

# **SINO-INDIAN RELATIONS: IMPLICATIONS FOR EAST ASIA**

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## **Introduction**

It is now frequently argued that 21<sup>st</sup> century will be the Asian century, as right from the Industrial Revolution to the end of the Second World War was a European century. However, the rest of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was of Americans and the present world order continues to be a unipolar with United States (US) as the sole super power. The contemporary world is waiting for the emergence of a challenging power to bring US hegemony to an end and redefine the world order. The first decade of 21<sup>st</sup> century stands over and it is not visible. In the contemporary world, the biggest challenge before the major powers of Asia is to arrive at a consensus on key issues otherwise American hegemony will continue to prevail at the global level in general as well as in Asia in particular.

21<sup>st</sup> century Asia is a witness to the emergence of three major powers, i.e. China, India and partially Japan. Since the devastating economic recession of 1929 contemporary world is confronting another international economic recession. The fact remains that in spite of its prevailing severity, both China and India have maintained the growth rate around 8%. It seems that the same is bound to prevail in foreseeable future. Japan has not been able to maintain the pace of economic growth at par with India and China, however, its economy is growing and one should not forget that Japan have been an imperial power since long and possesses a strong economy. Japan defeated Russia in 1905 and also defeated China in 1893-1895. During both the World Wars despite being an Asian power Japan played an important role at the global level.

The great ancient Indian strategic thinker, Kautilya stressed two and half millennia ago that there are no permanent friends or foes in international relations, the only thing permanent is the commonality of interests. Despite gamut of idealist school of thoughts in international politics the fact remains that only convergence of interests is the determining factor when it comes to shaping of foreign policy. Model of governance, commonality of religion, language, culture and all such considerations hardly matters, and the issues of national interests dominate the shaping of foreign policy. There are many examples to establish my arguments. But here I focus upon the changing relationship of China and Russia.

During the Soviet influx into Afghanistan in December 1979, China left the communist solidarity and jumped into American led alliance to defeat U.S.S.R. It was due to the simple algebra that a resurgent U.S.S.R was detrimental to Chinese national interests. The Chinese have changed their attitude in the immediate aftermath of the cold war and inked a deal with Russia. Russia has longest boundary of 4,300 kilometers

with China and had a history of bilateral contacts for centuries. For much of these years, both countries have had a hostile relationship and unsettled boundary. The situation changed again after the downfall of the USSR. According to one of the China's most authoritative history book, in about 60 years from the Opium war of 1840 to the early 1900s, Russia had taken away about 1.5 million square kilometers of land from China.<sup>1</sup> Although Russia was weak after its disintegration but still had second global nuclear power status and had expressed its intention to use nuclear weapons to defend its national interests.<sup>2</sup> China settled its boundary disputes with Russia despite its weak post disintegration status merely to consolidate its position as a global power. China gave this concession to Russia merely due to two factors. At that point of time, China was recovering from its internal turmoil following the Tiananmen tragedy of 1989\*. Secondly Chinese leaders were following Deng Xiaoping's advice of '*tao-guang yang-hui*' to observe the situation calmly, maintain a low profile, avoid assuming international leadership, and bid their time to develop China. Deng also instructed his successors to set aside ideological differences in handling China's future foreign relations.<sup>3</sup> One of the most important research question of this paper is how far China is going to adopt the same mantra proposed by Deng in dealing with India and what kind of impact this state of bilateral relationship between China and India is going to shed on East Asia? Needless to say that it will be extremely important to reshape the strategic architecture of the Asia-pacific region which shall determine as to whether the 21<sup>st</sup> century will be an Asian century or it shall continue to be dominated by the United States.

Right from Keshore Madhubani to many important pundits of the international politics have stressed that 21<sup>st</sup> century will be of Asia. The first decade of 21<sup>st</sup> century has already over and the hegemony of the United States continues to prevail into the international system however it has become comparatively weak after Iraq and Afghanistan war. China and India fought war in 1962 and still this baggage of history prevails on their decision making process. First Prime-Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru accepted Tibet as an integral part of China. It is pertinent to mention here that China did have suzerainty over Tibet but never had sovereignty. However, Nehru accorded Sovereignty of China over Tibet. It was the biggest blunder into the history of Indian foreign policy. After the war [1962] India -China bilateral relations remained almost frozen till the December 1988 Beijing visit of Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi. Again Prime Minister, Narsingh Rao visited China during his tenure [1991-1996] and further accelerated the process of engagement in economic and some extent strategic arenas. In June 2003, Indian Prime-Minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee visited China. It was a path breaking visit because both parties expressed their desire to expedite the boundary disputes and appointed senior officers to lead the negotiations. The following line in

1 Yan Jiaqi, 'Sino-Russo Border: A Concession of Three Hundred Years', *Dong Xiang*, Hong Kong, June 2001.

2 'Russia's Military Doctrine', *Arms Controls Today*, May 2000.

\* In this incident, Chinese authorities killed thousands of pro- democracy demonstrators. It was a large scale massacre and one of the most barbaric human rights violations by any state on its own people. It attracted world wide criticism and resulted into imposition of several economic and other kinds of sanctions against China.

3 Liu Huaqiu, Director of the Foreign Affairs Office under the State Council of the PRC, 'Strive for a Peaceful International Environment', *Shanghai Jie-fang Ri-bao in Chinese*, 3 November 1997, FBIS document ID; FTS19971117000240.

the Vajpayee-Wen (Chinese Prime Minister) joint declaration of June 2003 received wide coverage in the Chinese media,

The Indian side recognizes that the Tibet Autonomous Region is part of the territory of the People's Republic of China and reiterates that it does not allow Tibetans to engage in anti-China political activities in India. The Chinese side expresses its appreciation for the Indian position and reiterates that it is firmly opposed to any attempt and action aimed at splitting China bringing out 'independence of Tibet'.<sup>4</sup>

In reciprocation, for the first time China called Sikkim a State of India in a Memorandum exchanged between the two governments on Expanding Border Trade. A dramatic exchange between Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao and Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee at Bali (Indonesia) conference in October 2003 became headlines news in India. The Chinese Premier was reported to draw Vajpayee's attention to a change in the official Chinese website that Chinese no longer designates Sikkim as an independent country.<sup>5</sup> Prime Minister Manmohan Singh also visited China in December 2008. These Indian visits were reciprocated by the Chinese dignitaries in due course.

But China even today doesn't believe in Indian assurance over Tibet. In June 2010, Indian President, Pratibha Singh Patil visited China and again China raised the issue of Tibet. It simply means that the Chinese are still apprehensive about the future position of India on Tibet. Tibet is still bleeding even after six decades of its forcible incorporation into China despite all tall claims of rapid progress. Tibet is not a simple place, it constitutes almost 1/6<sup>th</sup> of entire Chinese territory and the roof of the world, additionally provides water to almost entire Asia and ecologically extremely important not only for India and China but for Asia. The Chinese have done maximum damage to the ecological balance of Tibet to ensure mainland speedy development.

Tibet still remains a bone of contention between India and China. Since long, China has adopted the policy of encircling India within South Asia. Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri-Lanka and Burma have emerged as new pawns of China into this balance of power game within South Asia *vis a vis* India. China conducted a study on India in 2005 at the behest of the Chinese Leadership, s Foreign Affairs Cell, and drew a recommendation that China should take all measures to maintain its strategic leverage in terms of territory, membership of the exclusive Permanent Five and Nuclear Five Club, diplomatic advantages and economic lead over India.<sup>6</sup> It can be observed that that China is resentful of a growing Indo-US rapport. In this changing power dynamics, South Asia is becoming a bigger battleground between China, India and the United States. India's burgeoning relations with the U.S may also be an attempt to lessen China's policy of strategic encirclement.<sup>7</sup> China has already sustained nuclear cooperation with Pakistan despite an imminent possibility of its capture by the terror and jihad factory. In Burma and Bangladesh too, China has taken over important space to monitor Indian security movements. In Nepal too, China is playing its cards very carefully to

4 *Shije Zhishi*, Beijing, Issue-14, 2003.

5 Priya Ranjan Dash, 'Sikkim No Longer on Chinese Map', *The Times of India*, New Delhi, 8 October 2003.

6 M. K. Bhadrakumar, 'Sri Lanka wards of western bullying', *Asia Times Online*, 27 May 2009.

7 'Sino-US Competition', October 27, 2006, [http://www/janes.com/security/international\\_security/news/sentinel/sent061027\\_1\\_n.shtml](http://www/janes.com/security/international_security/news/sentinel/sent061027_1_n.shtml).

defame India. New place has been Maldives and Sri-Lanka.<sup>8</sup> In recent years, China has increased its all round support to Sri-Lanka. Due to expanding economy, China needs secure energy supply from the Middle East and other potential sources but became furious after India's growing proximity with the United States. Sri-Lanka is strategically located and could ensure safety of the Chinese naval movements. China is cooperating to build Hambantota port and it will be a big step in this direction. Its significance could be understood with the fact that it is the hometown of the present Sri-Lankan President [Rajapakse] and aspiring for the next Commonwealth Games Not only that in January 2009 when Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh visited Arunachal Pradesh, Chinese Ambassador in Delhi hold a televised press conference and condemned Indian PM to visit Arunachal Pradesh without prior permission of China, which perceives AP as Eastern Tibet under illegal occupation of India, which has to be liberated. In August 2010, China has done a another provocative act to not allowing Lt. Gen, B.S. Jamwal [second in the hierarchy of the Indian Army] to visit Beijing because he is representing Northern Areas Command under which Jammu and Kashmir also falls which is considered as a disputed territory by China.<sup>9</sup> It is u-turn of Chinese attitude because they had adopted a positive line on Kashmir during Kargil crisis [1999] and suggested Pakistan to resolve the issue bilaterally with India. This move of China is extremely provocative because in August 2009, Lt. Gen. V.K. Singh, currently the Army Chief and then the GOC -in- C Eastern Command, had visited China for a similar high level exchange. If territorial sensitivity was the issue with China, then Singh, s visit should have been even more problematic because, as head of the Eastern Command, he had jurisdiction over Arunachal Pradesh, state that is claimed by China. It simply vindicates that deepening Indo-U.S bonhomie, Indo-Japan, Indo-South Korean, Indo-Mongolian relations and such other relationships in Asia has irritated China because China feels that these relationship have been forged to encircle her within Asia.

The whole world knows that Chinese have extended all possible support to Pakistan to develop their nuclear capacity despite knowing their proliferation record. In the mid of year 2010 they have inked a nuclear deal under which the Chinese will provide more support to the Pakistani nuclear programme. It is well known fact that Pakistan is one of the most vulnerable nuclear proliferators and due to prevailing Hobessian State of nature the nuclear weapons could go to the hands of perpetrators of terror. Recently it was revealed thorough secret documents of Afghan war that Pakistan is not properly collaborating with the NATO led war and maintain its excellent relationship with the terror networks because they perceive it as their strategic assets. In May 2011, Osama Bin Laden was eliminated in an American attack in Abbotabad [Pakistan]. He was living in a huge mansion, which is stone throwing close to the prestigious Kakul Military Academy and despite that Pakistan denied the open secret that it had no knowledge of Laden's presence there. It has revealed that Laden was living with the tacit support of the Pakistani military. Pakistani army, which often rules the roost even they are not directly in power stated that it was not aware about Laden,s presence. This episode has soured Pakistan-U.S relationship and proved that Pakistan

8 Gurmeet Kanwal, 'China' s long march to world power status; strategic challenge for India '. *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 22, No. 11, pp. 1713-1728, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09700169908458915>.

9 Indrani Bagchi, 'India Hits back at China for snubbing General in charge of Jammu and Kashmir', *The Times of India*, New Delhi, 27 August 2010.

has not entirely drifted away from the terror network to maximize its national interests to sustain a fragile Afghanistan.

In July 2010, the Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari visited Beijing. It was his 5<sup>th</sup> visit since he has taken over in August 2008. Despite the global apprehension of proliferation of nuclear weapons, China not only granted two nuclear reactors to Pakistan but pledged all round support to Pakistan. China is already making Gwadar port of Baluchistan as another watch tower against India into very strategic place at the mouth of the Persian Gulf. However during Kargil crisis [1999], China changed its traditional anti-India policies and advised Pakistan to settle bi-lateral issues with India through negotiations. Kashmir is the core zone of conflict between India and Pakistan. Pakistan was initially uneasy with Chinese advice to settle the discourse on bi-lateral level. The Chinese have persuaded Pakistan that the international community has little interest in getting involved into the conflict over Kashmir. At the same time, China continues to maintain strong relations with Pakistan and tries to get India to accept the fact that improvement in Sino-Indian relations should not come at the expense of Sino-Pakistani relations.<sup>10</sup> The Chinese have adopted the policy to engage Pakistan continuously and promoting their interests in Pakistan. Although growing Indo-U.S relationship has provoked the Chinese to deter India from all corners. In last couple of years due to growing Indo-U.S bonhomie and growing Indian military and economic might, the Chinese have again re-emphasis on their encirclement of India policy within South Asia and now it will be sustainable. In this context growing Indo-Japanese relationship, Indo-South Korea and Indo-Mongolian relationship could be also taken into account. These bi-lateral relationships are significant because of the fact that they did not have huge economic engagement at par with India-China level but despite that avail excellent strategic relationship. It is related with the changing paradigm of the global as well as Asian politics also. However the rising tentacles of terror into the western Muslim dominated province of Xinjiang has remained a factor of concern for the Chinese and the Chinese have reminded the Pakistani authorities to contain the export of terror from its soil to this troubled Muslim dominated province. In July and August 2011 again Xinjiang has started boiling with killings and this China has compelled to allege that Pakistan based terror network is the mastermind of these chains of attacks in this troubled province.<sup>11</sup> But the importance of this factor could not dampen the pace of Sino-Pakistani engagements due to convergences of interest between both countries. Pakistan would be extremely happy to contain India on Chinese support. In June -July 2011, Indian and Pakistani foreign secretaries have exchanged their bi-lateral visits to Islamabad and New Delhi followed by Pakistani Foreign Minister, Hina Rabbani Khar visit to New Delhi. It is important because it kept working even after 13 July 2011 Mumbai terror attack. One thing is remarkable here that China has again taken a new turn and advised both India and Pakistan that they must resolve their thorny issues on bi-lateral level.

Indian policy makers adopted *Look East Policy* in 1991. It was long due to strategize Indian interest into Southeast Asia in particular and Asia-Pacific in general due to commonality of interests. But the Chinese felt that it was Indian response of their 'policy of encirclement' against India within South Asia. Now India has extended this policy

10 John W. Garver, *Protracted Contest*, Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2001.

11 Ananth Krishnan, 'Xinjiang attackers trained in Pakistan, says China', *The Hindu*, New Delhi, August 12, 2011.

not within ASEAN but to the entire Asia-Pacific. In this regard it is important that India has started engaging Burma right from the early 2000s anticipating the Burmese junta desire to establish a strategic balance between India and China. Despite huge protest, the Burmese military leader visited India in August 2010. His visit underlined the official Burmese policy to sustain equi-distance between India and China for availing autonomy into the formulations of their foreign policy. Although China has helped Burma a lot but they want to engage India too and needless to say that India also wanted to engage Burma with the same zeal not only to persuade bi-lateral issues but to contain China too. Likewise India has engaged Australia and other countries of Pacific also in recent years to expand and the fulfillment of its national interests. In August 2010 Australian Parliamentary election, selling of Uranium to India has become an issue between both Labour and Conservative parties.

India and China are old Civilizations. Both countries have had historical linkages but they never accepted each other as their friends. Buddhism spread in China and became a bridge between them. After many decades of the spread of Buddhism in China, Han Yu, an anti Buddhist intellectual in the 9<sup>th</sup> century (who became one of the harbingers of Confucianism), put the issue starkly in his 'Memorial on Buddhism' written in 819; "The Buddha was of barbarian origin. His language differed from Chinese speech; his cloth of a different cut; his mouth did not pronounce the prescribed words of the Former Kings; his body was not clad in the garments prescribed by the former kings. He did not recognize the relationship between prince and the subject, nor the sentiment of father and son."<sup>12</sup>

I must recall Kautilya again as to when he insists in his famous Mandala Theory that two big geographical neighbors cannot be friends and India and China are neighbors with massive geography and population. There is a clash of national interests too. India wanted multi-polar Asia as well as international system but China continues to be interested in a uni-polar Asia with its dominance but multi-polar international system. Japan has a similar stand as that of India, therefore Japan-India relationship has grown considerably and has reached a comfortable stage despite the fact that Sino-Indian bilateral trade volume is more than 60 billion \$ and Japan-India trade volume is just over 10 billion \$. China however is one of the largest recipients of Japanese Overseas Development Assistance (ODA). Japan is also one of the top FDI providers to China. Since the mid 1980s, Japan has provided an average of \$ 3.5 billion per year to China, which is about 8.5 percent of China's annually, realized FDI value.<sup>13</sup> Despite these realities, China-Japan relationship in post cold war scenario has declined. China views Japan as one of the hurdles of its aspirations as an international power. Since Japan had defeated China in the past therefore the jingoist Chinese viewed Japan as an enemy. Few Years back, eminent American Scholar, Samuel P. Huntington had stated that if United States wanted to sustain its uni-polar status then it has to accommodate Japan and India as two important partners. He stressed that Japan will contain China from the east and India from the west.<sup>14</sup> It is the manifestation of the traditional notion of balance of power. According to the Neorealist thinker Kenneth Waltz,

12 Anartya Sen, *The Argumentative Indian*, Penguin, London, 2001, pp. 170.

13 See 'Invest in China', <http://www.fdi.gov.cn>.

14 Samuel P. Huntington, *Cultural Conflicts and the Restructuring of the World Order*, www.shuku.net.

Because the future is uncertain, States are more concerned about relative gains and how gains will be divided. For this reason, cooperation is hard to achieve in international relations. The basic nature of the international relations is therefore essentially conflictual.<sup>15</sup>

Japan and China have large volume of trade which has already surpassed Japan-U.S trade volume. However, like Sino-Indian large volume of bi-lateral trade has not been able to remove the cloud of mistrust between India and China so is the case between Japan and China. The burden of history also complicates the matter. Japan-India relationship despite limited bi-lateral trade has improved tremendously in last decade and bound to increase in future. The changing strategic architecture of Asia-Pacific has put both India and Japan into the same basket for the maximization of their national interests. China viewed growing bonhomie between India and Japan as the extension of U.S-India bonhomie as a strategic encirclement of herself. Of course, Indo-US relationship has grown up in a dramatic manner after the end of the cold war and bound to sustain the pace due to prevailing commonality of interests. During cold war years, Indo-U.S relationship was termed as Estranged Allies by Daniel Kux but now it has converted as Engaged Allies by Strobe Talbot. During her July 2011 India Visit, United States Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton had stated that India must play an assertive role in Asia-pacific. The end of the cold war is coincided by the process of globalization, which brought the atmosphere of the cooperation, conflict and competition (CCC). It is competition, conflict and cooperation but Chinese viewed growing Indian profile with a different manner, which lacks that spirit.

However there are some positive feelings about India within the Chinese security community. An editorial in China's *Global Times* in June 2009, in spite of the reports of India's deployment of additional troops along with Sino-Indian border, was quite neutral in its assessment of India's relationship with America and Japan and its implications for Sino-Indian ties. It reads as follows:

India has long held contradictory views on China. Another big Asian country, India is frustrated that China's rise has captured much of the world's attention. Proud of its 'advanced political system', India feels superior to China. However, it faces a disappointing domestic situation which is unstable compared with China's. India likes to brag about its sustainable development, but worries that it is being left behind by China. China is seen in India as both a potential threat and a competitor to surpass. But India can't actually compete with China in a number of areas, like international influence, overall national power and economic scale. India has apparently not realized this. Indian politicians these days seem to think their country would be doing China a huge favour simply by not joining the 'ring around China' established by the United States and Japan. India's growing power would have a significant impact on the balance in this equation, which has led India to think that fear and gratitude for its restraint will cause China to defer to it on territorial disputes. But this is wishful thinking, as China won't make any compromises in its border dispute with India. And while China wishes to coexist peacefully with.<sup>16</sup>

15 Kenneth N., 'Reflections on Theory of International Politics' in Robert O. Keohane ed. *Neorealism and Its Critics*, New York, Columbia University Press, pp. 102.

16 'India's unwise military moves', *Global Times*, Beijing, 11 June 2009,

Chinese experts have insisted that China should not treat India as the United States did China. China cannot prevent India from rising and becoming a great power. Neither can India affect China's rise and growth. The best way is to foster economic relationship between both countries. Both countries have made excellent progress towards fostering a constructive relationship of mutual cooperation and development. The bi-lateral trade volume was \$ 260 million in 1990, which has crossed \$ 60 billion in FY 2010-2011 and slated to touch & 100 billion by 2015. Chinese premier Zhu Rongji joyfully remarked we are number one in hardware and the Indians are in software exports. If we put the hardware and the software together, we can become the world's number one and make progress together.<sup>17</sup>

Both countries could get more benefits through real cooperation. Both economies are expanding and expected to increase in a massive manner in foreseeable future. They need energy to sustain this progress. Both need to prevent piracy and ensure safe route to their energy supply through Indian Ocean to sustain their rapid progress. Top Indian and Chinese military and political leaders are now thinking positively and perceive more benefits in cooperation and devastation in conflict. Both countries are nuclear power and could devastate each other within few days in case of war. They must understand that they are representing almost 40 percent of the global humanity and also representing two great civilizations, which has insisted peace, compassion and international brotherhood. But bread could not be made only with one hand. China need to shed its superiority complex and need to be accommodative in boundary disputes with India. Still Tibet card is in Indian hand and despite decade of Chinese control over Tibet, it is boiling and day by day Dalai Lama is getting international recognition. In August 2011, one monk in Tibet has self immolated himself and demanded the return of the Dalai Lama and independence of Tibet from the shackles of China.<sup>18</sup> India could sustain Tibet issue to put China contained and needless to say that its impact will be on Xingjian too. In Xingjian massive resistant against the Chinese occupation is going on and only in 2009, 200 hundred of Uyghur Muslims had been killed by the Chinese troops to suppress the protest. In July-August 2011 again violence has erupted and that has pushed a grave threat to Chinese. Terrorism, despite an international war against it in Afghanistan, still maintains high level of prevalence and has emerged as a common thereat to both China and India. Both countries have a sizeable number of people in their peripheral areas, living below the poverty line. Both countries are allocating huge amount towards defense expenditure. For the durability of their development they need to strengthen the notion of human security and for that they have to relocate resources from defense to welfare schemes. At first sight it seems that India and China are engaged in the complex cycle of Security Dilemma. These two countries are growing simultaneously with great power aspirations. They fought war in 1962 and have a history of conflict with variety of irritants. They have a strong sense of nationalism and are undergoing massive military restructuring and modernization.<sup>19</sup> Both countries at this juncture of history need to understand the demand of humanity and therefore, must cooperate.

17 John Cherian, 'Zhu Rongji in India', *Frontline*, Chennai, 2 February 2002.

18 Jacobs, Andrew, 'China: Officers Surround Monastery After Suicide', *The New York Times*, New York, 18 August 2011.

19 In his 'steps-to-war' model Vasquez has argued that the absence of a boundary dispute between two rivals all but ensure that the conflict will not escalate to war. Conversely, however, evidence also suggests that the presence of territorial disputes significantly affect hostility levels and the prospects of escalation to war. [Diehl] John, Vasquez, *The War Puzzle*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1993; Pail F. Diehl, (ed) *A Road Map to War: Territorial Dimensions of International Conflicts*, Vanderbilt University Press, Nashville, TN, 1999.



Cooperation, conflict and competition are the new cardinal principles of the foreign policy in the post cold war scenario. Both stand to gain tremendously in cooperation and lose huge in conflict. But present state of Sino-Indian relationship has a different tale to tell. They are living under the cloud of mutual suspicion. As Adler and Barnett note

Neorealist theories ....stress the notion that while war does not take place all the time, like rain, it is always expected.<sup>20</sup>

Asian century hypothesis will be included with an important element of European theater. Why both world wars happened, which decreased European population so much that till today their population is stagnant in Europe. It is known as the biggest carnage in the history of humanity. Both world wars happened due to the fact that all leading countries of contemporary Europe were unable to control their aspirations to enhance their power and capture more colonial territory. Needless to say that the same kind of madness emerged within the Asian theater. The only difference is that it came into Europe after the continent became powerful within the international system. Contemporary Asian powers have become jealous of each other before Asia became hegemonic within the international system. The other difference between the European and Asian situation is that there was no competitor in term of a global power to Europe but Asia till today has not established its supremacy over America into the international system. The U.S still holds levers of power within the international system and bound to keep it till Asian powers do not cooperate among themselves to establish supremacy of Asia in the world. Some scholars opine the dangers of Asia as deep and profound. To quote one 2008 study on U.S policy on Asia,

Asia is not a theater of peace. Suspicions rooted in rivalry and nationalism run deep. The continent harbors every traditional and non-traditional challenges of our age; it is a cauldron of religious and ethnic tension; a source of terror and extremism; an accelerating driver of the insatiable global appetite for energy; the place where the most people will suffer the adverse effects of global climate change, the primary source of nuclear proliferation and the most likely theater on Earth for a major conventional confrontation and even a nuclear conflict.<sup>21</sup>

China and India are two most important ancient Civilizations of the world. Chinese scholar Yi Jing after returning from India to China into seventh century asked "Is there anyone in any part of India who does not admire China? He spent ten years at the Institute of Higher Learning, Nalanda and studied medicine particularly Ayurveda [the science of longevity] in addition to the Buddhist philosophy.<sup>22</sup> Chinese and Indians have interacted a lot since time immemorial and even the word 'Mandarin' derives from the Sanskrit word Mantri [an adviser or a minister, the Prime Minister of India still holds the nomenclature Pradhan Mantri].<sup>23</sup> In India itself, consumption habits, particularly of rich

20 Emmanuel Adler and Michael Barnett, (eds) *Security Communities*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1998.

21 Campbell Kurt, Nirav Patel and Vikram J. Singh, *The Power of Balance; America in Asia* Washington DC: Centre for a New American Security, June-2008, pp. 14-15.

22 Yi Jing's, *A record of the Buddhist Religions as Practiced in India and Malay Archipelago*, Oxford, 1986, pp. 136.

23 Amartya Sen, *The Argumentative Indian*, Penguin Books, England, 2005, pp. 121.

Indians, were radically influenced years ago by innovations made in China. Kautilaya's Sanskrit treatise on economy and politics, *Arthashastra*, first written in fourth century BCE gives a special place to 'silk and silk cloth from the China' among precious articles and objects of value. There are references in the ancient epic the *Mahabharata* to Chinese fabric or silk [Cinamsuka] being given as gifts, and there are similar references also in the ancient Laws of Manu.<sup>24</sup> Both countries learned a lot from each other in ancient time. Noted Chinese philosopher, Fahian visited India in 401 BCE, took considerable interests in contemporary health care system in India. He was particularly impressed by the civic facilities for medical care in 5<sup>th</sup> century Patliputra [Modern Patna, Provincial Capital of Eastern Indian State of Bihar]. According to him,

All the poor and destitute in the country... and all who are diseased, go to these houses, and are provided with every kind of help, and doctors examine disease. They get the food and medicine which their cases require, and are made to feel at ease; and when they are better, they go away of themselves.<sup>25</sup>

India and China have learned a lot from each other in first millennium, but the significance of that epistemic process has not dried up even at the outset of the third millennium. Climate change has become an issue of global concern. India and China had done well during climate change talks at Copenhagen in December 2009.

At Copenhagen, India rallied with China, Brazil and South Africa to oppose any emission cuts that impeded growth and thus collectively created the spirit of Copenhagen, which is sustaining and strengthening bilateral Sino-Indian cooperation since then. India's ambassador to China, S. Jaishankar observed Copenhagen "was a meeting of minds on bilateral, global and regional issues. It saw the emergence of new ideas and stronger engagement."<sup>26</sup> Much of the optimism regarding enhanced Sino-Indian cooperation and combined clout of the Asian giants in the global arena comes from their combined front put by them in the December 2009, Climate Change Summit in Copenhagen. India and China worked together at Copenhagen Summit to steer the debate in such a way that no formal restrictions were imposed on their growth. Their joint cooperation surprised the world and that level of spirit of consensus needs to be sustainable at least on the issues of common concern. Now both India and China strongly feel that such cooperation between the two sides can be replicated in other areas for mutual benefits. China is India's largest trade partner and the two-way trade between the two sides has crossed to \$60 billion by 2010-2011. The growing confidence in each other is further reflected in the establishment of a Sino-Indian hotline between their two prime ministers to ensure that the two leaders can consult each other in crisis

24 In his well-researched study *Buddhism, Diplomacy, and Trade*, Tansen Sen shows that the size and continuity of Sino-Indian trade relations are often underestimated. For example, in contrast with the common presumption that the trade between the two countries died out in the second millennium, Sen argues that Sino-Indian exchanges were very extensive between the 11<sup>th</sup> and the 14<sup>th</sup> centuries. Also, Sen provides evidence to conclude that Buddhism, too, continued to flourish simultaneously in Song dynasty China and in Eastern India in the early part of the second millennium.

25 Leon Hurvitz and Tsai Heng-Ting, 'The Introduction to Buddhism'. In Wm. Theodore de Bary and Irene Bloom [eds] *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, Vol.1, 2nd edition, New York: Columbia University Press, 1999, pp. 425-26.

26 S. Jaishankar cited in Saurabh Shukla, 'Hotline to Hope', *India Today* (New Delhi), April 19, 2010, Vol.35, No. 16, pp. 67.

situation or whenever they feel the need to sort out differences and evolve joint strategy on global issues.

Both China and India are growing rapidly when the entire world is confronting global recession. Their basic interest is to sustain this process. Both sides are becoming convinced that absolute gains are mutually benefited for both countries. Of course, both countries have invested billions of dollars in up gradation of their navies and other wings of the army. But both countries are diverse and need to protect their interest and for that purpose they need modernized navy and military to cope with the emerging challenges. Ensuring maritime security is not only beneficial for China and India but for the entire Asia-Pacific. Their growing navies have been able to curb piracy and if continues will be more effective. Since both China and India are growing at a faster pace, they need to safeguard their energy resources. Both countries are importing the maximum amount of their energy consumption and this ratio is expected to grow in foreseeable future. Both countries constitute top five energy consumers of the international system and expected to consume more energy to sustain their progress in future therefore their import routes need to be protected for the sustainability of their development. The role of Japan, United States and East Asian countries are extremely crucial into the shaping of Sino-Indian Relationships or vice-versa. In post Pokhran scenario, sustainability of good relationships has been witnessed between India and the United States as well as between India and Japan, India and South Korea, India and Mongolia and India and Vietnam. It is expected to reach new heights in foreseeable future due to convergences of interests.

Asia today needs to enhance their level of cooperation to play a dominant role into the international system. The Asian countries need to shed the mentality of suspicion and remain in the state of Security Dilemma; instead they have to cooperate in real sense of the term in best possible ways. Their cooperation will bring well being and happiness to not only both countries but stabilize Asia and then only Asia could emerge as the new power house of the international system. In his seminal Foreign Affairs article in September 2005, senior Chinese official, Zheng Bijian argued on this line. As Zheng writes

China will not follow the path of Germany leading up to World War 1 or those of Germany and Japan up to World War II, when those countries violently plundered resources and pursued hegemony. Neither will China follow the path of the great power's vying for global domination during the Cold War. Instead, China will transcend ideological differences to strive for peace, development and cooperation with all the countries of the world.<sup>27</sup>

Their cooperation has the potential to diminish the existing U.S hegemony into the international architecture of power; the process has started with the U.S fiasco in Iraq and would be fiasco in Afghanistan. In contrast the conflict between India and China will lead the world towards third world war, which all of us know will be devastating not for both countries but for the entire globe. But the reality is different from expressed idealism from the Chinese side. China seems to drifting from Mao's advise of peaceful rise. According to latest assessments from the Pentagon, the Chinese are modernizing their 2.25 million strong army, against the backdrop of uncertainty over Beijing's long term intentions. New Delhi can ill afford to ignore China's increasing trans-border

<sup>27</sup> Bijian Zheng, 'China's Rise Will be Peaceful' *Foreign Affairs*, Sep/Oct 2005, pp-18-24.

military capabilities, its assiduous strategic encircling of India and hardening posture in the border talks. According to that report the defense budget of China in 2010 was \$ 91.5 billion in comparison with India's \$ 36 billion.<sup>28</sup> This development will have deep impact on India in particular and rest part of the Asia in general.

The leaders of both countries and policy makers must understand this reality. Both could sustain their progress in the state of cooperation also. The new strategic architecture of Asia will be determined by future state of Sino-Indian relationship and will determine the basic dynamics of the international system. The challenges of 21<sup>st</sup> century need to be taken into account with proper care by both countries.

### Impact on East Asia

East Asia is dominated by China due to its huge geography and economy. South China Sea has become bitter issue of divergences of interests between China and East Asian countries in recent years. There are other issues as well which are making relations between China and East Asia bitter. The issue of nuclear proliferation particularly by North Korea and its open support by China has remains a matter for concern for East Asian countries. The U.S is already there and will not like the dominance of China over East Asia. Writing in 2003, Ross again emphasized that "Pax Sinica and pax Americana [sic] together create East Asian Peace" for, despite mutual U.S-China sensitivity to perception of threats and to change in military capabilities, both Washington and Beijing have much to gain from maintaining a continental maritime status quo.<sup>29</sup>

In 2009, he observed;

Since the end of the Cold War, East Asia has been the most peaceful and stable region in the world. Even as the region has experienced the rise of China and a committed U.S response. This stability reflects the combination of bio-polarity and the presence of water between spheres of influence. Insofar as these are enduring characteristics of the regional order, regional stability should endure well into the twenty first century.<sup>30</sup>

Historically, the interaction of geopolitical change with growth in military capabilities – the interplay between the "dynamic of technological change and military competitiveness – usually destabilizes any given balance of power.<sup>31</sup> In particular, the development of significant force projection capabilities may challenge geopolitical stability because such arms suggest potential transformations in the configuration of any established geographic system of maritime and continental power. The prevailing "geography of the Peace" in East Asia will be no exception to this rule.<sup>32</sup>

28 Rajat Pandit, 'Pentagon Warns India of Chinese build-up', *The Times of India*, (New Delhi), August 26, 2011.

29 Robert S Ross, 'The U.S-China Peace: Great Power Politics Spheres of Influence and the Peace of East Asia'. In Robert Ross, *Chinese Security Policy: Structure, Power and Politics*, London, Routledge, 2009, pp. 76.

30 Robert S Ross, *Chinese Security Policy; Structure, Power and Politics*, London, Routledge, 2009, pp. 10.

31 Paul, Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Power; Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000*, London: Fontana Press, 1989 edition, pp. xvii.

32 Michael Evans, 'Power and Paradox: Asian Geopolitics and Sino-American Relations in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century', *Orbis*, Winter 2011, pp. 98.

Two decades back, Indian Prime-Minister, Narsingh Rao had initiated *Look East Asia Policy*. Today it is its peak due to the expanding Indian profile in Asia-Pacific. India is rapidly emerging as a great Asian power and a potential economic giant. Geopolitically, the country is moving from a concept of *Nehruvian aloofness*, regarding events in East Asia, towards a greater strategic appreciation of India's centrality in South and East Asian affairs. Some pundits of international system have described a nuclear armed India as rediscovering geopolitics along the lines of Lord Curzon's celebrated 1909 book, *The Place of India in the Empire*, which upheld the wielding of sea power in the Indian Ocean Littoral and East Asia.<sup>33</sup> As the Indian strategic analyst, C. Raja Mohan observed in 2004,

for the section of Indian foreign policy elite who have long dreamt of a powerful role for India in its surroundings regions, Curzon remains a source of foreign policy inspiration.<sup>34</sup>

India's main strategic concern revolve around the rise and growing influence of China in Eurasia and the Indian Ocean, Beijing's links to Pakistan, and the accelerating problem of energy access, and the long standing Kashmir dispute. India has revisited its maritime security umbrella in changing security architecture of Asia. Apprehension over China's "string of pearls" strategy, particularly regarding energy security and SLOC's in the Indian Ocean, reinforce India's evolving maritime strategy.<sup>35</sup> Although China has sought to engage various South East Asian navies over its "Malacca dilemma" significantly it has not done so with the Indian Navy. Like China, India needs uninterrupted access to oil for its economic growth and both power's are increasingly competitors for global energy resources. Energy considerations motivate New Delhi's development of closer relationship with the United States alongside improving Indian force projection capability along the Indian Ocean littoral. In 2007, the Indian Navy was a major participant in the Malabar exercises in the way of Bengal with U.S, Australia, Japan and Singaporean fleet elements.<sup>36</sup> Many such joint exercises followed. For some analyst, such as William H. Overholt, the greatest single paradox at work in East Asia is the United States growing strategic dependence upon Japan even as Washington becomes increasingly economically and geopolitically aligned with a rising China.<sup>37</sup> In this context, indeed, Indian and U.S interests have converged in Asia, ranging from countering terrorism and Islamist radicalism to ensuring that New Delhi becomes a major player in Asia to balance China.<sup>38</sup> In terms of both geopolitics and energy security concerns, India seeks to offset Chinese influence in the eastern Indian Ocean region and South East Asia. India has already emerged as an Asian power and will be consolidating its global position in foreseeable future. Between June-December 2010, all five Permanent

33 C. Raja Mohan, *Crossing the Rubicon, The Shaping of India's New Foreign Policy*, New York: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2004, pp. xvii.

34 C. Raja Mohan, *Crossing the Rubicon*, 2004, pp. 204.

35 Stephen J. Blank, *Natural Allies? Regional Security in Asia and Prospects for Indo-American Strategic Cooperation*, Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies institute, U.S Army War College, September. 2005, pp. 77-78.

36 C. Raja Mohan, 'India and the Balance of Power', *Foreign Affairs*, July/ August 2006, pp. 17-32.

37 William H. Overholt, *Asia, America and the Transformation of Geopolitics*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008, pp. 270.

38 Edward, Luce, *In Spite of the God: The Strange Rise of Modern India*, Little and Brown, London, 2006, pp. 261.

member of the Security Council head of the government visited New Delhi.<sup>39</sup> The future implications of this emerging configuration are summed up by Stephen J. Blank,

To the extent that Indian power contributes to an overall Asian framework backed up and promoted by Washington that restrains the projection of Chinese power, it will contribute to a broader, more comprehensive Asiatic equilibrium that keeps all powers to play and prevents any one power from making a bid for regional or continental hegemony.<sup>40</sup>

Since China is trying to play its might to dominate East Asia therefore East Asian countries have started to diversify their options to deter China. United States is already there. The changing power architecture of Asia has put India and China in a competitive mode despite their well versed level of engagement at economic front. China wants Uni-polar Asia dominated by her but wanted multi-polar world, with herself as an important power. India wanted both Asia and the world multi-lateral with herself as an important power. These divergences of interests have sustained the competition between both countries. Since a long time, China is trying to encircle India within South Asia. India has now reciprocated with increasing its engagement with the East Asian countries. There are many convergences between India and Japan, India and South Korea, India and Mongolia and Vietnam and others countries of this region as well. Due to these facts despite low profile of their bi-lateral trade volume they are enjoying excellent relation with India. The deepening relations between India and the countries of East Asia could be gauged with the warmth of July 2011 visit of Indian President to South Korea and Mongolia. The countries of East Asia have perceived engagement with India as an instrument to diversify their foreign policy and deter China. The growing multi-lateral relationship between the U.S, India, South Korea, Vietnam and Japan could be taken into this context. The July 2011 statement of U.S Foreign Secretary, Hillary Clinton, in which she has opined that India must play a bigger role in Asia-Pacific, could be understood in this context.

As balance of power theory indicates major countries of East Asia has the option to expand their relationship with many influential countries. They have extended their relationship with India in many folds since last one decade. As far as nuclear proliferation in Korean peninsula is concerned, Indian interest is also converging because it has become open secret now that Pakistan is the main conduit of this proliferation, which has been propelled by China. As many South Korean companies are very active in India since a long but sustainability of growth in India has given a new twist to economic relationship. South Korean investment has also rose to many folds and slated to increase in foreseeable future. In August 2010, Indian Defense Minister, A.K. Antony visited Seoul and inked many agreements. It was the maiden visit by any Indian Defense Minister since independence. Many strategic bi-lateral agreements had been inked during that visit. In July 2011, Indian President, Pratibha Devi Singh Patil visited South Korea and Mongolia India and Japan has cemented their relationship in an excellent manner since last one decade despite less volume of trade in comparison with India-China trade due to convergences of interests. Japan and India have realized the utility of each other

39 Sudhir Kumar Singh [ed] *Sino-Indian Relations: Challenges and Opportunities for 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Pentagon Press, New Delhi, 2011, pp. xxiv.

40 Stephen J. Blank, *Natural Allies? Regional Security in Asia and Prospects for Indo-American Strategic Cooperation*, 2005, pp. 160.

for the maximization of their national interest and their growing relationship is also negating the dominant view that economy could be a driver of better relationship. India and Vietnam remained traditional allies since many decades and has enhanced the deepening of their relationship in recent past. Mongolia and Indian relationship is also fine and touching new heights by high voltage bilateral visits in recent years.

India and East Asian countries have many commonalities like religion, culture and most importantly convergences of interests. In post cold war scenario, which has altered the contours of the international system, India and East Asian Countries have deepened their bi-lateral ties. The East Asian countries have realized that growing Indian participation in their part would be beneficial for them given the growing clout of China within the international system. Since India has developed a lot too in all the fronts therefore India is a natural ally for East Asian countries. These convergences of interests could be gauged with the deepening Indian engagement with the countries of East Asia both on bi-lateral and multi-lateral levels. Since Asia has become the main playground of the international system at the outset of the 21<sup>st</sup> century therefore its conflict attracts global attention. China has initially behaved in a very kind way and even promoted its ties with East Asian countries but in post 9/11 scenario, it has changed its behavior towards the East Asian countries. Although they are engaging China on many fronts but still they have apprehensions about Chinese vested designs therefore they are inclined towards India. India has grabbed the situation for the maximization of its national interests through deepening its ties with the countries of East Asia. In due course of time, India and China have developed cordial relationship but it still remain confined in the arena of economic relationship and not translated into strategic arena and trust deficit has widened between both countries. This kind of shaky relationship between India and China is slated to continue in near future too therefore East Asian Countries have the option to use this opportunity for the maximization of their interests. We are aware about the fact that only communality of interests is the determining factor of foreign policy therefore in foreseeable future India and East Asia is slated to propel their profile of relationship in all the sectors.

