contemporary International Relations, as well as the Centre for China Studies at Tsinghua University proposing different methods.

John Mearsheimer distinguishes between two kinds of power: latent power, and military power. According to him, 'latent power constitutes the societal resources that a state has available to build military forces'.<sup>34</sup> He zeroes in on wealth as the most important component of latent power, advances in which form the basis for advances in military power, and notes that GNP is a good indicator of wealth, specially when the two powers being compared are at comparable levels of economic development. This section will, thus, focus on economic power as the material basis of latent power.

China's average annual GDP growth rate since 1978 of 9.6 per cent is phenomenal, if not quite unprecedented, with Japan, South Korea and Taiwan having exhibited similar growth in the past. India's own progress has been more modest. According to Yan Xuetong:

although it enjoys the same advantage of low-cost labour as China, India is far behind China in aspects of opening-up to foreign investment as well as other economic reforms. Therefore, the Indian economy will continue to grow at a slower pace than that of China.<sup>35</sup>

Even if India achieves parity in growth rate with China, the gap will continue to widen, because China is growing on a much larger base (Table 1).

**TABLE 1** AVERAGE ANNUAL GDP GROWTH RATE (%)  
IN CHINA AND INDIA

	<i>1980-90</i>	<i>1990-00</i>	<i>2000-04</i>
China	10.3	10.6	9.4
India	5.7	6.0	6.2

*Source:* World Development Indicators.

It has been argued that the different political systems in the two countries to some extent reflect their different performances. Meghnad Desai, for instance, suggests that China is on the road to becoming a great power, whereas India will remain a great democracy. More pertinently, it has been pointed out by Amartya Sen, among others, that China's relative economic success vis-à-vis India was a function of its healthy social indicators immediately preceding reform. China also raised agricultural productivity and managed to transfer a sizeable chunk of agricultural labour into small-scale manufacturing via the Township and Village Enterprises (TVEs) scheme in the early stages of reform. That shift in the pattern of employment failed to occur in India.

The possibility exists that China's growth could be imperiled for economic, social or environmental reasons. Prognostications of China's collapse have become a virtual cottage industry with its high-watermark being Gordon Chang's 2001 publication, which predicted 'The Coming Collapse of China' in less than a decade. Economic downfall has been predicated on the condition of China's banking system and its large percentage of Non-Performing Loans (NPLs), the capitalization costs of which could have an impact on the economy's future growth trajectory.

There are also voices which suggest that India could have the better prospects in the long run. Tarun Khanna and Yasheng Huang have argued that while China's growth stems from massive accumulation of resources as reflected in their levels of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and their high national savings rate, India's growth is a result of its greater efficiency in using limited resources, as reflected in its lower NPLs and more dynamic private entrepreneurship.<sup>36</sup> Efficiency is more difficult to achieve than capital accumulation, which means that India has negotiated the more complex problem and can have the best of both worlds by also attracting greater FDI, including from its diaspora.

Martin Wolf has noted that the surprising element about China's growth is not how fast it has been but how slow, given that it has so much capital at its disposal. While China has more bucks, other countries such as India 'have obtained considerably more

growth for their investment buck'.<sup>37</sup> India can also tap more into other factors of production like labour because of its more youthful demographic profile, whereas China has already used up most of its demographic dividend. So, the jury is still out on whether India can outgrow China in the future.

From India's perspective, the projections of Arvind Virmani provide both good and bad news. The good news is that the gap in GDP and power potential between China and India will not continue to widen for much longer and India will begin to narrow the gap from about 2012. But the bad news is that it will take until the end of the century for India to catch up. As he puts it:

India's GDP has fallen from more than that of China's in 1980 to half of it in 2000. It will reach a relative trough of 44% around 2012 before starting to rise and close the gap. By 2025 the ratio of India's to China's GDP and power will be 50% and 35% respectively. By 2050 the ratio of GDP and power potential will have risen to 70% and 55% respectively. We project both gaps to be completely eliminated by the end of the century, thus restoring the position that prevailed in the early 1980s.<sup>38</sup>

#### MILITARY EXPENDITURE

China claims that the staggering annual increases in its official defence expenditures (17.8 per cent in 2007) are a compensatory gesture for the neglect of defence in the early stages of economic reform. Defence was accorded the lowest priority among the Four Modernizations and 'at that time, it was decided that national defense should be both subordinated to and serve the country's overall economic development'.<sup>39</sup> Indeed, in the decade from 1979 to 1989, official defence expenditure actually registered an average annual decrease of 5.83 per cent after taking inflation into account.

From the 1990s, however, the Peoples' Liberation Army's (PLA's) finances have followed an upward trajectory. Only once in the last 18 years has the defence budget not received a double-digit annual increase. Even allowing for inflation, official defence spending grew by an average of 9.8 per cent per year in real terms from 1988–2003. The

subordinate relationship of national defence to the economy has now metamorphosed into a coordinated relationship between the two as part of official policy. In the words of the 2006 Defence White Paper:

China pursues a policy of coordinated development of national defense and economy. It keeps the modernization of China's national defense and armed forces as an integral part of its social and economic development, so as to ensure that the modernization of its national defense and armed forces advance in step with the national modernization drive.<sup>40</sup>

China's habit of omitting a sizeable chunk of its defence expenditure from the official figures is well-documented. According to Rand, these include: procurement of weapons from abroad; expenses for paramilitaries (People's Armed Police); nuclear weapons and strategic rocket programmes; state subsidies for the defence-industrial complex; some defence-related research and development; and extra-budget revenue.<sup>41</sup> The Rand estimate puts the actual 2003 expenditure at between 1.4 to 1.7 times the official figure, which translates into a range of 2.3–2.8 per cent of the GDP. There is a whole spectrum of estimates by other sources, with the Pentagon suggesting that the 2006 figure could range between \$70–105 billion (Tables 2 and 3).

**TABLE 2** OFFICIAL AND ESTIMATED DEFENCE EXPENDITURE  
OF CHINA  
(US\$ billion, current)

	<i>GDP</i>	<i>Official Defence Expenditure</i>	<i>% of GDP</i>	<i>Growth Rate</i>	<i>Estimated Defence Expenditure</i>	<i>% of GDP</i>
2000	1,100	14.5	1.31	12.6	42.0	3.81
2001	1,200	17.0	1.41	17.7	43.5	3.62
2003	1,300	20.0	1.53	17.6	51.2	3.92
2003	1,430	22.4	1.56	9.6	55.9	3.91
2004	1,680	25.0	1.48	11.6	62.5	3.72
2005	—	29.9	—	12.6	80.0	—
2006	—	35.09	—	14.7	—	—
2007	—	44.94	—	17.8	—	—

Source: globalsecurity.org

**TABLE 3** DEFENCE EXPENDITURES OF INDIA AND CHINA  
(US\$ BILLION, CURRENT)

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
India	14.8	14.4	13.7	15.5	19.6	22
China	42.0	43.5	51.2	55.9	62.5	80

*Source:* CSIS.

Rand, however, notes that the current annual rates of growth in China's defence expenditure may be unsustainable even in the medium term. 'If the Chinese government should attempt to keep defense budgets growing at 9.8 percent per year while the economy grows at our projected rates, military expenditures would take between 6.2 and 7.6 percent of GDP by 2025,'<sup>42</sup> which, they conclude, is unrealistic. A slightly different view is put forward by Dwight Perkins.

If China's leadership so demands, then the country will soon have the capacity to support a very large military budget. A budget of even 5% or 6% of GDP could be sustained for quite some time without cutting into the overall rate of economic growth. If, for example, the increase in military expenditure came out of the investment total currently at around 40% of GDP, that investment rate would fall to 37% or 38% of GDP, which is still an extraordinarily high figure.<sup>43</sup>

India's defence expenditure has averaged just about 2.3 per cent of the GDP for the past 15 years compared to the 3 per cent level spent in the preceding 15, when the economic situation was much less rosy. Given the manpower-intensive nature of the Indian Armed Forces, it has been argued that defence expenditure as a percentage of GDP must have a floor of at least 3 per cent in order to enable major capital acquisitions. If current trends continue, the disparity between the budgets of both countries, which is already more than a factor of three, is likely to widen even further, with all its attendant implications. Yan Xuetong holds that as long as China is faced with a potential military conflict with the US in the Taiwan Straits, its military spending will continue to rise faster than India, which, in turn, will increase its military superiority over India.<sup>44</sup>

## DEFENCE TRANSFORMATION

According to Andrew Marshall, long-time director of the US DoD's Office of Net Assessment, the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) refers to '[A] major change in the nature of warfare brought about by the innovative application of new technologies which, combined with dramatic changes in military doctrine and operational and organizational concepts, fundamentally alters the character and conduct of military operations.'<sup>45</sup>

These concepts have been embraced by India and China in their official military discourse. The PLA's strategic guidelines have evolved over multiple stages: People's War (pre-1978), People's War Under Modern Conditions (1978–85), Local War or Limited War (1985–91), Limited War Under High Technology Conditions (1991–2004), and Limited War Under the Conditions of Informationalization (2005 onwards). According to Michael Pillsbury, writing in 2000, the official change of guideline had not fully penetrated into the PLA, and there were still three schools of thought that could broadly be characterized as People's War, Local War, and RMA.<sup>46</sup>

According to China's December 2004 Defense White Paper, the RMA with Chinese characteristics includes the following component parts: 'reducing the PLA by 200,000; strengthening the Navy, Air Force, and Second Artillery Force; speeding up "informationalization"; accelerating the modernization of weaponry and equipment; implementing the "strategic project for talented people"; intensifying joint training; deepening logistics reform; innovating political work; and governing the armed forces strictly and according to law'.<sup>47</sup>

The Indian Army doctrine also talks of a 'homespun' RMA.

Although we may not have the wherewithal to draw full benefits from it at present, the underlying message is unambiguous—technology gives a clear edge and needs to be exploited to our advantage. We need to conceive and work towards a 'homespun' RMA that meets our needs and gives us an edge over our potential adversaries...Analysis of major components of RMA indicates that they have great applicability in our context. We may however, have to follow an

incremental approach in embracing these principles and acquiring the relevant technology. Information Warfare (IW) will form a key component of our war fighting doctrine.<sup>48</sup>

In terms of organization, the PLA has streamlined its force structure by slashing 1.7 million troops since the 1980s, including 200,000 in the last few years. On the other hand, India has gone against international trends by reportedly adding 200,000 troops in recent years. Cutting manpower is essential to redirect personnel expenses into technology and increasing the tooth-to-tail ratio. India has not been in a position to do this because of its counterinsurgency requirements, which are manpower-intensive. At some point of time, hard decisions will have to be taken because the quantity of manpower is limiting both the acquisition of technology and the quality of manpower. This is reflected in the shortfall of about 14,000 officers in the Armed Forces.

## GEOGRAPHY

China has been able to overcome the limitations of infrastructure in Tibet by building road, rail and oil pipeline links that can allow it to pump many more divisions in the region in the event of a contingency. The Qinghai–Tibet railway was extended to Lhasa in 2006 and China is considering a further extension that would bring it right up to the boundary. India has also been racing to expand road infrastructure in Arunachal Pradesh, but is constrained from having the same capability of mobilization because of the more difficult terrain south of the McMahon Line. The scheduled completion of 3,062 km of roads in Arunachal including some that lead right up to the border under the Special Accelerated Road Development Programme (SARDP) has been advanced to 2009. As Minister of State for Defence Pallam Raju has noted, ‘China’s side is largely plateau, sometimes their roads don’t even need blacktopping. On our side it is an extremely difficult task that involves mountain cutting and relaying.’ Thus, airpower acquires added significance in the Indian context.

The Himalayas form a formidable natural barrier between India and China, which should in normal circumstances favour the defence. There are two approaches in the eastern sector. One is the direct one through the Himalayan valleys from the north, while the other is the indirect one from the east via Myanmar. As far as the northern approach is concerned, Lt Gen V. R. Raghavan (retd) has noted:

For an offensive from the Tibetan plateau into India, China could make do with 3–5 divisions in 1962 but in any future conflict they would need around 20 divisions. Moreover, in the Tibetan plateau the summer is very short, so this would require a logistical buildup over two summers, which Indian observers could pick up.<sup>49</sup>

The Indian Army has 10 mountain divisions, almost all raised after the 1962 war, whereas the PLA maintains just three mountain infantry brigades.

Just as the Maginot Line was rendered irrelevant by Hitler's advance through the Low Countries, the relative impenetrability of the Himalayas could conceivably be overcome by an approach from the east. Hitler did not take the consent of Belgium and the Netherlands, but Myanmar, while by no means hostile towards India, is for all practical purposes a Chinese satellite. B. Raman has noted that even in 1962, some Chinese troops from Yunnan did enter the then NEFA on muleback (roads being non-existent) from the Kachin state which, although part of Burma, had not yet been brought under effective Burmese administration.<sup>50</sup> The condition of the road network in northern Myanmar has not substantially changed since then to facilitate a major offensive. But China is involved in a major effort to upgrade infrastructure in Myanmar.

#### DOMESTIC DEFENCE INDUSTRY

China's indigenous defence industry has scaled up production over the last decade and a half. During 1990–2003, the official defence budget allocation for military equipment grew at twice the rate of the budget. The domestic military-industrial complex has

succeeded in providing China with a limited but significant degree of independence from foreign military suppliers, which can only increase with time. The advances have also been in qualitative terms. According to Roger Cliff, 'China's defence companies are now producing systems that while not cutting edge are comparable to those that dominate the inventories of the US and other advanced militaries.'<sup>51</sup>

The contrast with India is symbolized by China commissioning their 4.5<sup>th</sup> generation indigenous fighter, the J-10, into service in 2006, whereas India's equivalent Light Combat Aircraft still remains in the prototype stage, although both programmes were initiated in the 1980s. The LCA's production has been delayed by the US embargo post-1998 (that has since been lifted) which halted the transfer of the GE-404 engine. China too had to face a crippling sanctions regime after 1989, which it managed to overcome. The J-10 is modelled on Israel's aborted Lavi fighter programme, which in turn was modelled on the F-16.

Although India's commercial Information Technology (IT) sector is more advanced than that of China, it is the latter that has managed to leverage its IT sector more successfully for military applications, specially in the realm of C4I. China's relative success reflects its greater level of civil-military integration, which has enabled technological advances in the civilian sector to be spun-on to the military.

#### ISR

In the information age of warfare, it is important to obtain and secure information superiority prior to the onset of hostilities by cutting through the 'fog of war', a term coined by Clausewitz to describe the lack of real-time situational awareness on the battlefield. According to Chang Mengxiong, 'Information-intensified combat methods are like a Chinese boxer who has knowledge of vital body parts and can bring an opponent to his knees with a minimum of movement.' Chang adds that information superiority is more important than air or sea superiority.<sup>52</sup>

These capabilities generally fall under the rubric of ISR (Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance). The distinction between the latter two has been explained as follows.

Surveillance operations are sustained operations designed to collect information by a variety of platforms and/or individuals which have a comparatively long dwell time and continuous collection capability...Reconnaissance operations are transitory in nature and generally designed to collect information at a single point in time by a platform that does not dwell over the target or in the area.<sup>53</sup>

There are a variety of air and space platforms available for ISR operations. The general view is that these need to be integrated to maximize the benefits, which is why the IAF periodically drums up support for an Aerospace Command. This has been delayed due to inter-Services rivalry as well as the government's concern that this could be seen as a prelude to the militarization of space. Radar mounted on aerial platforms and remote sensing satellites are the primary means of establishing information superiority.

ISR capabilities are important to detect any movement in deployments across the boundary, which India failed to adequately do in Kargil. However, India now has more sophisticated instruments for ISR including UAVs (Unmanned Aerial Vehicles) which it did not possess then. India will also be obtaining the Israeli Phalcon AEW&C (Airborne Early Warning and Control) system, which is a radar platform carried by air to detect enemy aircraft as well as guide friendly aircraft in taking it down. China sought to get the same system earlier, but was frustrated by a US veto. Instead, the Chinese have sought to manufacture it in-house, although this suffered a temporary setback in 2006 with the crash of a KJ-2000 aircraft, which is a Russian Il-76 converted into an AWACS aircraft, and the loss of all 40 people on board.

China reportedly has at least nine satellites dedicated to military use (besides another 63 dual-use satellites) compared to India's one experimental satellite for limited defence use (out of a total of 16). China is also going all out to develop its own regional satellite navigation system while India is content to piggyback on Russia's

Global Navigation Satellite System (GLONASS) which can be used as a guidance system for precision-guided munitions and missiles.

China's successes in the military applications of space are exemplified by its anti-satellite missile test in January 2007, which is a central part of its asymmetric warfare strategy against the US. However, it can also be used against any adversary that is increasingly dependent on satellites for military remote sensing and military communications, including India. While it was a spectacular propaganda coup for the PLA, it simultaneously blew a hole through the Chinese government's assiduous efforts to package China's progress under the rubric of 'peaceful development'. One can probably infer from the test that the PLA has greater autonomy in decision making than was formerly believed. China's anti-satellite missile test occurred just a day after India's own launch of its Cartosat 2 remote sensing satellite, which is officially a cartographic satellite with 1 m resolution, although it also has potential military applications. India may have to consider investing in some form of anti-satellite weapons in order to obtain a reciprocal leverage in this regard. There are more subtle instruments of taking out a satellite than using a missile, which may be appropriate for this purpose. Indeed, China reportedly first experimented with directed energy weapons such as lasers before carrying out the missile test.

#### AIR POWER

The decision not to use airpower even in territory that was on India's side of the LAC in 1962 was a tactical error that contributed to the eventual outcome. As Wg Cdr Sukumaran has noted:

one of the major effects of any fighter aircraft activity is to boost troop morale. This is quite apart from any effect that they may have on the enemy...The use of air power in 1962, would certainly have significantly boosted troop morale and stiffened resistance. It would also have conveyed a message to the Chinese about the extent of Indian resolve.<sup>54</sup>

The Kargil conflict demonstrated that India had learnt its lesson. Although the government did not authorize using air power

to target supply lines across the LAC on the ground that it was escalatory, the IAF flew almost 1,200 sorties, of which about 40 per cent were 'air cover/escort missions to ensure that air superiority was visible and available on location'.<sup>55</sup>

Intelligence is only useful when it is actionable and when the capability exists to use military assets like air power or strategic forces to operationalize it. As of 2006, the PLAAF had 251 fourth-generation multipurpose fighters out of a total of 2,643 combat aircraft. These comprise 116 Su-27s, 73 Su-30 MKKs, and 62 J-10s. India has 150 out of a total of 852. The break-up is 54 Mig-29s, 46 Mirage 2000Hs, 32 Su-30 MKIs, and 18 Su-30 MKs (which are being exchanged for the same number of Su-30 MKIs).<sup>56</sup> Quantity becomes as important as quality as the conflict lengthens, because in the early stages the numerically superior opponent can use his lower-end capability to weaken the opponent through attrition. China's advances in developing indigenous fighters mean that they have a ready supply of low-cost, mass production combat aircraft.

It has been suggested that India's Su-30 MKI 'air-dominance fighter' is superior to any aircraft in China's inventory, including the latter's Su-30 MKK, because of India having tweaked the aircraft's avionics with the help of Western and indigenous technology. The deployment of Beyond Visual Range (BVR) air-to-air missiles (AAMs) has meant that aircraft no longer need to engage at close ranges, and the quality of the avionics trumps that of the airframe. India already has French- and Russian-made BVR AAMs and has also successfully tested the indigenous Astra. There are reports that the IAF is seeking AAMs with a range as high as 120 km.

Although India's present authorized combat strength is 39 squadrons, the operational strength has reportedly dwindled to just 28 squadrons as a result of earlier models being phased out. India is seeking to fill its Medium Range Combat Aircraft (MRCA) niche with 126 aircraft. Former IAF Chief Air Chief Marshal Tyagi has declared that the entire order will be sourced from a single seller, but there are others who suggest that it may not be a bad idea to acquire more than one type of aircraft. The decision is likely to be taken more on the basis of the avionics than on the airframe. The

Russian Mig-35 is currently the favoured candidate, but the US Super Hornet has also gained some traction because of its Active Electronically Scanned Array (AESA) technology, of which the US currently has a monopoly over. India is also collaborating with Russia on a fifth-generation fighter.

Apart from the quantity and quality of aircraft in the inventory, the quality of the manpower, specifically pilots, also contributes to the overall edge of the force. In this context, factors such as number of flight hours per pilot and number of air exercises conducted by the air force become important signposts. The Indian Air Force has taken part in intensive air exercises with their counterparts from the US, France, Singapore and South Africa. The Cope India exercises with the US Air Force were especially closely watched, and US accounts have stressed that they were taken by surprise at the performance of the IAF pilots. On the other hand, China has not yet participated in any meaningful air exercises.

#### NUCLEAR AND MISSILE BALANCE

According to John Pike, director of GlobalSecurity.org, 'China's missile testing is surpassing anything since the Soviet Union's missile buildup of the 1960s. It's as if China was in near war-time production of missiles...in what amounts to the largest missile production and test rate since the Cold War.' Pike adds that China is testing ballistic missiles as often as once a week.<sup>57</sup> There are reports that China could be producing as many as 100 Short-Range Ballistic Missiles (SRBMs) and 200 LACMs (Land Attack Cruise Missiles) per year. While the SRBMs are primarily intended as a coercive instrument against Taiwan, the LACMs appear to have a much wider role. China is putting priority on strategic LACMs with a range of up to 4,000 km, which could be nuclear-tipped. However, these are subsonic missiles, which give an adversary more leeway in intercepting them. In contrast, the range of India's supersonic Brahmos has a ceiling of 300 km in order to meet MTCR regulations, although, since the missile can also be air-launched from the Su-30 MKI, it can be delivered over much longer distances.

The nuclear balance is lopsided in China's favour, and while India is taking steps to redress this, it does not seem to be doing so with any great urgency. As George Perkovich notes:

China's nuclear arsenal is more than sufficient to prevail in theoretical nuclear exchanges with India, even discounting the Chinese bomber fleet, which cannot penetrate alerted Indian defences, and the Chinese naval nuclear force, which is highly unlikely to be deployed to the Bay of Bengal or the Indian Ocean.

Perkovich adds that a total of 66 ballistic missiles, based in Kunming in Yunnan, and Xining in Qinghai, apparently target India (among other countries). These include the DF-21 (range of 1,800 km), DF-3A (2,800 km), and DF-4 (4,750 km).<sup>58</sup> There has been speculation about the possibility of a Chinese tactical nuclear first strike to break down Indian conventional defences in the course of a border war. China has a declared no-first-use (NFU) policy, but whether it applies to disputed territory is debatable. Moreover, India's proposal for a bilateral NFU has not found favour in Beijing. As Srikanth Kondapalli notes:

While China has signed nuclear warhead 'de-targeting' and 'non-targeting' agreements with Russia and the US respectively in the 1990s, no such agreement or understanding exists with India despite the latter's request in that direction. In fact at least three meetings between Indian and Chinese officials took place with no progress achieved.<sup>59</sup>

A credible Indian nuclear deterrent will serve the purpose both of deterring a theoretical Chinese nuclear strike, and, more usefully, adding a second rung of defence to its conventional deterrent which will become more important as the asymmetry in conventional forces grows further. In these circumstances, India's own declared NFU policy could become progressively diluted, as indeed it already has been, in order to add muscle to its overall deterrent, and to narrow the strategic space for a limited conventional conflict. With regard to the yield of India's nuclear arsenal, even assuming that it comprises only 15 KT warheads, i.e. if its thermonuclear capability is considered less than credible, this is sufficient to cause destruction on the scale of the attack on Hiroshima. The credibility of the

deterrent hinges more on the range of the delivery systems at India's disposal.

Under its nuclear doctrine, India avowedly seeks a nuclear triad of 'aircraft, mobile land-based missiles and sea-based assets'. Although India does not possess strategic bombers, its fighters such as the Su-30 MKI, Jaguar, Mirage 2000 and Mig-27 can be used to deliver nuclear payloads. The Su-30 MKIs have a combat radius of 1,600 km that can be more than doubled with mid-air refuelling by the six IL-78 tankers acquired from Uzbekistan. However, mid-air refuelling cannot be done in Chinese airspace, which means that while this will allow for an aircraft to take off from deeper inside India, the maximum penetration inside China will remain 1,600 km. Even this will be considerably reduced if the aircraft is to follow a low-altitude flight path in order to evade detection by terrestrial radar. While this would bring many Chinese cities within its radius, it would still leave others such as Beijing and Shanghai, which are more than 2,500 km from Tezpur as the crow flies, well outside its purview.

India has successfully tested the nuclear-capable Dhanush missile, which can be launched from surface ships, but a submarine-based asset offers greater survivability. The Sagarika missile, which is likely to eventually equip India's indigenous nuclear submarine (the ATV or Advanced Technology Vessel) has also been tested several times. According to Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) officials, they have received permission from the government to extend the Sagarika's range to 2,500 km. Given that the missile currently being tested only has a range of 700 km, and the time frame for the deployment of the ATV itself is shrouded in uncertainty, submarine-based assets are unlikely to become part of the strategic calculus for the foreseeable future.

It is clear that land-based missiles will have to serve as the pillar of a credible Indian nuclear deterrent against China and the first successful test of the Agni-3 ballistic missile in April 2007 was a step in that direction. At a maximum range of 3,000 km, Agni-3 is not a true Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile (IRBM). In fact, it is at the outer range of a Medium Range Ballistic Missile

(MRBM). While locating missiles closer to the borders can provide them with greater range inside the target territory, it also increases their vulnerability to attacks by the adversary. Moreover, north-eastern India is not the most politically stable region in the country. For a more credible deterrent, India needs to develop longer range missiles, which are deployable over a wider swathe of territory, in order to 'preserve locational uncertainty...without compromising in its ability to hold critical Chinese targets at risk', as Ashley Tellis notes.<sup>60</sup> In other words, India needs a next-generation missile with a range that is closer to 5,000 km. The DRDO has said that it has the capability to add an extra stage to the existing Agni-3 to produce such a missile provides it gets the political authorization, which should not be difficult. But it does not appear to be a priority.

#### CONCLUSION

The 1962 war provided the impetus for India to maintain a more robust conventional deterrent against China. Both countries currently favour a peaceful border as they pursue economic development as well as focus on more pressing military priorities. China's military modernization is not only aimed at the specific goals of capturing Taiwan and deterring the US in a Taiwan contingency, but more broadly at developing the capabilities that would enable it to eventually supplant the US as the most influential political player in the region. These capabilities will also give it the opportunity to neutralize India's conventional deterrent should it decide to revisit the border question in the future. India has to take appropriate measures to redress this growing asymmetry. As Air Chief Marshal A. Y. Tipnis (retd) has argued, India's 'existing doctrinal approach of dissuasion for China can and must be altered to that of deterrence, both on the nuclear and conventional fronts'.<sup>61</sup>

China's advances in ISR capabilities as well as in targeting the ISR capabilities of adversaries, which is part of the wider rubric of unconventional and asymmetric warfare, are being closely watched by India. As India becomes more dependent on IT, its vulnerability also increases proportionately. Instead of merely taking protective

measures, India should consider investing in asymmetric warfare capabilities in order to deter their use by a potential adversary. India also needs to launch more remote sensing satellites dedicated for military use in order to augment its ISR capabilities. Cartosat-2A, which has been described as India's first dedicated military satellite, is scheduled to be launched in 2008. The nuclear and missile balance is tilted heavily in China's favour. The acquisition of longer-range missiles will add teeth to India's deterrent. The testing of Agni-3 is a step in the right direction, but it does not go far enough. India has still not even tested, let alone deployed, a next-generation missile with a range of 5,000 km.

The lessons of 1962 have been absorbed, specially the tactical error of not using airpower. This was further reinforced during the Kargil conflict, which showed that a successful campaign to evict intruders from Indian territory required close air support. China has stolen a march over India in upgrading its logistical infrastructure in the border regions. On the whole, India's deterrent is adequate, but leans towards being minimum rather than being credible. Deterrence involves the ability to take the battle into enemy territory in case of aggression rather than merely defending one's own territory. Gurmeet Kanwal has suggested that India create a mountain strike corps headquarters for this purpose. As he notes, 'In any future border war with China, the Indian Army must resort to offensive-defence and should plan to take the fight across the LAC on to the Tibetan plateau.'<sup>62</sup>

## CHAPTER 4

### *Bridging the Trust Deficit in Sino-Indian Relations*

The previous two chapters have addressed two sources of India's insecurity, the unresolved territorial dispute and China's growing military capabilities relative to India, and how India is seeking to moderate them. This chapter seeks to address the insecurity arising from China's relationships with countries on India's periphery, specifically Pakistan and Myanmar, which have been characterized as 'strategic encirclement'. India has sought to improve relations with these countries as well as build strategic partnerships with other powers in the region to obtain a comparable leverage over China.

China's relationship with Pakistan and to a lesser extent other countries like Myanmar is one of the causes of the trust deficit in bilateral relations. It has been cited as evidence of China's malign intentions since it appears designed to undermine India's security. There is a widely-held perception that the India-US strategic partnership is an instrument to contain China's attempts to expand into India's sphere of influence. However, these interpretations are in many ways an over-simplification of the motivations of both China and India in pursuing these relationships. This chapter will also look at the insecurity arising from the uncertainty over China's future intentions. China and India are well aware of the importance of their own bilateral relationship and have simultaneously been taking steps to reach out directly to each other. The process is slow and a wider CBM regime may help both to telegraph their intentions towards each other in a more transparent manner and lock them into a relationship built on a foundation of greater trust.

## CHINA'S RELATIONSHIPS WITH INDIA'S NEIGHBOURS

China's relationships with the countries along India's periphery has frequently elicited concern in India as a scheme to deliberately enhance India's insecurity and keep it tied to the South Asian region. This is especially so in the case of the collaboration and transfer of nuclear and missile technology between China and Pakistan. There is also another factor behind China's presence in South Asia, which is the so-called 'string of pearls' strategy by which it seeks to safeguard the vital sea lines of communication that transport its energy supplies. This is a relatively more benign underpinning, and India is willing to understand if not approve of the rationale behind it, although it remains a bogey raised in sections of the Indian intelligentsia.

The Sino-Pakistan entente has a hoary history going back over 40 years to the 1965 India-Pakistan war when a Chinese demarche which could be interpreted as a threat to launch a second front against India may have prompted India's acceptance of a ceasefire. However, China was less inclined to get involved in the 1971 war. During the Kargil conflict of 1999, China adopted a neutral posture, although, according to then Indian Army Chief Gen V. P. Malik, 'the PLA enhanced its level of activity along the LAC in Ladakh and opposite Arunachal Pradesh...(which) indicated a demonstrative support to Pakistan, or an attempt to take advantage of our Army's involvement on the western borders.'<sup>63</sup>

China's defence collaboration with Pakistan included the sale and joint development of main battle tanks and fighter aircraft. After the US suspended the sale of military assistance to Pakistan, including F-16s, in 1990, China stepped in to the void and signed an agreement with Pakistan to co-develop and produce the FC-1 (also known as JF-17) fighter aircraft. But it was China's assistance to Pakistan's nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programmes that was of greater concern to India, since it went much beyond routine military collaboration and gave Pakistan the cover to prosecute a proxy war against India in Kashmir. It has been reported that China not only provided Pakistan with weapons-grade uranium,

but also a proven nuclear weapon design before it joined the NPT in 1992. In the 1990s, the Chinese delivered M-11 missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads besides constructing a factory in Pakistan for indigenous production of the missiles. This attracted sanctions from the US since it violated the provisions of the MTCR. China also sold thousands of ring magnets to Pakistan, which are a crucial component in the centrifuge technology for uranium enrichment.

China's position on Kashmir has become more nuanced over the years with a shift in its stand since 1990 when it dropped its references to the UN resolutions on Kashmir and proposed bilateral negotiations to resolve the dispute. China's ambassador to India unequivocally told the Indian media in 1996 that 'we do not stand for internationalization of the Kashmir question,' which was not very different from India's own position.<sup>64</sup> India's remains dissatisfied by the Chinese reluctance to call a spade a spade by recognizing the numerous killings of civilians by Kashmiri separatist groups as being acts of terrorism, much less being sponsored from across the border.

India agreed to China's insistence on the decoupling of Sino-Indian ties from Sino-Pakistani ties in the 1980s. In other words, China was asking India not to link progress in Sino-Indian ties with curtailment of Sino-Pak ties. As the Sino-Indian joint communiqué released after Premier Li Peng's visit to India in 1991 noted, 'The two sides stated that the improvement and development of Sino-Indian relations was not directed against any third country, nor would it affect their existing friendly relations and cooperation with other countries.'<sup>65</sup> This raises the question as to why India agreed to this arrangement if it believed that the Sino-Pak nuclear and missile collaboration was damaging to its national security. While India could not have prevented it from occurring, it could have kept ties with China in cold storage as a form of protest, in the hope of impressing upon China the significance of India's concerns. Garver speculates that it was due to fear of Chinese power in the aftermath of the 1987 border skirmish, which brought back memories of 1962.<sup>66</sup> It could also be argued that India's belief in its deterrent

against China was strengthened, not weakened, by the events of 1987. It may just be that India rationally concluded that no alternative policy toward sChina would influence China's behaviour and decided to get on with Sino-Indian rapprochement.

Presently, the China–Pakistan defence collaboration has receded into the background because most of the damage has already been done and Pakistan is preoccupied by internal problems. The issue of the Chinese construction of a port in Gwadar has been portrayed in India as giving Pakistan strategic depth in the event of a naval blockade of Karachi during a future Indo-Pak conflict. China claims that the port is now being run by a company from Singapore and that it does not have any military presence at Gwadar, although that could change in the future.

The China–Myanmar alliance also has an adverse impact on India's security, although not to the same degree as the China–Pakistan one. Myanmar's alignment with China's sphere of influence followed the military coup in Myanmar in 1988 and its subsequent international isolation. Myanmar's dependence on China for economic and military assistance gave China significant leverage over Myanmar. Unlike China's relationship with Pakistan, which is primarily designed to keep India in check, China's interests in Myanmar are mainly related to the development of China's south-west provinces, access to energy resources, and the access provided by Myanmar to the Indian Ocean. The concern in India over the deepening strategic relationship between China and Myanmar is related to geopolitics. The extensive road and rail infrastructure development that China has undertaken in Myanmar could provide China a more favourable approach into North-East India in the event of another border conflict. China is also involved in modernizing Myanmar's naval facilities and the reported electronic surveillance facility that China has established on Cocos Island north of the Andamans is an intelligence asset that could be used to monitor India's naval operations.

India put its eggs in the pro-democracy basket since it expected the pro-democracy forces led by Aung San Suu Kyi to ride the tide of public support and return to power. However, the military junta

proved far more durable, leading India to jettison its moralpolitik approach and reorient its policy to Myanmar in the mid-1990s by adopting a more conciliatory approach underpinned by realpolitik considerations. While the China factor was the basis for this volte-face, the safe havens, which many insurgent groups in the north-east had established in Myanmar, also made it incumbent upon New Delhi to seek cooperation with the military junta to dismantle this cross-border infrastructure. India established defence ties with Myanmar, providing limited military assistance, and carrying out joint operations along the Indo-Myanmar border against insurgent groups. India is involved in several road construction projects in Myanmar and is also set to sign an agreement with Myanmar for the development of the Sitwe port, which would also benefit the opening up of India's north-east. Myanmar also became another arena in the Sino-Indian competition over energy resources. The strategic imperative had finally overcome the moral imperative in India's Myanmar policy.

China's development of naval facilities in Pakistan and Myanmar is part of its 'string of pearls' strategy. Securing the sea lines of communication that transport the bulk of China's foreign trade, including energy and raw materials, is the primary motivation behind the 'string of pearls' which refer to China's forward presence along the Indian Ocean rim between the Straits of Malacca and the Straits of Hormuz.<sup>67</sup> Besides Pakistan and Myanmar, China is also developing the port of Hambantota in Sri Lanka. China's inroads into the Indian Ocean have come under scrutiny from India, but the pursuit of some degree of oversight over the sea lines is a legitimate Chinese desire given the importance of energy and raw materials for sustaining economic growth.

#### INDIA'S STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

India is also building strategic partnerships with other powers in the region. These partnerships are not directed against China but are part of a larger Indian policy to develop good relations with all the major actors in the international system in order to benefit the

economy, which will, in turn, have a trickle-down effect on other elements of national power. Indeed, India is also seeking a strategic partnership with China, which is discussed later. These partnerships also serve as a hedge against China's military modernization, ensuring that India will not remain isolated in the event that China's rise turns out to not be peaceful. The other spin-off of these partnerships is that they serve as a counter to China's own partnerships with countries surrounding India. This could have two potential effects. It could result in China scaling back its relationship with Pakistan in exchange for India doing the same with the US and creating a mutually trustworthy and beneficial relationship with each other. But it could also lead to the China–Pakistan and India–US relationships intensifying, thereby heightening the security dilemma and mutual distrust.

The India–US relationship finally broke the shackles imposed by the old Cold War mindsets during the second term of the George W. Bush Administration. Although the Cold War ended in 1991, it took another decade and a half for this to happen. This was primarily due to the setback to bilateral ties caused by India's 1998 nuclear tests. The Jaswant–Talbot strategic dialogue during the Clinton Administration helped to put the relationship back on track and paved the way for the developments that followed. The US had noted the strategic importance of India in its National Security Strategy of 2002, which acknowledged India to be a growing world power with which the US had common strategic interests. But it was in March 2005 that the US State Department came out with the extraordinary pronouncement that the US would 'help India become a major world power in the 21<sup>st</sup> century'.<sup>68</sup> The subsequent Indo-US nuclear agreement will help cement the new strategic partnership between the two countries.

China's concerns over the changing contours of Indo-US relations have been driven by the lingering suspicion that it is intended as a counterweight to China. US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice threw light on the role of the US–India relationship vis-à-vis China in a speech in Japan in 2005.

I really do believe that the US-Japan relationship, the US-South Korean relationship, the US-Indian relationship, all are important in creating an environment in which China is more likely to play a positive role than a negative role. These alliances are not against China; they are alliances that are devoted to a stable security and political and economic and, indeed, values-based relationships that put China in the context of those relationships, and a different path to development than if China were simply untethered, simply operating without that strategic context.<sup>69</sup>

China's opposition to US-India civilian nuclear cooperation stems from the concern that it is the cementing factor of a partnership that could be used to implement the US strategy of maintaining the power balance in Asia. China has portrayed its opposition in the context of safeguarding the global non-proliferation regime, which it claims could unravel if the deal goes through. As an article in the official *People's Daily* in 2005 stated:

Now that the United States buys another country in with nuclear technologies in defiance of an international treaty, other nuclear suppliers also have their own partners of interest as well as good reasons to copy what the United States did...A domino effect of nuclear proliferation, once turned into reality, will definitely lead to global nuclear proliferation and competition.<sup>70</sup>

China's own contribution to the undermining of the non-proliferation regime through its transfer of nuclear and missile technology to Pakistan make its pronouncements less credible in this regard.

India has also made significant strides in its relationship with Japan, which has taken on a strategic character during the last few years, having recovered fully from the post-Pokhran setback. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe went so far as to propose a quadrilateral security dialogue between the US, Japan, Australia and India. The meeting between representatives of the four countries on the sidelines of the APEC summit in Manila in 2007 led China to betray its anxiety by serving all four with a demarche seeking an explanation of the purpose behind the meeting. The five-nation naval exercises in the Bay of Bengal involving the US, Japan, Australia, India and Singapore in 2007 were also not looked upon favourably by China.

Chinese analysts opposed the emergence of such a grouping, which they dubbed as a mini-NATO designed to divide Asia into rival camps and balance the rising influence of China in the region. The exit of Prime Minister Abe—and more importantly Prime Minister Howard—has led to the initiative being put on the backburner. Australia formally announced in February 2008 that it was pulling out of the quadrilateral dialogue, although the US–Japan–Australia trilateral mechanism was to remain. It remains to be seen whether the US, Japan and India similarly decide to go ahead with a trilateral mechanism minus Australia.

China also appears to be having reservations about India's participation in the East Asia Community. Although it could not prevent India's membership of the body, it has managed to have India granted secondary status, with the ASEAN-plus-three being acknowledged as the 'main vehicle' for building the Community. China has been wary of India's Look East policy ever since Prime Minister Vajpayee (after the first India–ASEAN summit in 2002) described India and China as competitors in cultivating ASEAN.

#### EVALUATING CHINA'S INTENTIONS: CHINA'S PEACEFUL RISE?

The debate whether China is a status quo or a revisionist power has not yet been decisively resolved, with both viewpoints having support in the academic literature. Proponents of the revisionist hypothesis note that power transitions in history have usually resulted in conflict, with the rising power seeking to overturn the international order that had hitherto been controlled by the declining power. According to John Mearsheimer, for example, 'If China continues its impressive economic growth over the next few decades, the US and China are likely to engage in an intense security competition with considerable potential for war. Most of China's neighbours...will join with the US to contain China's power.'<sup>71</sup> Backers of the status quo argument suggest that with growing economic interdependence, China will buy—and is indeed already buying—into the existing order and will have less incentive

to overturn it. Alastair Iain Johnston subscribes to the latter view, with the caveat that:

(his) argument is not that a PRC which is more status quo-oriented relative to its past is necessarily a more benign or less violent actor in international politics than before. Status quo states, particularly those caught in security dilemmas, can be quite willing to use military force to defend their territory, their spheres of influence, and their client states.<sup>72</sup>

To China's credit, it has gone out of the way to reassure the outside world of its peaceful intentions, as the discourse within China on 'peaceful rise' demonstrates. CCP elder statesman Zheng Bijian coined the term 'three transcendences' to describe the way China would meet its challenges on the road to development.<sup>73</sup> One of these is to transcend the traditional ways for great powers to emerge. China has repeatedly insisted that it will not follow the path of Japan and Germany. The phrase 'peaceful rise' was also introduced into the official Chinese discourse in 2003 by Zheng and was used by Premier Wen Jiabao and President Hu Jintao at various forums but fell out of favour the following year, being replaced by the term 'peace and development' or 'peaceful development'. Apparently, it was felt that the word 'rise' would add to the concerns of other countries rather than dispel them. A White Paper was subsequently released on China's Peaceful Development Road in December 2005.<sup>74</sup> According to it, China's goal is to become a moderately well-off society in an all-round way by 2020 by furthering economic development and social harmony. For this, a peaceful regional environment is paramount, hence China would be wary of initiating any action that would willfully disturb the peace, at least until this goal is achieved. The exception is, of course, Taiwan, but even here it would require a serious provocation by Taiwan for China to attempt to alter the status quo by force in the short term.

This does not mean that China's military modernization gets short shrift. As its 2006 White Paper on National Defence indicates, China also concurrently seeks to make major progress in modernizing its Armed Forces by around 2020.<sup>75</sup> Thus, by the second decade of

this century, China expects to be in a position to have bolstered both its economic and military power, which constitute the two main pillars of Comprehensive National Power, to levels that would then translate into a decisive political influence over its extended neighbourhood. China regards its military modernization underlined by double-digit annual increases in defence spending as not being incompatible with peaceful rise. According to Zheng Bijian:

In order to guarantee China's peaceful rise, it is totally necessary to improve our military equipment, move ahead with the new military revolution, and strengthen our defense power. Building a strong defense assures the realization of China's peaceful rise and the achievement of the great project of unifying the motherland.<sup>76</sup>

In the 1990s, during Jiang Zemin's leadership, the Chinese introduced what could be regarded as an upgraded version of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence in the form of the New Security Concept. As a Chinese position paper on the subject mentions:

In 1996, in light of the trend of the times and the characteristics of the Asia-Pacific region, China put forward the initiative that countries in the region jointly cultivate a new concept of security, which focuses on enhancing trust through dialogue and promoting security through cooperation...In China's view, the core of such [a] new security concept should include mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality and coordination.<sup>77</sup>

The position paper goes on to add that China has sought to operationalize the concept through several means such as the peaceful settlement of disputes, regional economic cooperation, and regional security cooperation through forums such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) and ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). Chu Shulong has summarized the New Security Concept as consisting of four no's: no hegemonism, no power politics, no alliances, and no arms races.<sup>78</sup>

In a study on China's grand strategy, Tellis and Swaine suggest that China is currently following a 'calculative' strategy that maintains prudence towards other countries in the region and seeks good relations with all the major powers.<sup>79</sup> This is a function of

China's dependence on its external environment for continued economic growth and development, and is likely to continue at least for the first two decades of the century. China's grand strategy since the 1980s has followed the well-known 24-character strategy enunciated by Deng Xiaoping: 'Observe calmly; secure our position; cope with affairs calmly; hide our capacities and bide our time; be good at maintaining a low profile; and never claim leadership.' The phrase, 'make some contributions' was subsequently incorporated as an afterthought. This strategy has evolved under the present fourth-generation leadership with China taking a progressively higher profile in international affairs. Tellis and Swaine also propose that when the calculative strategy eventually outlives its usefulness, it could evolve into a cooperative or an assertive strategy, with the latter trajectory being more probable.<sup>80</sup>

Going simply by the experience of previous rising powers in history, it appears likely, even inevitable, that China will take on a more proactive role not just in keeping with its power, but also with the expanding geographical footprint of its interests, which is a corollary to rising power. However, assertiveness need not necessarily translate into great-power conflict, even if it has tended to do so in the past. China is perhaps the most self-aware and self-conscious rising power in history, and its leaders have intensively studied the lessons of the past in order to learn how to avoid it. The peaceful-rise paradigm was a direct outcome of this study. Having disassociated itself with those examples and undertaken to beat a path of its own never before followed in history, China is not merely seeking to reassure its anxious neighbours, but also to underline the distinctive characteristic of its own rise and a subtle reminder to the world of the efficaciousness of the Chinese way, which is itself the outcome of its cultural predispositions. Thus, it will not be easy for China's actions to break with this discourse that it has carefully constructed.

Burles and Shulsky have identified several characteristics of China's use of force in previous conflicts, including the element of surprise, psychological or political shock value, and opportunistic timing.<sup>81</sup> Whiting has also written on the subject, although his

views are slightly different. According to him, 'the political-military pattern of PLA deployment from 1950 to 1996 showed certain consistent characteristics, such as early warning for deterrence, seizure of the initiative, risk acceptance, and risk management.'<sup>82</sup> In other words, the Chinese provide warning signals before taking military action in order to achieve their goals without fighting, in line with Sun Tzu's thought. If the signals are not heeded, China seizes the initiative by striking first and also displays a penchant for risk-taking. There is also a close linkage in Chinese strategic thought between the prevalence of domestic unrest and the vulnerability to external force. This memory is a legacy of the nineteenth century when various external powers took advantage of China's weakness. China's perceived vulnerability has often led it to attack first in what is euphemistically referred to as a 'self-defence counterattack'.

The nature of China's strategic culture has given rise to considerable debate in the literature on whether it is predisposed towards offence or defence. The traditional belief that Chinese strategic culture was embodied by a defensive Confucian strand was overturned by Johnston, who concluded that it was, in fact, influenced by a more offensive realpolitik strand.<sup>83</sup> Scobell argues that both these strands are operative and interact with each other. The outcome is that 'while most of China's leaders, analysts, and researchers believe profoundly that the legacy of Chinese civilization is fundamentally pacifist, they are nevertheless predisposed to deploy force when confronting crises.'<sup>84</sup> They also 'justify virtually any use of force—including offensive and preemptive strikes—as defensive in nature'.<sup>85</sup>

The Chinese concept of 'active defence' is deliberately ambiguous, encompassing a wide range of military operations. China's elastic interpretation of the term gives it the opportunity to rationalize its military conflicts, such as those with India and Vietnam, as 'self-defence wars'. This is underpinned by the concept of *quanbian* or 'absolute flexibility' to pursue an accommodating strategy until the strategic conditions are ripe for coercive action including the use of military force, as Alastair Iain Johnston has noted. China also

uniquely uses war as a pedagogic instrument, invading Vietnam to teach it a lesson for challenging China's regional hegemony.

China's future intentions are not only unknown but also unknowable at this stage, *even by the Chinese themselves*, since it will be a function of the future geopolitical environment. It is clear that China's current intentions are peaceful, with the notable exception of its Taiwan policy, and also that China wishes to follow the same path as it continues to rise towards great-power status. It would be overstating the case to view the peaceful development discourse as another cog in the Chinese legacy of deception that goes back to Sun Tzu. Because intentions can change rapidly, other countries must still hedge against the possibility that China's rise could take an untoward turn in the future.

#### EXPANDING THE CBM REGIME

The 1993 and 1996 CBM agreements between India and China were the first steps in developing a relationship based on mutual trust, which had been eroded by the 1962 border conflict. Sidhu and Yuan have divided the features of these agreements into declarative principles, information exchange and constraining measures, of which the latter 'require the greatest technological input and need a high level of cooperative monitoring to be successfully implemented'. They point out the limitations of the CBM process so far by noting that 'in the China-India context, CBMs serve the purposes of institutionalizing minimum measures to prevent accidents without in any significant way transforming fundamental perception of threats and security outlooks'.<sup>86</sup> Moreover, the effective implementation and verification of specific force reduction measures has yet to occur, partly because of the difference in perception regarding the LAC itself, which is yet to be clearly defined.

During Premier Wen Jiabao's visit to India in 2005, both countries signed a document on the modalities for implementation of CBMs in the military field along the LAC. According to an Indian Army officer:

While the 1996 agreement provided the institutional framework for the maintenance of peace and tranquility along the LAC, (this) protocol will ensure that the CBMs envisaged in the previous agreement will materialize on the ground... The 1996 agreement was more of a vision document while the current one seeks to implement the CBMs on the ground in more specific terms.<sup>87</sup>

It remains to be seen whether this is borne out.

The 1998 nuclear tests followed by the letter written by the Indian prime minister in which he obliquely referred to China's nuclear weapons as a rationale for the tests marked a setback to the emerging relationship. This had been preceded by the remarks of Indian Defence Minister George Fernandes that China was India's potential threat number one (which was widely misquoted as 'enemy number one'). If one of the outcomes of CBMs at the level of declarative principles is the eschewing of such rhetoric towards each other, then the two countries have come a significant distance in the last decade, with the Indian government no longer seeing the need to use the word 'threat' in connection with China, partly because it could become self-fulfilling if such a discourse is propagated. As Pranab Mukherjee, who succeeded Fernandes as defence minister, noted, 'We do not consider China as a threat to us nor should China consider India as a threat to China.'<sup>88</sup>

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on defence signed between India and China in 2006 promises to usher in a new era in the history of India–China CBMs. The MoU called for the institution of an annual defence dialogue (the first of which took place in November 2007), joint military exercises in the fields of search and rescue, anti-piracy and counter-terrorism (the first of which took place in December 2007 in China) and greater exchange of military officers in each other's military academies. There has been criticism that no information of strategic value was exchanged in the joint military exercises, but that is besides the point since the idea is to develop a comfort level between the forces of both countries rather than see it as a means of deriving substantive knowledge about the actual subject of the exercise.

Trade has always been an instrument to instil confidence between nations by developing interdependence and enabling wider

constituencies to have an incentive in the peace process. According to Swaran Singh:

in view of the role that China-India bilateral trade and commerce have played in reviving and strengthening their rapprochement following India's nuclear tests of May 1998, their bilateral economic engagement has finally established its credentials as the most agreeable as also the single most reliable pillar amongst China-India confidence building measures (CBMs).<sup>89</sup>

Bilateral trade targets are being met ahead of schedule with a new target of \$60 billion by 2010 replacing the earlier one of \$40 billion, which is likely to be reached by 2008. However, this also means that India's trade deficit, which has already crossed \$9 billion, could become unsustainable, leading to trade being seen as a confidence sapping rather than confidence building measure, unless remedial action is taken. China wants India to grant it market economy status and is also seeking a bilateral free trade agreement, but both these steps are on hold because of India's concerns on their potential impact on the trade balance. The Joint Study Group report on economic cooperation was submitted to the governments of both countries in 2005 and makes many recommendations, which, if implemented, could redress the lopsided nature of the trade balance.

Despite the keen competition between Chinese and Indian companies to acquire energy assets in various parts of the world, there is also a simultaneous trend of emerging Sino-Indian energy cooperation, which could serve as another potential CBM. In 2005, China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) and India's Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), announced that they had jointly won a bid to acquire 37 per cent of Petro-Canada's stake in Syria's al-Surat oilfields. This was followed by the signing of an energy agreement in 2006 calling for joint bidding in third countries to reduce the burden to their exchequers. The then Indian Petroleum Minister Mani Shankar Aiyar said that India looks upon China 'not as a strategic competitor but as a strategic partner' in the quest for energy security.

Our cooperation in energy is based on equal cooperation, mutual benefit, mutual respect and enhanced understanding. If those principles sound familiar, it is because they are. They were embodied in the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence—the Panchsheel—adumbrated by Premier Jawaharlal Nehru and Premier Zhou Enlai half a century ago.<sup>90</sup>

Khurana has proposed that this cooperation between China and India could be extended to the arena of securing the sea-lines of communication, which transport most of their trade and a significant portion of their energy requirements.

If insecurities in the Southeast Asian waterways increase a few years from now, India and China could even request each other's help in escorting selected vessels carrying vital commodities; the Indian Navy in the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asian straits and the Chinese Navy in the East and South China Sea.<sup>91</sup>

The India–China–Russia trilateral dialogue has been another instrument to forge closer ties between the two countries along with Russia by seeking a common perspective on major international issues. The dialogue was an initiative of former Russian Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov, who proposed it during a visit to India in 1998. It took a practical form when the foreign ministers of the three countries first met together on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York in 2002. The intention behind the dialogue is not to counterbalance US power, since all three countries have a vital stake in their relationships with the US, but to serve as a forum for a candid exchange of opinions in order to develop greater mutual confidence and coordinate their policies for mutual benefit, specially with regard to issues on which their interests converge.

The visit of Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao to India in 2005 marked the establishment of the Strategic and Cooperative Partnership for Peace and Prosperity between China and India. China's willingness to enter into civilian nuclear cooperation with India as well as its support for India playing a greater role in the UN, including in the Security Council (a euphemism for permanent membership of the UNSC), are incremental steps that help advance mutual trust, even if these currently stand for abstract principles rather than practical

actions. Progress in the resolution of the border dispute as well as in the implementation of military CBMs will give a further thrust to the positive trends in bilateral ties. China's move towards greater equidistance between India and Pakistan would be an important step towards convincing India of China's peaceful intentions. A friendship treaty between India and China on the lines of China's similar such treaties with several other nations would help to seal the rapprochement between the two nations. This could even conceivably precede the final settlement of the boundary question, considering that China and Japan signed such a treaty in 1978 despite their ongoing maritime boundary dispute.



## CHAPTER 5

### *Conclusion*

Sino-Indian relations have gone through three distinct phases in the past 60 years: the friendly vibes of the 1950s; the bitter fallout of the 1962 border conflict; and, finally, the guarded friendship that has grown slowly but steadily since the landmark visit to China by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1988. But for full normalization to occur, India's sources of insecurity vis-à-vis China would have to be further moderated in order to generate the trust and confidence that could pave the way for such an eventuality.

The persistence of the border dispute that has defied resolution despite continuous negotiations on the issue since 1981 has contributed to Indian insecurity. This is of greater concern to India than China because the latter is seen as the revisionist or irredentist player by periodically raising its claim to Arunachal Pradesh, whereas India has gone quiet on its claim to Aksai Chin despite a standing Parliament resolution seeking every inch of that region. The inability of both sides to even delineate the LAC for which the JWG was set up symbolises the intractable nature of the dispute.

With the JWG process hitting a dead end, the institution of the special representative was devised to give a political impetus to the negotiations. This has produced some significant progress in the form of the Agreement on the Political Parameters and Guiding Principles for the settlement of the boundary question. The key clause in the agreement was the ruling out of the transfer of territory involving settled populations in any final resolution. This was widely perceived as being an implicit understanding that the final resolution would be on the lines of the status quo. This interpretation has run into rough weather with the Chinese foreign minister being understood to have repudiated the clause in 2007. Both sides have subsequently set up a working group to examine

the alternate drafts of a possible framework agreement involving mutual concessions, having set aside contentious issues like Tawang and concentrating first on areas where there is least disagreement.

The Chinese now appear to be willing to write off their claim to most of Arunachal Pradesh, except the Tawang region, on which they are digging in their heels. But with Tawang town comprising a settled population, it is inconceivable that India could be induced to part with it as part of a final settlement. It is possible that China is using Tawang as a bargaining chip and is seeking some quid pro quo from India in order to give up its claim. But if China continues to press the issue, it would only lead the talks into another cul-de-sac from which it will take a long time to get extricated. The only viable basis for a settlement consistent with the agreement signed by the special representatives would be for both sides to write off their claims to territory occupied by the other side. India must seek to remind China that it is the latter that deserves the credit for mooted this solution in the first place, both in the 1950s and the 1980s.

Both sides have differing perceptions even on the very nature of the status quo, which is why it is important to clarify it through the JWG mechanism even as the special representatives proceed in their quest to arrive at a final settlement. The reason why Chinese incursions occur in territory occupied by India and vice versa is because of the lack of mutual agreement on what constitutes the LAC. This gives either side the legitimacy to indulge in local adventurism, which could spiral out of control. It is perplexing why India and China have been unable or unwilling to make any headway on this, since it would have to accompany a final settlement. Talks by the special representatives cannot be a substitute for talks at the JWG, which has to be taken out of cold storage if both sides are sincere in their professed desire to expedite a settlement. India's perception of China's lack of sincerity stems from its refusal to exchange maps of the western and eastern sectors of the boundary. This source of insecurity is likely to remain for the foreseeable future.

The growing military power of China, underpinned by its continuing rapid economic growth, is also a source of insecurity

for India. The US has been most vocal in questioning the rationale behind China's military expenditure, although this sounds a little hollow considering that its own military budget dwarfs China's. India is not perturbed by China's growing military power per se since its own strategic goals are relatively modest and do not require it to compete with China in this regard. However, China's growing military capability relative to India gives it the opportunity to overturn the strategic equilibrium between the two countries. While China is not India's primary threat and vice versa, its capabilities have to be factored in by India's strategic planners, given that military assets are transferable across theatres in the event of contingencies. Although the probability of Chinese troops pouring across the McMahon Line once more is remote, China could flex its muscles and leave India vulnerable to coercion, if the existing equilibrium is eroded.

India must take steps to upgrade its defensive capability through a variety of measures, which are not necessarily China-specific but are part of the inexorable logic of military modernization. These include capabilities relating to ISR, asymmetric warfare, and IRBMs. In logistical terms, China has upgraded the infrastructure on its side of the McMahon Line by connecting Tibet to the rest of the country through rail and road links, which gives it a greater rapid reaction capability than it enjoyed before. India's lethargy in developing its own border regions stemmed from the belief that this would benefit a potential Chinese advance. But that mindset has now been overcome, and India is also going all out to increase the connectivity of Arunachal Pradesh, although it will take time.

With regard to the variable of political will, which is a function of political stability, it would seem that China, being an autocracy, is better placed than India, being a democracy. Although India's coalition governance has led at times to a decision-making gridlock, there is generally bipartisan support to the government across the political spectrum when it comes to defending territorial integrity. In this regard, the lessons of 1962 have been well-learned, although India would still need to maintain the capability to enforce that will. However, the Indian government appears to lack the political will to

take offensive action beyond the country's borders, if attacked.

Another source of insecurity for India is the relationships that China has established with countries along India's periphery. The patron-client relationship between China and Pakistan has long inspired mistrust in India, because the primary benefit China appears to derive from it is the indirect benefit of keeping India in check. While China has slowly inched towards equidistance between India and Pakistan, it continues to have a pronounced tilt towards Pakistan, which casts an inevitable shadow over the Sino-Indian relationship. China's other major patron-client relationship in the region is with Myanmar. This is less threatening from India's standpoint, since China's interest in the relationship is not India-centric, and India for its part is consciously seeking to upgrade its own ties with Myanmar with some limited success.

India is also responding by developing strategic partnerships with other powers in the region, notably the US and Japan. This would help moderate the security dilemma with China by making India more secure in the knowledge that its strategic partners, being influential members of the international community, would assist in preventing a potential Sino-Indian crisis from spiralling out of control. This is likely to give India greater leverage and bargaining power with China, although these partnerships must be calibrated lest China mistake this for an offensive measure and react accordingly.

The study set out to evaluate whether India's response to its sources of insecurity vis-à-vis China was optimal or sub-optimal, i.e. whether or not it has successfully moderated the insecurity, without significantly raising China's insecurity so as to heighten the security dilemma. The three sources of insecurity considered were those arising from the non-resolution of the territorial dispute, China's military modernization, and China's relationships with some of the countries on India's periphery. India's response has been less than optimal in each case, i.e. the insecurity remains, but it is moving in the right direction towards moderating each of them. At the same time, India has signalled reasonably transparently that its intentions towards China are benign and that the motivation behind the

moderation of its insecurities is defensive in nature.

On the other hand, India still remains uncertain about China's intentions, which stems from a perceived lack of transparency in China's actions. This is despite China's efforts to reassure its neighbours that it follows a policy of peaceful development. The US has counselled China to demonstrate its good intentions by playing the role of a responsible stakeholder in regional peace and stability. It is important for India to be able to ascertain China's intentions with greater confidence, since India's insecurity over the three issues discussed above derives from the uncertainty shrouding China's intentions. If China's intentions were known to be benign with reasonable confidence through an expanded CBM regime, it would automatically moderate India's insecurity. China could telegraph its benign intentions towards India in a less ambiguous manner which could lead India to reciprocate, producing a dynamic that is the mirror image of the security dilemma by which both sides take mutually reinforcing cooperative measures that enhance mutual security.

The prospects for the strategic partnership between the two countries metamorphosing from vision to reality depends on progress on the underlying insecurities, including an expeditious border settlement, India upgrading its conventional and nuclear deterrent in the face of China's military modernization, China moving towards greater equidistance between India and Pakistan, as well as India reassuring China on its relationship with the US and its Tibet policy. If they are not addressed, a ceiling will remain on how far the bilateral relationship can rise. But CBMs can raise the floor on how far the bilateral relationship can fall. These include trade, people-to-people contact, cooperation on energy and maritime security, and cooperation in regional forums.

A CBM regime of wider scope than what currently exists between the two countries could moderate insecurities, enhance mutual trust and confidence, and pave the way for the resolution of the border dispute which is the sine qua non for full normalization. The annual joint military exercises between the two countries, which began in the Yunnan province of China in December 2007, are a significant

breakthrough in initiating a closer military-to-military rapport. The military has traditionally been more resistant to abandoning rigid mindsets of the past, and the MoU on defence cooperation will bring this influential constituency in both countries into the CBM process and give it greater credibility.

## Notes & References

<sup>1</sup> Jervis, Robert, 'Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma', *World Politics*, vol. 30, no. 2, January 1978, p. 187.

<sup>2</sup> Glaser, Charles L. and Chaim Kaufmann, 'What is the Offence-Defence Balance and Can We Measure It?' *International Security*, vol. 22, no. 4, Spring 1998, p. 50.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 51.

<sup>4</sup> Jervis, *op. cit.*, n. 1 above, p. 186.

<sup>5</sup> Glaser, Charles L., 'The Security Dilemma Revisited', *World Politics*, vol. 50, no. 1, October 1997, p. 192.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 181.

<sup>7</sup> 'Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the People's Republic of China on the Political Parameters and Guiding Principles for the Settlement of the India-China Boundary Question', 11 April 2005: [www.hindu.com/thehindu/nic/0041/indiachinatxt.htm](http://www.hindu.com/thehindu/nic/0041/indiachinatxt.htm)

<sup>8</sup> Maxwell, Neville, *India's China War*, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire: Pelican Books, 1972, p. 4.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 76.

<sup>10</sup> Bhattacharjea, Mira Sinha, 'China's Strategy for the Determination and Consolidation of its Territorial Boundaries: A Preliminary Investigation', *China Report*, vol. 23, no. 4, 1987, pp. 410-17.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 404.

<sup>12</sup> Noorani, A. G., 'Perseverance in the Peace Process', *Frontline*, 29 August 2003: [www.hindu.com/fline/fl2017/stories/20030829001604900.htm](http://www.hindu.com/fline/fl2017/stories/20030829001604900.htm)

<sup>13</sup> Maxwell, *op. cit.*, n. 8 above, p. 117.

<sup>14</sup> Ranganathan, C. V. and Vinod Khanna, *India and China: The Way Ahead*, New Delhi: Har-Anand Publications, 2004, p. 29.

<sup>15</sup> Maxwell, *op. cit.*, n. 8 above, p. 229.

<sup>16</sup> Arpi, Claude, 'Will India Repeat the Mistakes of 1962?' [rediff.com](http://rediff.com), 17 November 2006.

<sup>17</sup> Ying, Rong, 'The View from Beijing', [rediff.com](http://rediff.com), 20 December 2002.

<sup>18</sup> See Fravel, M. Taylor, 'Regime Insecurity and International Cooperation: Explaining China's Compromises in Territorial Disputes', *International Security*, vol. 30, no. 2, Fall 2005, pp. 46-83.

<sup>19</sup> Garver, John, *Protracted Contest: Sino-Indian Rivalry in the Twentieth Century*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001, pp. 104-05.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 106.

<sup>21</sup> Carlson, Allen, 'Constructing the Dragon's Scales: China's Approach to Territorial Sovereignty and Border Relations in the 1980s and 1990s', *Journal of Contemporary China*, vol. 12, no. 37, 2003, pp. 690-91.

<sup>22</sup> Noorani, A. G., 'Fences and Windows', *Frontline*, 30 August–12 September 2003: [www.hinduonnet.com/fline/fl2018/stories/20030912002304700.htm](http://www.hinduonnet.com/fline/fl2018/stories/20030912002304700.htm)

<sup>23</sup> Interviewed by rediff.com, 18 January 2007.

<sup>24</sup> See Noorani, A. G., 'Negotiating with China', *Frontline*, 15 August 1998: [www.flonnet.com](http://www.flonnet.com)

<sup>25</sup> Garver, op. cit., n. 19 above, p. 92.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., pp. 108–09.

<sup>27</sup> Ranganathan and Khanna, op. cit., n. 14 above, p. 170.

<sup>28</sup> Mohan, C. Raja, 'China for Consensus on Settling Boundary Row', *Hindu*, 13 September 2001: [www.hindu.com/thehindu/2001/09/13/stories/0313000a.htm](http://www.hindu.com/thehindu/2001/09/13/stories/0313000a.htm)

<sup>29</sup> Aiyar, Pallavi, 'Chinese Media: A Servant of the State', *Financial Express*, 30 April 2005: [www.financialexpress.com/news/chinese-media-a-servant-of-the-state/72532/](http://www.financialexpress.com/news/chinese-media-a-servant-of-the-state/72532/)

<sup>30</sup> Acharya, Alka and G. P. Deshpande, 'The Territorial Imperative: Past and Present', *Economic and Political Weekly*, vol. 38, no. 45, 8 November 2003, pp. 4728–30.

<sup>31</sup> Maxwell, op. cit., n. 8 above, pp. 271–2.

<sup>32</sup> Sinha, P. B. and A. A. Athale, *History of the Conflict with China, 1962*, New Delhi: History Division, Ministry of Defence, Government of India, 1992: [www.bharat-rakshak.com/LAND-FORCES/Army/History/1962War/PDF/index.html](http://www.bharat-rakshak.com/LAND-FORCES/Army/History/1962War/PDF/index.html)

<sup>33</sup> Hu, Angang and Men Honghua, 'The Rising of Modern China: Comprehensive National Power and Grand Strategy', paper presented at the international conference on 'Rising China and the East Asian Economy', KIEP, Seoul, 19–20 March 2004, p. 3.

<sup>34</sup> Mearsheimer, John, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, New York: W. W. Norton, 2001, p. 60.

<sup>35</sup> Xueting, Yan, 'The Rise of China and its Power Status', *Chinese Journal of International Politics*, vol. 1, 2006, p. 29.

<sup>36</sup> See Huang, Yasheng, 'China Could Learn from India's Slow and Quiet Rise', *Financial Times*, London, 27 January 2006: [www.lyaleglobal.yale.edu/display.article?id=6887](http://www.lyaleglobal.yale.edu/display.article?id=6887)

<sup>37</sup> Wolf, Martin, 'Why is China Growing so Slowly?' *Foreign Policy*, January/February 2005: [www.carnegieendowment.org/publications/index.cfm?fa=view&cid=16543](http://www.carnegieendowment.org/publications/index.cfm?fa=view&cid=16543)

<sup>38</sup> Virmani, Arvind, 'A Tripolar Century: USA, China and India', *ICRIER Working Paper*, no. 160, March 2005.

<sup>39</sup> Information Office of the State Council, *China's National Defense in 2006*, 29 December 2006: [www.china.org.cn/english/features/book/194421.htm](http://www.china.org.cn/english/features/book/194421.htm)

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Crane, Keith, Roger Cliff, Evan Medeiros, James Mulvenon and William Overholt, *Modernizing China's Military: Opportunities and Constraints*, Santa Monica: Rand, 2005, p. 103.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., p. 224.

<sup>43</sup> Perkins, Dwight, 'China's Economic Growth: Implications for the Defense Budget', in *Strategic Asia 2005–06*, ed. Ashley J. Tellis and Michael Wills, Seattle and Washington, D.C.: NBR, 2005, p. 383.

<sup>44</sup> Xuotong, op. cit., n. 35 above, p. 29.

<sup>45</sup> As quoted in Kelly, Jason, 'A Chinese Revolution in Military Affairs?' *Yale Journal of International Affairs*, vol. 1, issue 1, Winter/Spring 2006, p. 59.

<sup>46</sup> Pillsbury, Michael, *China Debates the Future Security Environment*, Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 2000: [www.ndu.edu/inss/books/books%20-%202000/China%20Debates%20Future%20Sec%20Environ%20Jan%202000/pills2.htm](http://www.ndu.edu/inss/books/books%20-%202000/China%20Debates%20Future%20Sec%20Environ%20Jan%202000/pills2.htm)

<sup>47</sup> Information Office of the State Council, *China's National Defense in 2004*, 27 December 2004: [english.peopledaily.com.cn/whitepaper/defense2004/defense2004.html](http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/whitepaper/defense2004/defense2004.html)

<sup>48</sup> 'Indian Army Doctrine': <http://indianarmy.nic.in/indianarmydoctrine.htm>

<sup>49</sup> Conversation with author.

<sup>50</sup> Raman, B., 'Why I Remain Wary of China', [rediff.com](http://rediff.com), 14 November 2006.

<sup>51</sup> Cliff, Roger, *Advances Underway in China's Defence Industries*, Santa Monica: Rand, 2006, p. 4.

<sup>52</sup> Pillsbury, op. cit., n. 46 above.

<sup>53</sup> Asthana, Air Marshal (retd) T. M., 'ISR for Air Operations', *Air Power Journal*, vol. 2, no. 4, Winter 2005 (October–December), p. 116.

<sup>54</sup> Sukumaran, R., 'The 1962 India–China War and Kargil 1999: Restrictions on the Use of Air Power', *Strategic Analysis*, vol. 27, no. 3, July–September 2003, p. 341.

<sup>55</sup> Malik, Gen (retd) V. P., *Kargil: From Surprise to Victory*, New Delhi: HarperCollins, 2006.

<sup>56</sup> International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 2007*, New York: Routledge, 2007, p. 350.

<sup>57</sup> Covault, Craig, 'DSP Satellites See Aggressive New Chinese Missile Testing', *Aviation Week and Space Technology*, 2007, [aviationweek.com](http://aviationweek.com)

<sup>58</sup> Perkovich, George, 'The Nuclear and Security Balance' in *The India–China Relationship: Rivalry and Engagement*, ed. Francine R. Frankel and Harry Harding, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 189.

<sup>59</sup> Kondapalli, Srikanth, 'China's Satellite Killer: Should India Worry?' [rediff.com](http://rediff.com), 24 January 2007.

<sup>60</sup> Tellis, Ashley, *India's Emerging Nuclear Posture*, Santa Monica: Rand, 2001, p. 565.

<sup>61</sup> Tipnis, Air Chief Marshal (retd) A. Y., 'Indian Air Force 2020', *India Defence Review*, 2005, [bharatrakshak.com](http://bharatrakshak.com)

<sup>62</sup> Kanwal, Gurmeet, 'Joint Operations in the Mountains', *Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies*, 7 February 2007: [www.ipcs.org/article\\_details.php?articleNo=2202](http://www.ipcs.org/article_details.php?articleNo=2202)

<sup>63</sup> Malik, op. cit., n. 55 above, p. 295.

<sup>64</sup> Garver, op. cit., n. 19 above, p. 231.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., p. 221.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., p. 225.

<sup>67</sup> See Pehrson, Christopher J., *String of Pearls: Meeting the Challenge of China's Rising Power Across the Asian Littoral*, Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute, 2006.

<sup>68</sup> Background briefing by administration officials on US–South Asia relations, Washington, D.C., 25 March 2005.

<sup>69</sup> Remarks at Sophia University, Tokyo, 19 March 2005.

<sup>70</sup> *People's Daily* as quoted in PTI, 'China Flays Indo-US Deal', 7 November 2005.

<sup>71</sup> Mearsheimer, John, 'The Rise of China Will Not be Peaceful at all', *Australian*, 18 November 2005: [mearsheimer.uchicago.edu/pdfs/P0014.pdf](http://mearsheimer.uchicago.edu/pdfs/P0014.pdf)

<sup>72</sup> Johnston, Alastair Iain, 'Is China a Status Quo Power?' *International Security*, vol. 27, no. 4, Spring 2003, p. 56.

<sup>73</sup> Bijian, Zheng, 'China's "Peaceful Rise" to Great Power Status', *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 84, no. 5, September/October 2005, pp. 18–24.

<sup>74</sup> Information Office of the State Council, *China's Peaceful Development Road*, 22 December 2005: [www.china.org.cn/english/2005/Dec/152669.htm](http://www.china.org.cn/english/2005/Dec/152669.htm)

<sup>75</sup> Information Office, op. cit., n. 47 above.

<sup>76</sup> Zheng, Bijian, "Peaceful Rise: An Important Chinese Characteristic of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics," interview with *Study Times*, no. 239, June 14, 2004, p. 1

<sup>77</sup> 'China's Position Paper on the New Security Concept', Ministry of Foreign Affairs, People's Republic of China, 31 July 2002: [www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/wjw/zjjg/gjs/gjzzyhy/2612/2614/t15319.htm](http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/wjw/zjjg/gjs/gjzzyhy/2612/2614/t15319.htm)

<sup>78</sup> Roy, Denny, 'China's Pitch for a Multipolar World: The New Security Concept', *Asia-Pacific Security Studies*, vol. 2, no. 1, May 2003, p. 3.

<sup>79</sup> Swaine, Michael D. and Ashley J. Tellis, *Interpreting China's Grand Strategy: Past, Present and Future*, Santa Monica: Rand, 2000, p. 97.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., p. 187.

<sup>81</sup> Burles, Mark and Abram N. Shulsky, *Patterns in China's Use of Force: Evidence from History and Doctrinal Writings*, Santa Monica: Rand, 2000, pp. 5–16.

<sup>82</sup> Whiting, Allen, 'China's Use of Force, 1950–96, and Taiwan', *International Security*, vol. 26, no. 2, Fall 2001, pp 103–31.

<sup>83</sup> See Johnston, Alastair Iain, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998.

<sup>84</sup> Scobell, Andrew, *China and Strategic Culture*, Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute, 2002, p. 4.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>86</sup> Sidhu, W. P. S. and Jing-dong Yuan, *China and India: Cooperation or Conflict?* Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003, p. 127.

<sup>87</sup> Dikshit, Sandeep, 'India–China Protocol to Define Conditions at Ground Level', *Hindu*, Chennai, 12 April 2005: [www.thehindu.com/2005/04/12/stories/2005041215201100.htm](http://www.thehindu.com/2005/04/12/stories/2005041215201100.htm)

<sup>88</sup> Kondapalli, Srikanth, 'Indian Defence Minister's Visit to China: New Beginnings', *China Report*, vol. 42, no. 4, 2006, p. 405.

<sup>89</sup> Singh, Swaran, 'China-India Economic Engagement', *CSH Occasional Paper*, March 2005, p. 145.

<sup>90</sup> Aiyar, Mani Shankar, 'Asia's Quest for Energy Security', speech in Beijing, 13 January 2006.

<sup>91</sup> Khurana, Gurpreet Singh, 'Securing the Maritime Silk Route: Is there a Sino-Indian Confluence?' *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, vol. 4, no. 3, 2006, pp. 89-103.

## Select Bibliography

- Acharya, Alka and G. P. Deshpande, 'India–China Relations: The Territorial Imperative: Past and Present', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 8–14 November 2003.
- Bhattacharjea, Mira Sinha, 'China's Strategy for the Determination and Consolidation of its Territorial Boundaries: A Preliminary Investigation', *China Report*, vol. 23, no. 4, 1987.
- Bhutani, S. K., *A Clash of Political Cultures: Sino-Indian Relations, 1957–1962*, New Delhi: Roli Books, 2004.
- Burles, Mark and Abram N. Shulsky, *Patterns in China's Use of Force: Evidence from History and Doctrinal Writings*, Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 2000.
- Craig, Susan L., *Chinese Perceptions of Traditional and Nontraditional Security Threats*, Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute, 2007.
- Elleman, Bruce A., *Modern Chinese Warfare, 1795–1989*, New York and London: Routledge, 2001.
- Feigenbaum, Evan A., *China's Techno-Warriors: National Security and Strategic Competition from the Nuclear to the Information Age*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003.
- Frankel, Francine R. and Harry Harding, *The India–China Relationship: Rivalry and Engagement*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Fravel, M. Taylor, 'Regime Insecurity and International Cooperation: Explaining China's Compromises in Territorial Disputes', *International Security*, vol. 30, no. 2, Fall 2005, pp. 46–83.
- Garver, John W., *Protracted Contest: Sino-Indian Rivalry in the Twentieth Century*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- 'The Security Dilemma in Sino-Indian Relations', *India Review*, October 2002, pp. 1–38.
- 'The China–India–US Triangle: Strategic Relations in the Post Cold War Era', *NBR Analysis*, vol. 13, no. 5, October 2002.
- 'Development of China's Overland Transportation Links with Central, South-West and South Asia', *The China Quarterly*, 2006.
- Glaser, Charles L., 'The Security Dilemma Revisited', *World Politics*, vol. 50, October 1997, pp. 171–201.
- 'The Causes and Consequences of Arms Races', *Annual Review of Political Science*, 2000, pp. 251–76.
- 'When Are Arms Races Dangerous?' *International Security*, vol. 28, no. 4, Spring 2004, pp. 44–84.
- Glaser, Charles L. and Chaim Kaufman, 'What is the Offense–Defence Balance and Can We Measure It?' *International Security*, vol. 22, no. 4, Spring 1998, pp. 44–82.

- Huang, Yasheng and Tarun Khanna, 'Can India Overtake China?' *Foreign Policy*, July–August 2003.
- Jervis, Robert, 'Cooperation under the Security Dilemma', *World Politics*, January 1978, pp. 167–214.
- Johnston, Alastair Iain, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History*, Princeton University Press, 1998.
- Karnad, Bharat, *Nuclear Weapons and Indian Security: The Realist Foundations of Strategy*, New Delhi: Macmillan Press, 2002.
- Khurana, Gurpreet Singh, 'Securing the Maritime Silk Route: Is there a Sino-Indian Confluence?' *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, vol. 4, no. 3, 2006, pp. 89–103.
- Lamb, Alastair, *The McMahon Line: A Study in the Relations Between India, China and Tibet, 1904–1914*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966.
- *The China–India Border: The Origins of the Disputed Boundaries*, London: Oxford University Press, 1964.
- Lei, Guang, 'From National Identity to National Security: China's Changing Responses Toward India in 1962 and 1998', *Pacific Review*, vol. 17, no. 3, 2004, pp. 399–422.
- Liu, Xuecheng, *The Sino-Indian Border Dispute and Sino-Indian Relations*, Lanham: University Press of America, 1994.
- Maxwell, Neville, *India's China War*, London: Penguin Books, 1972.
- 'Settlements and Disputes: China's Approach to Territorial Issues', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 9 September 2006, pp. 3873–81.
- Mearsheimer, John, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, New York: W. W. Norton, 2001.
- Mehra, Parshotam, 'India's Border Dispute With China: Revisiting Nehru's Approach', *International Studies*, vol. 42, nos. 3 and 4, 2005.
- Montgomery, Evan Braden, 'Breaking Out of the Security Dilemma: Realism, Reassurance and the Problem of Uncertainty', *International Security*, vol. 31, no. 2, Fall 2006, pp. 151–85.
- Noorani, A. G., 'Facts of History', *Frontline*, 30 August–12 September 2003.
- 'Facing the Truth, Parts 1 and 2', *Frontline*, 23 September–6 October 2006 and 7–20 October 2006.
- Norbu, Dawa, *China's Tibet Policy*, Surrey: Curzon Press, 2001.
- Pehrson, Christopher J., *String of Pearls: Meeting the Challenge of China's Rising Power Across the Asian Littoral*, Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute, 2006.
- Pillsbury, Michael, *China Debates the Future Security Environment*, Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 2000.
- Ranganathan, C. V. and Vinod C. Khanna, *India and China: The Way Ahead*, New Delhi: Har-Anand Publications, 2004.
- Ryan, Mark A., David M. Finkelstein, and Michael A. McDevitt (eds.), *Chinese Warfighting: The PLA Experience Since 1949*, Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 2003.

- Scobell, Andrew, *China and Strategic Culture*, Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute, 2002.
- *China's Use of Military Force: Beyond the Great Wall and the Long March*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Scobell, Andrew and Larry Wortzel, *Chinese National Security: Decisionmaking Under Stress*, Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute, 2005.
- Shang, Quanyu, 'Sino-Indian Friendship in the Nehru Era: A Chinese Perspective', *China Report*, vol. 41, no. 3, 2005.
- Sidhu, W. P. S. and Jing-dong Yuan, *China and India: Cooperation and Conflict*, Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003.
- Singh, Swaran, 'China-India Economic Engagement: Building Mutual Confidence', *CSH Occasional Paper*, March 2005.
- Sinha, P. B. and A. A. Athale, *History of the Conflict with China, 1962*, New Delhi: History Division, Ministry of Defence, Government of India, 1992.
- Sukumaran, R., 'The 1962 India-China War and Kargil 1999: Restrictions on the Use of Airpower', *Strategic Analysis* vol. 27, no. 3, July-September 2003.
- Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, Boston: Shambhala, 2002.
- Swaine, Michael D. and Ashley J. Tellis, *Interpreting China's Grand Strategy: Past, Present and Future*, Santa Monica: Rand, 2000.
- Tellis, Ashley J., *India's Emerging Nuclear Posture: Between Recessed Deterrent and Ready Arsenal*, Santa Monica: Rand, 2001.
- Van Evera, Stephen, 'Offence, Defence, and the Causes of War', *International Security*, vol. 22, no. 4, Spring 1998, pp. 5-43.
- Vertzberger, Yaacov, 'India's Border Conflict with China: A Perceptual Analysis', *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 17, no. 4, October 1982.
- *Misperceptions in Foreign Policymaking: The Sino-Indian Conflict, 1959-1962*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1984.
- Virmani, Arvind, 'A Tripolar Century: USA, China and India', *ICRIER Working Paper*, no. 160, March 2005.
- Whiting, Allen S., *The Chinese Calculus of Deterrence: India and Indochina*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, Center for Chinese Studies, 2001.
- 'China's Use of Force, 1950-96, and Taiwan', *International Security*, vol. 26, no. 2, Fall 2001, pp. 103-31.
- Yan, Xuetong, 'The Rise of China and its Power Status', *Chinese Journal of International Politics*, vol. 1, 2006, pp. 5-33.
- Zhang, Guihong, 'The Rise of China: India's Perceptions and Responses', *South Asian Survey*, vol. 13, no. 1, 2006.
- 'China's Peaceful Rise and Sino-Indian Relations', *China Report*, vol. 41, no. 2, 2005.
- 'Sino-Indian Security Relations: Bilateral Issues, External Factors and Regional Implications', *South Asian Survey*, vol. 12, no. 1, 2005.
- Zhang, Tiejun, 'Chinese Strategic Culture: Traditional and Present Features', *Comparative Strategy*, vol. 21, 2002, pp. 73-90.

## RCSS PUBLICATIONS

### *BOOKS*

- Refugees and Regional Security in South Asia (1996)
- Nuclear Non-proliferation in India and Pakistan: South Asian Perspectives (1996)
- Diplomacy and Domestic Politics in South Asia (1996)
- Regional Economic Trends and South Asian Security (1997)
- Ethnicity and Constitutional Reform in South Asia (1998)
- People to People Contact in South Asia (2000)
- Security Studies in South Asia: Change and Challenges (2000)
- The Simla Agreement 1972-Its Wasted Promise (2001)
- Security and Governance in South Asia (2001)
- Globalization and Non-Traditional Security in South Asia (2001)
- Security in the New Millennium (2001)
- Shaping the Future: A South Asian Civil Society Dialogue (2002)
- Small Arms and Human Insecurity (2002)
- SAARC in the Twenty-First Century: Towards a Cooperative Future (2002)
- Memories of a Genocidal Partition: The Haunting Tale of Victims, Witnesses and Perpetrators (2002)
- South Asia and the War on Terrorism (2003)
- Terrorism in South Asia: Impact on Development and Democratic Process (2003)
- Defence, Technology and Cooperative Security in South Asia: • Report on the Proceedings of the Tenth Summer Workshop (2004)
- Documents on Sri Lanka's Foreign Policy: 1947 -1965 (2005)
- Understanding Terrorism in South Asia: Beyond Statist Discourses (2006)
- Responding to Terrorism in South Asia (2006)

- Impact of Insurgencies on Women in South Asia (2008)

#### RCSS Newsletter

A quarterly bulletin, it publishes a brief report of RCSS activities, presentations and its workshops on topics of contemporary interest and news and programmes of the RCSS and its alumnae.

#### POLICY STUDIES

Policy 1, Nira Wickremesinghe, *Humanitarian Relief Organisations and Challenges to Sovereignty: The Case of Sri Lanka*

Policy 2, Steve P Cohen, *The Structural Dimensions of Conflict in South Asia*

Policy 3, P R Chari, *Newer Sources of National Insecurity: The Crisis of Governance in India*

Policy 4, B S Chimni, *The Law and Politics of Regional Solution of the Refugee Problem: The Case of South Asia*

Policy 5, Sasanka Perera, *New Evangelical Movements and Conflicts in South Asia: Sri Lanka and Nepal in Perspective*

Policy 6, Ajai, Dharshan Behera, *The Politics of Violence and Development*

Policy 7, Neila Hussain Chowdhury, *Proliferation of Small Arms and Politics in South Asia: The Case of Bangladesh*

Policy 8, Neluka Silva, *Politics and the Theatre: Comparative Study of Nationalism and Gender in the Popular Theatre of Sri Lanka*

Policy 9, Muhktar Ahmed Ali, *Sectarian Violence in Pakistan*

Policy 10, Jasjit Singh & Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema, *Defence Expenditure in South Asia: An Overview*

Policy 11, Frank De Silva & Abrar R Chowdhury, *Defence Expenditure in South Asia: Bangladesh and Sri Lanka*

Policy 12, P. R Chari & Ayesha Siddiqi, *Defence Expenditure in South Asia: India and Pakistan*

Policy 13, Anasua Ray Chowdhury, *The Energy Crisis and Sub-regional Cooperation in South Asia*

Policy 14, Monica Bhanot, *Order, Welfare and Legitimacy in the Regional Context of South Asia: An Ultima Thule?*

- Policy 15, Aruni John, *Investigation of the Potential for Militarization of the Bhutanese Refugee Youth in Nepal and Related Security Concerns for the Region*
- Policy 16, Lailufar Yasmin, *Law and Order Situation and Gender-based Violence: Bangladesh Perspective*
- Policy 17, P. Sahadevan, *Coping with Disorder: Approaches and Strategies to End Internal Wars in South Asia*
- Policy 18, Subramanyam Raju, *Third Generation Perception on Kashmir Issue*
- Policy 19, Uttam Sen & Ayesha Siddiqa Agha, *Governance in Plural Societies and Security*
- Policy 20, Arjun Bhardwaj and Delwar Hossain, *Globalisation and the Multinational Corporations (MNCs) in South Asia: Towards Building a Partnership for Sustainable Development*
- Policy 21, Lok Raj Baral, Bertram Bastiampillai & Rasul Bakhsh Rais, *Governance and Defence Spending: View from South Asia*
- Policy 22, Tanvir Anjum, *Nature and Dynamics of Conflicts Over Privatization of Potable Water*
- Policy 23, Sushil J. Aaron, *Christian Evangelicals and Political Conflict in India: with Special Reference to Gujrat, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa*
- Policy 24, Shaista Tabassum, *River Water Sharing Problem Between India and Pakistan: Case Study of the Indus Basin Water Treaty*
- Policy 25, Zafar Nawaz Jaspal, *Nuclear Risk Reduction Measures and Restraint Regime in South Asia*
- Policy 26, Smruti Pattnaik, *Elite Perceptions in Foreign Policy: Role of Print Media in Influencing India-Pakistan Relations, 1989-1999*
- Policy 27, Nishchal Pandey, *Nepal's Maoist Movement and Implications for India and China*
- Policy 28, Happymon Jacob, *HIV/AIDS as a Security Threat to India*
- Policy 29, Amit Dholakia, *The Role of Mediation in Resolving India-Pakistan Conflicts: Parameters and Possibilities*
- Policy 30, Manjrika Sewak, *Multi-Track Diplomacy between India and Pakistan: A Conceptual Framework for Sustainable Security*

- Policy 31, Saira Yamin, *Stability through Economic Cooperation in a Nuclear Environment*
- Policy 32, Sun Xun, *New Nuclear Triangle and China's Role in South Asia*
- Policy 33, Salma Malik & Mallika Joseph, *Small Arms and the Security Debate in South Asia*
- Policy 34, Rizwan Zeb & Suba Chandran, *Indo-Pak Conflicts: Ripe to Resolve?*
- Policy 35, Upendra Chowdhury, *Nuclear Risk Reduction Measures in South Asia: Problems and Prospects*
- Policy 36, A. Subramanyam Raju & S.I. Keethaponcalan, *India and Sri Lanka: Issues in Maritime Cooperation*
- Policy 37, Amtul Hassan, *Impact of Partition Refugees on Pakistan*
- Policy 38, Anindita DasGupta, *The 'People's War' in Nepal.*
- Policy 39, Asma-ul-Husna Faiz, *India-Pakistan Dialogue: Bringing the Society In.*
- Policy 40, Geetanjali Chopra, *INGOs in Arms Control and Disarmament: Potential and Viability*
- Policy 41, Maria Saifuddin Effendi, *Role of a Third Party in Conflict Resolution: A Case Study of India and Norway in Sri Lanka*
- Policy 42, Dr Rajesh Kumar, *Getting to Rapprochement over Kashmir: Is Using the 'China Model' a Viable Alternative?*
- Policy 43, Saira Yamin, *Peacebuilding in Afghanistan: Revisiting the Global War on Terrorism*
- Policy 44, Sadia Tasleem, *INDO-US Nuclear Cooperation: Altering Strategic Positioning & Shifting Balance of Power in South Asia*
- Policy 45, Arshi Saleem Hashmi, *Conflict Transformation from Ethnic Movement to Terrorist Movement: Case Studies of Tamils in Sri Lanka and Mohajirs in Pakistan*
- Policy 46, Rumana Monzur, *Beyond the Security Impasse: State, Development and People*