

## ON EXPECTED LINES

THE DELIBERATIONS at the consensus-building talks on Sri Lanka's devolution package and constitutional reforms have proceeded on predictable lines. For all practical purposes, the two major Sinhala parties have agreed on the broad contours of the devolution package and the setting up of an interim council for the northeast. The talks between the President, Ms. Chandrika Kumaratunga, and the Opposition United National Party (UNP) leader, Mr. Ranil Wickremesinghe, which were supposed to wind up on June 30, have been extended up to July 7 to finalise a few other aspects of the constitutional reforms. Though it is still early to say whether the two sides can agree on all outstanding issues by then, the fact that they are negotiating with some flexibility is a welcome development in the island's politics. What is unfortunate is that even before the devolution package and the constitutional reforms which will give it statutory status have been finalised and sent to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), its ideologue, Mr. Anton Balasingham, has rejected the proposals outright. For the LTTE, the 'national aspirations of the Tamil people' centre on the "right to self-determination and nationhood" — in other words, a separate Tamil Eelam. This stand is also on expected lines, forcing some Tamil parties like the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) to reject the interim council set-up and it may perhaps vote against the package when it is presented to Parliament. It will be unfortunate for parties like the TULF to pull out of this exercise after one of its constitutional experts, the late Neelan Thiruchelvam, contributed so much to the process of constitutional reforms. All that remains to be seen is whether the President and Mr. Wickremesinghe will agree on the whole package of reforms and proceed to get it endorsed by Parliament.

Just as there are welcome features in the

devolution package, there are a few sensitive issues that the Tamil parties will find difficult to accept as they stand now. The proposed definition of Sri Lanka as a 'Republic consisting of the Centre and Regions' marks a departure from the controversial 1978 constitution which made it a 'Unitary State'. The two Sinhala parties have now agreed to set up an interim council to administer the north and the east for five years, with a Board of Ministers. The Chief Minister is likely to be from the Tamil community and there will be two Deputy Chief Ministers from the Muslim and Sinhala communities. But the Tamil parties will oppose the time-limit set for the interim administration, tied to the holding of a referendum in the east to decide whether its people want to remain with the north in a common regional council, or delink themselves to form a separate region. The possibility of a demerger seems anathema to most Tamil groups, though the time has probably come to go in for a re-demarcation of boundaries for the provinces and the proposed regional councils. There may be time for the Tamil parties to add value to these proposals before they are presented to Parliament. But nobody can influence the Tamil Tigers to participate in this re-building process. The LTTE, which is now bent on re-taking Jaffna at an opportune time, has ruled out any peace talks until the Government troops withdraw from the peninsula. It is unfortunate that Norway, which emerged as the chosen facilitator, has not been able to persuade the LTTE to make any compromise on its rigid positions, to at least effect a ceasefire and resume negotiations. The President has kept her word on evolving a basic Sinhala consensus, even though her own 1995 proposals have been watered down. The international community must now realise that the real roadblock to meaningful negotiations and peace in Sri Lanka is the LTTE, which is bent on a senseless, murderous course. /

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# Russia, China huddle on US missile plan

REUTERS

DUSHANBE (Tajikistan), July 5. — The Presidents of Russia and China today discussed their opposition to US plans for a new missile defence system which they fear could upset the global balance of power, Kremlin officials said.

Mr Vladimir Putin and Mr Jiang Zemin met for nearly an hour in the Tajik capital of Dushanbe on the sidelines of a regional security summit which also includes four Central Asian states.

"The leaders spoke about the fundamental importance of maintaining the strength of the 1972 ABM (anti-ballistic missile) treaty," Kremlin spokesman, Mr Sergei Prikhodko told reporters after the meeting.

China and Russia say the proposed US system, aimed at blocking attacks by what Washington calls "rogue states", would undermine existing arms control agreements by violating the ABM treaty.

Mr Prikhodko said other countries were also concerned at the destabilising impact of a new missile defence mechanism. "It is not only Russia and China, but many partners of the United States in Nato who have similar and sometimes coinciding views on the need to maintain stability and not allow any distortions to the balance of power," he said.

The US President, Mr Bill Clinton, has said he will decide later this year whether to go ahead with the \$60-billion national missile defence system. The Pentagon has scheduled a crucial test of the system over the Pacific Ocean for 7 July.

The morning's meeting also touched on Mr Putin's visit to China on 18-19 July and came amid fresh talk of building a "strategic partnership" between the neighbouring states, which were ideological rivals in the 1960s and 1970s.

Analysts say the altered situation on the Korean peninsula could undermine the US political and military role in northeast Asia and even revive an alliance between North Korea, China and Russia. Washington's proposed missile defence system could also give further impetus to Moscow's ties with Beijing. China says the proposal would oblige it to build up its small nuclear arsenal.

THE STATESMAN

7 JUL 1998

AD-16  
6/9  
**Russia, China unite against NMD**

**Dushanbe, July 5.** The Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, and the Chinese leader, Mr. Jiang Zemin, today jointly warned of a growing threat to global security as Washington moves further toward the creation of a National Missile Defence shield over its territory.

"International stability is today undergoing a serious test of its durability," Interfax news agency quoted Mr. Putin as saying at a summit meeting in the Tajik capital of Dushanbe of the leaders of Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

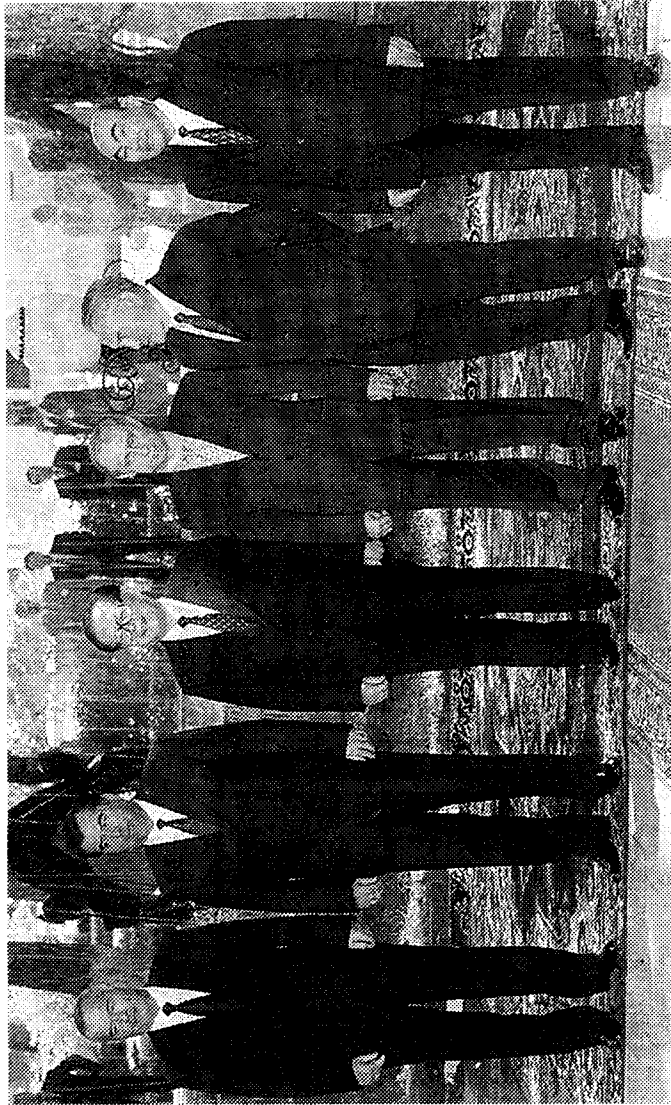
At their first meeting in person, Mr. Putin and Mr. Jiang ruled out any amendments to the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) treaty to facilitate the U.S. plans for the system, which Washington says is a defence against attack by States like North Korea.

In a declaration issued at the one-day gathering, the five delegations underscored the "unconditional necessity of the preservation and strict adherence to the ABM treaty", describing it as "the cornerstone of strategic stability and basis for the further reduction of strategic and attack weapons".

Mr. Putin said some NATO member-States were also concerned about the potential collapse of the treaty, which helped to maintain strategic parity between the superpowers during the cold war years.

He warned that the "the global balance of security may be undermined" if the U.S. project was implemented.

In the declaration, the leaders of the Eurasian grouping called for the strict maintenance of the international nuclear test ban and agreements on non-proliferation of sensitive nuclear technology, and called for a 'multipolar world order' to meet global security concerns.



**(Right to left) The Kyrgyz President, Mr. Askar Akayev, Kazakhstan's President, Mr. Nursulton Nazarbayev, the Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, the Chinese President, Mr. Jiang Zemin, the Tajik President, Mr. Eмомали Рахмонов, and Uzbekistan's President, Mr. Islam Karimov, during their meeting in Dushanbe on Wednesday. — AP**

They condemned the use of force or threat of force in international relations without the sanction of the U.N. Security Council, and called for strengthening of the U.N. "as the main mechanism in maintaining international peace and stability".

Support was, however, unanimous for Moscow's military campaign against Islamic rebel forces in its breakaway Caucasus Republic of Chechnya, and for China's territorial claims on Taiwan, both of which were regarded as internal affairs.

Other items discussed were the confrontation between North and South Korea, the civil war in Afghanistan, and a greater Russian and CIS military presence in Tajikistan to secure the border

against threats from the Afghan side. The summit was the first meeting of Mr. Putin and Mr. Jiang. Mr. Putin will make a stop-over in Beijing in just under two weeks time before the G-8 meeting in Okinawa.

The two leaders also discussed the Russian President's visit to China on July 18 and his trip to North Korea, the first by a Russian President to the isolated Stalinist state.

"We are preparing for the visit by Russia's President to China, and we have joint documents on the development of a strategic partnership in the 21st century," said the Russian Foreign Minister, Mr. Igor Ivanov, in Dushanbe yesterday.

"The process is not only con-

tinuing, but the practical content is increasing." A Kremlin spokesman said the talks dealt with a variety of international issues, including the situation in Korea after the summit last month between the two leaders of the divided peninsula.

Moscow and Beijing shared a common position in denouncing the NATO's bombing campaign in Yugoslavia and appear to want to use more recent geo-political developments to forge closer links.

Analysts say that the altered situation on the Korean peninsula could undermine the U.S. political and military role in North-East Asia and even revive an alliance between North Korea, China and Russia. — DPA, AFP

**SUMMIT / PUTIN'S BEIJING VISIT TOMORROW**

# Russia, China to discuss NMD

By Vladimir Radyuhin

**MOSCOW, JULY 15.** The United States' plan to build a missile shield are likely to dominate a Chinese-Russian summit in Beijing this week.

The Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, is setting out on his first tour of Asia on Monday during which he will visit China and North Korea before proceeding to Japan for a G-8 summit. In Beijing, Mr. Putin will discuss possible responses to the U.S. intention to deploy a National Missile Defence (NMD), which Russia and China regard as a threat to regional and global stability.

The Russian Foreign Minister, Mr. Igor Ivanov, who arrived in Beijing on Saturday to prepare for Mr. Putin's visit, put "strategic stability in the region" on top of the list of issues to be discussed at the summit. He said the talks would also cover "expansion of trade and economic ties, defence cooperation and interaction in the international arena."

Russia and China co-sponsored a U.N. resolution last year denouncing the U.S. proposal to modify the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM) between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, to allow Washington build NMD. Both countries warned a U.S. anti-ballistic missile system would trigger off a new missile race. Russia also said it could abandon both START I and START II treaties if the U.S. violated the ABM accord.

Last week, Mr. Sha Zukang, head of the Chi-

nese Foreign Ministry's Department of Arms Control and Disarmament, said the NMD system could push China and Russia closer together in a strategic alliance to protect common security interests.

For their part, Russian defence sources suggested the two countries may develop a joint missile defense system if the U.S. ignored their objections to NMD. "Such a development is one of several possible counter-measures we can take in case the United States violates the ABM treaty," a Russian Defence Ministry officer said in a phone interview.

The possibility of developing a joint regional missile shield was considered by the Defence Ministers of Russia and China in Moscow in January and is expected to be discussed more extensively during Mr. Putin's visit.

The U.S. has been testing interceptor missiles that could shoot down incoming missiles, but its efforts suffered a serious setback last weekend when the kill vehicle prototype failed to intercept a Minuteman ICBM above the Pacific Ocean. The U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, is to decide later this year whether to deploy a national missile defence.

China has shown keen interest in a joint anti-missile system with Russia in view of U.S. proposals to extend the American missile shield to Taiwan. Experts have noted that Russia does not really need an ABM shield in the Far East as most of its nuclear forces, including sea-launched ballistic missiles, are de-

ployed elsewhere. Moreover, Russia would be reluctant to transfer vital ABM technologies to China as they would enable Beijing to develop its own national ABM system that could undermine Russia's ability to hit China. But by discussing a joint anti-missile system with China, Moscow seeks to put additional pressure on Washington to abandon its NMD plan.

Russia has already succeeded in fanning opposition to the American NMD system among Washington's European allies by proposing building a joint missile shield in Europe.

Reuters reports:

Mr. Putin tried to break up a quarrel among armed forces chiefs today, ordering the Defence Minister and head of the General Staff to work together to draw up plans for reform.

The Chief of the General Staff, Gen. Anatoly Kvashnin, had called this week for the strategic nuclear rocket forces to be eliminated as a separate branch of the military and nuclear missiles to be put under centralised command. The proposal was widely seen as an attack on the Defence Minister, Mr. Igor Sergeev, a former head of the rocket forces who has backed their independent command.

The Kremlin said Mr Putin had met the two men, along with the head of the Advisory Security Council, Mr. Sergei Ivanov, and ordered the three to jointly prepare material for a Security Council meeting to discuss military reform. The meeting would be held at the end of the month.

THE HINDU

16 JUL 2000

H.D. 16  
18/7  
Russia, China  
to reiterate  
opposition to NMD

BEIJING, JULY 17. The Russian president, Mr. Vladimir Putin, today left Moscow on his maiden visit to China with an aim to build strong strategic partnerships between Beijing and Moscow and step up their campaign against the controversial U.S. National Missile Defence (NMD) system. *in vi. f. m. s. a*

While a senior Chinese Foreign Ministry official declined to spell out details of the joint statement to be issued by Mr. Putin and his host, the Chinese President, Mr. Jiang Zemin, tomorrow, diplomatic sources said China and Russia would strongly reiterate their opposition to the U.S. plans to deploy the NMD, violating the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) treaty.

A number of bilateral agreements covering defence, economic cooperation, banking and trade are to be signed during Mr. Putin's visit, sources said.

During the summit, leaders of the two countries are expected to share in-depth exchanges on important regional and international matters.

Also on the agenda will be matters concerning strategic stability in the Asia-Pacific region and the impact of America's proposed anti-missile shields, they said.

The Chinese Foreign Minister, Mr. Tang Jiaxuan, and the Russian Foreign Minister, Mr. Igor Ivanov, finalising the joint statement to be issued after the summit, have already commented that Mr. Putin's visit to China is a major event in bilateral relations.

"President Putin's China visit will play an important role in pushing forward the Sino-Russian strategic partnership in the 21st Century," a senior Chinese Foreign ministry official told reporters at a briefing. — PTI

THE HINDU

18 JUL 2001

# Putin departs on key China, Japan tour

FROM VLADIMIR  
ISACHENKOV

Moscow, July 17 (AP): Russian President Vladimir Putin left today for China, the first stop on an Asian tour that will also take him to North Korea and Japan for a meeting of the Group of Eight, Russian news agencies reported.

The trip is intended to re-assert Russia's global clout, which has shrunk due to the nation's economic decline.

By making high-profile stops in China and North Korea en route to the Okinawa summit, Putin will try to bolster Russia's image as a world power, then follow up by using the meeting with western leaders to push Russia's global concerns.

He arrived in Beijing early Tuesday, the Interfax news agency reported.

Putin is expected to use his visits to Beijing and Pyongyang to register once again Russia's deep concern over the US proposal to modify the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty to allow construction of a limited national missile defense.

Putin and Chinese President Jiang Zemin are to sign a statement that condemns the proposed US system.

The two leaders are also expected to take further steps to bolster relations between the former Communist rival states. They plan to sign agreements on energy cooperation, including a feasibility study for a gas pipeline from Russia into China.

Bilateral agreements on education and banking are also on the agenda for the visit, which ends tomorrow.

A Chinese official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said in Beijing that Russia and China had a new kind of partnership that was "non-aligned, non-confrontational, and non-threatening to any third party."

After decades of tension that followed a falling-out in the late 1950s, relations between Moscow and China have been steadily improving since the late 1980s. Since the 1991 Soviet collapse, China has evolved into one of Russia's major trading partners and is the top customer for Russia's ailing military industrial complex.

Beijing has purchased billions of dollars worth of jets, missiles, submarines and destroyers.

Russian and Chinese leaders have spoken much about the "strategic partnership" between their countries and their efforts to build a "multipolar world" — a term intended to underline their joint opposition to perceived US global domination.

Some Russian media and analysts have warned the Kremlin against using political and military ties with China as a tool to blackmail the West.

"We need China and other Asian countries as economic partners and additional markets, not an alternative to the West," political analyst Yevgeny Verlin wrote in the business newspaper *Vedomosti* today.

The two nations have long discussed plans for building oil and natural gas pipelines from Russia into China, but nothing has been done so far.

According to Russian media reports, Russia could export up to \$5 billion worth of energy resources a year to China if the projects materialise.

THE HINDU

18 JUL 2000

# Jiang finds anti-US friend in Putin

19/12

OLIVER AUGUST  
THE TIMES, LONDON

BEIJING, July 18. — China and Russia have forged an alliance intended to head off USA's plans to deploy a new anti-missile defence system, warning that it could lead to a new arms race.

In a joint statement with his Chinese counterpart yesterday, visiting Russian President Mr Vladimir Putin said the plan was an attempt to "seek unilateral military and security advantages" which would have "grave consequences" not only for Russia, China and other countries but for the security of the USA.

(The two countries today signed five major documents, including one on the controversial anti-ballistic missile issue. Mr Jiang Zemin and Mr Putin signed the Beijing Declaration of the People's Republic of China and Russia Federation and a joint statement on anti-ballistic missile issue, Xinhua agency reported.)

The warmer ties on the security front are matched in Beijing by a feeling that

in Mr Putin they have a man with whom they can do business.

Mr Putin is visiting Beijing on the way to the G-8 meeting in Okinawa which starts on Friday. The stopover is an attempt to bolster his international stature and to see for himself how Russia's one-time Communist rival is creating a market economy.

The two men talked privately for more than two hours, twice the allotted time, during which they are said to have cemented a close relationship.

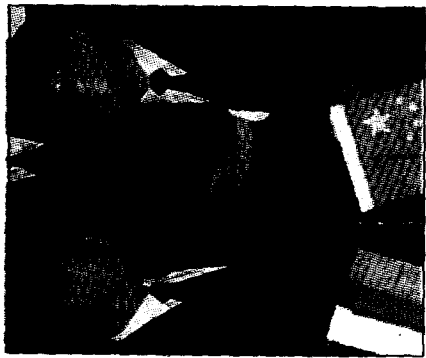
President Putin was given a red-carpet welcome and a 21-gun salute at Tiananmen Square. The symbolism mixed with

## CHINA, RUSSIA FORGE TIES TO HEAD OFF MISSILE PLAN

Communist comradeship was meant to seal a new partnership against the perceived opponent, the USA.

Yesterday's scenes were markedly different from the uneasy relationship that governed ties over the past four decades. The Sino-Soviet split at the height of the Cold War was partly healed in the late 1980s. The decline of the Soviet Union's military might further helped ease tensions, but suspicions prevailed despite Mr

Boris Yeltsin's frequent visits to Beijing. China regarded him unpredictable and prone to be an embarrassment. Mr Yeltsin too never dropped his Soviet-era



Putin and Jiang

distrust of the rival Communist power. In Mr Putin, Beijing seems to have found a more amenable partner. In no small measure, it's a result of Mr Putin's flattering move to emulate China's strategy to cope with the post-Communist economic breakdown.

Mr Putin's steps are being interpreted by Beijing as evidence that for the first time the Kremlin is prepared to learn from China.

On previous visits, Russian leaders tended to lecture China, whether as fellow Communists or as converts to free-market economics. Mr Mikhail Gorbachov's 1989 visit was soured by the Tiananmen uprising and his decision to propagate a new era of openness did not appeal to the beleaguered leadership around Deng Xiaoping.

Yesterday the roles were reversed. Mr Putin was eager to learn from China how to cope with the collapse of the command economy while free market reforms threaten older generations bred on state handouts.

**SINO-RUSSIAN SUMMIT / BID TO SEEK SECURITY ADVANTAGES FLAYED**

HD-18  
19/7

## Joint opposition to NMD

**BEIJING, JULY 18.** China and Russia today jointly opposed U.S. plans to deploy missile shields and urged the international community to be vigilant against Washington's unilateral attempts to seek military and security advantages.

The joint opposition to the proposed National Missile Defence (NMD) and a regional Theatre Missile Defence (TMD) in East Asia were stated in a joint statement signed by the Chinese President, Mr. Jiang Zemin, and visiting Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, here after their nearly three hours of talks.

"The American plan is a source of enormous concern."

China and Russia believe the "nature of the NMD is to seek unilateral military and security advantages" which will pose the most grave adverse consequences not only to the national security of Russia, China and other countries, but also to the security and international strategic stability of the U.S. itself," the statement said.

China and Russia are "firmly opposed to such a system", it said.

The two sides stated that the 1972 Anti-Bal-

listic Missile (ABM) treaty remained the cornerstone of global strategic stability and international security.

"It forms the basis of key international agreements on reduction and limitation of offensive strategic weaponry and prevention of proliferation of massive destructive weaponry."

"It is of vital importance to maintain and strictly observe the ABM treaty," the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman, Mr. Zhu Bangzao, told reporters while commenting on the statement.

Quoting the statement, Mr. Zhu said the U.S. proposal to establish the NMD had made the people of the two countries "deeply worried."

Washington argues that the NMD is required to protect the U.S. mainland from attacks from "countries of concern" while the TMD is needed to guard U.S. troops in Asia as well as America's allies in the region from missile attacks.

However, China and Russia have refused to accept this reasoning, calling upon the international community "to heed continuously

the activities of a certain country to develop a missile defence system, which is detrimental to global strategic balance and stability.

Steps should be taken to do "what is necessary to prevent such a dangerous situation from continuing," the joint statement said.

It said the proposal to amend the ABM treaty would trigger a new arms race and lead to an about-face in the positive trend that appeared in world politics after the end of the Cold War.

"This is clearly not in the fundamental interests of any nation in the world," it said adding the country that proposed an amendment to the ABM, a basic document in the area of disarmament, must "take all responsibility" for undermining international stability and security.

"Analysis of the international situation shows that the demand of a certain nation to amend the ABM on the pretext of missile threat is totally unjustified. The proposal to revise the ABM is actually a ruse to cover its attempt to violate the ABM," it says. — PTI

THE HINDU  
19 JUL 2000



# China-Russia axis vulnerable

**Beijing, July 19:** Like any partnership founded more on a common adversary than on shared values, China's vaunted "new type of cooperative relationship" with Russia is vulnerable to their diverging interests, analysts said on Wednesday.

Russian President Vladimir Putin and China's President Jiang Zemin capped off a summit in Beijing with a joint statement brimming with resentment and suspicion of a "certain country" — Chinese shorthand for the United States.

"China and Russia call on the international community to heed continuously the activities of a certain country to develop a missile defence system, which is detrimental to the global strategic balance and stability," said the joint statement.

In addition to registering their pique at US plans for a anti-missile defence systems for North America and Asia, China and Russia stressed their opposition to international intervention in domestic conflicts on humanitarian grounds.

Both giant countries are modern-day empires rife with restive, independence-minded ethnic groups, and both have come under human rights criticism for their treatment of such groups.

Despite the cosiness between states that were bitter rivals for decades following the 1960 Sino-Soviet split, analysts saw nothing alarming in this new axis.

"A lot of it is just hype and it's worth keeping in perspective their

bottom-line interests," said a Beijing-based Western diplomat.

Yan Xuetong, an international security expert at Tsinghua University in Beijing, said the "new Sino-Russian relationship falls between neutrality and mutual alliance."

China and Russia could be virtual allies on US missile shield plans but differ on Nato's expansion, trade and regional disputes, he said. On the surface, the two leaders made good on the warning by Beijing's top disarmament diplomat last week that US pursuit of a National Missile Defence system could push China and Russia into a closer alliance. "But if you look at it closer, there's not necessarily a community of interests," said the diplomat. Potentially divisive issues ranged from South Asia, where China backs Pakistan and India is a traditional Russian friend, to Japan, where Russia's territorial dispute with Tokyo pales in intensity beside China's enmity. And while the potential for cooperation on NMD remains significant, even there interests diverge between heavily nuclear-armed Russia and China with its modest arsenal. Diplomats noted that Tuesday's joint statement did not rule out Russia's eventually accepting amendments to the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty. And in a move that would be anathema to China, Russia is thought to be open to minor revisions to ABM to allow an arms-cuts-for-missile-shield trade-off. (Reuters)

THE ASIAN AC

20 JUL 2000

## 209 ALMOST A PAIR 17

The first visit of the new Russian president, Mr Vladimir Putin, to China has reassured Beijing that Mr Putin looks eastward as much as his predecessor, Mr Boris Yeltsin. When he took office, Mr Putin seemed to see Russia's Asian neighbour as a future rival. However, the United States's talk of building a national missile defence that could reduce the credibility of Russia's and China's nuclear arsenals has led Mr Putin to rethink his position. US missile defence was the theme of the summit between Mr Putin and his Chinese counterpart, Mr Jiang Zemin. Their joint statement warned of "grave adverse consequences". It dismissed Washington's concerns about missile firing rogue states like North Korea as a "ruse". China and Russia also talked trade. Mr Putin sees opportunity in selling raw materials to China's expanding economy. Among the big ticket items on his agenda are two huge gas pipelines that would provide China some 40 billion cubic metres of gas a year. Beijing has another trade interest: advanced aerial weaponry. Tensions over Taiwan have led China to buy Russian fighters. It is also in the market for an airborne warning and controls system after the US scuttled a plan to buy an Israeli AWACS.

However, Washington has rightly said it is unconcerned about Sino-Russian talk of balancing US global power. The strategic partnership announced by Russia and China in 1996 has not gone beyond words. Bilateral trade has actually declined from \$10 billion in 1994 to less than \$ six billion last year. Cut out oil, gas and weapons, and economic relations barely exist. The two have three common interests. First is a broad but diffuse desire to hinder the US from throwing its weight around. This desire tends to wax and wane depending on events. It declined with the end of the Yugoslav bombings but picked up again with missile defence. Second is a concern for regional stability. This common worry about ethnic separatism and Islamic terror was visible in this month's "Shanghai five" summit which also included three central Asian countries. Finally, the two countries have a cozy arms sales relationship. But these are all short term, relatively shallow bases for cooperation. For example, there has been little joint work against secessionists because there are few links between China's Uighurs and Russia's Chechen. Both countries also have economic and political relationships with the US, which they are unwilling to damage. Mr Putin has already indicated that if the US goes ahead with missile defence, then Moscow would like to be a partner to such a system. This would leave China out in the cold. This shows up the essentially negative nature of the Sino-Russian axis. They oppose similar things, but remain too wary of each other to allow more constructive wedding of ways and means.

THE TELEGRAPH

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24/7

## A STRATEGIC CONGRUENCE

of Sino-Russia

49-12

THE STRATEGIC FLUX in big power relations triggered by the latest move by the United States towards the development and deployment of a national missile defence (NMD) shield, has predictably been exploited by China and Russia to voice concern over Washington's suspected game plan of reaching the skies for an absolutist military supremacy on planet Earth. Prima facie, the joint statement which the Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, and his Chinese counterpart, Mr. Jiang Zemin, signed in Beijing last week is notable for their concerted opposition to the perceived "unilateral military and security advantages" that the U.S. has set its sights on. In prime focus is the enthusiasm of the outgoing U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, for the NMD option as a sequel to the Reaganite Strategic Defence Initiative, or the quest for a protective prototype of the so-called Star Wars genre. However, the virtual reality inherent in the China-Russia joint statement — a depiction of the U.S. itself in its present mood as some sort of a 'state of concern' for the wider international community — will be nothing more than the manifestation of a rhetorical resistance if the two aggrieved countries do not take steps to counter the perceived new American dream. There is a hint in some reports from Beijing that China and Russia may think of joining hands in a practical manner if needed.

A truly cooperative endeavour by China and Russia to checkmate the U.S., in regard to its NMD-related experiments as also the future scenario of a Washington-orchestrated theatre missile defence system in East Asia, will require much more than a congruence of strategic interests aimed at ensuring a multipolar world. While Russia and China have attained a great deal of normality in bilateral ties since the bygone period of Sino-Soviet rift, it is very much debatable at present whether their equation pulsates with the impetus required for a definitive joint move for competing with the U.S. in

space-oriented military gamesmanship. The U.S., on its part, has quickly sought to mollify Russia and China in the wake of their joint statement by reaffirming that they are not the "states of concern" (a new usage for "rogue states") on Mr. Clinton's radar screen. The threat perceptions on Washington's horizon, the technical feasibility as also the cost of a planned NMD shield and the possible impact of such a system on international strategic stability are said to figure in the calculus that will determine a firm decision by Mr. Clinton. Moreover, the U.S., by keeping the door ajar for some form of cooperation with the other major powers, most notably Russia as was evident during the latest Clinton-Putin meeting on the margins of the G-8 conclave in Okinawa, Japan, is still trying to contain the shock waves that its actions have generated.

China and Russia are not merely posturing for a multipolar world. But they must also harness the emerging international consensus, which encompasses India, that the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missiles Treaty should not be trifled with in haste. A diplomatic counter-attack by like-minded countries with a stake in the global strategic balance is an option that should be fully explored before the U.S. decides, one way or the other, on the NMD as a long-term strategic device. Somewhat related to this is the potential contour of a strategic partnership that Mr. Putin will seek with India during his prospective visit to New Delhi later this year. Of no less interest to India is the totality of the improving Sino-Russian ties. An array of agreements that Mr. Putin and Mr. Jiang have now endorsed in sectors such as energy, the East Siberia-Shanghai pipeline proposal being in some focus, can bind the two countries in ways unforeseen till now. It is a moot question whether the dust-wrapped proposal of a strategic triangle involving Russia, India and China will merit a second look in this new and changing context.

THE HINDU

29 2000

## China wary of Russian plan

**BEIJING, JUNE 6.** China reserved judgment on a Russian proposal to erect joint missile defences with NATO and Europe, but insisted that any change to an anti-ballistic missile treaty would trigger a new arms race.

The Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, proposed the joint anti-missile defence system on Monday as an alternative to a unilateral anti-missile shield Washington wants to build to ward off possible attacks by hostile countries.

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Mr. Putin's proposal followed a summit with the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, in Moscow last weekend at which defence analysts say Russia effectively reversed its opposition to adjusting a 1972 anti-ballistic missile (ABM) treaty.

The ABM treaty, originally signed by the United States and the Soviet Union, forbids the deployment of a national missile defence system. — Reuters

7 JUN 2000

## Russia, China all set to discuss strategic ties

Beijing, February 27

PT-11  
IN A bid to boost Sino-Russian strategic ties and co-ordination of policies on major international issues, Chinese Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan is going to Moscow on a three-day visit tomorrow.

"The visit aims at further deepening of the existing strategic and cooperative relations between the two nations", a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman said.

Tang would be visiting Moscow from February 28 to March 1 at the

invitation of Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov. Tang and Ivanov are expected to discuss Sino-Russian relations.

There are also likely to be discussions on recent Sino-US strategic consultations during which the US made presentation on its attempt to amend the Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty and set up a National Missile Defence for itself and a regional Theatre Missile Defence for East Asia. Russia and China are against US plans to establish NMD and TMD. (PTI)

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

28 FEB 2000

## *Vietnam, China sign landmark border treaty*

HANOI: Vietnam and China signed an historic 11th-hour land border treaty here more than two decades after the two communist neighbours clashed in early 1979.

Chinese foreign minister Tang Jiaxuan inked the accord with his Vietnamese counterpart Nguyen Manh Cam in the international centre in a signing ceremony attended by diplomats, journalists and government officials.

It fulfilled a mutual pledge to reach an agreement before 2000, first mooted by then Vietnamese communist party general secretary Do Muoi during a visit to Beijing in 1997, and reiterated by his successor, Le Kha Phieu.

The agreement settles all outstanding border disputes along the two countries' common 1200 km border, eight years after normal relations were re-established in 1991, ending more than 11 years of diplomatic frost following a bloody border clash in February-March 1979.

"This demonstrates that when secretary generals set a deadline, the cadres of both sides can be bent to meet it," said Carl Thayer, a professor and expert in Sino-Vietnamese relations in the Asia Pacific centre for security studies in Honolulu. (AFP)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

- 1 JAN 2000

# Jiang hopes ties will flourish with Putin at the helm

BEIJING: Chinese President



Jiang Zemin

Jiang Zemin thanked Russia's Boris Yeltsin for building friendly ties between the once hostile neighbours and appealed to his successor to maintain the partnership, China's Xinhua news agency reported on Saturday.

In a telegram sent on Friday, Jiang praised Mr Yeltsin for making "a historic contribution" in developing relations between their countries. "In making ceaseless efforts for the development of Chinese-Russian relations, the strategic partnership that we initially built together is strengthening daily," Jiang said.

Jiang added that he hoped to cooperate with Vladimir Putin, whom Mr Yeltsin named as acting president. By quickly reaching out to Mr Putin, Jiang sought to initiate the kind of personal rapport that he developed with Mr Yeltsin through five years of annual summits. Their personal diplomacy allowed China and Russia to use the ties to counteract what they see as US global dominance.

Criticised by the West for Russia's military campaign in Chechnya, Mr Yeltsin travelled to Beijing last month and picked up Jiang's unqualified support. Both countries opposed NATO's war with Yugoslavia over Kosovo. "As a friendly neighbour of Russia, we whole heartedly hope Russia can

maintain stability and development," Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Zhu Bangzao said.

In Washington, President Clinton learnt of Mr Yeltsin's resignation from his security adviser Sandy Berger at 5.00 a.m. Mr Clinton then telephoned Mr Yeltsin to thank him for their work through tough times and pledged to work with Mr Putin. White House spokesman Joe Lockhart said. He said that the conversation lasted 20 minutes. Mr Clinton then told reporters in a brief press conference that he had found Mr Yeltsin to be honest in his dealings.

"He was always very forthright with me," Mr Clinton said. "He always did exactly what he said he would do. He was willing to take chances and to try to improve our relationship with Russia, to try to improve democracy in Russia."

Mr Clinton, who received a warning from Mr Yeltsin recently, not to take a nuclear-armed Russia for granted, praised the Soviet leader for extricating Russia from Communist rule. "He genuinely deplored Communism," Mr Clinton said. "He lived with it. He saw it and he believed that democracy was the best system. It was in every fibre of his being."

On the telephone to Mr Clinton, Mr Yeltsin expressed hope to stay in contact with Mr Clinton, Mr Lockhart said. "I am very glad that I was your friend, and I will continue to be your friend," Mr Lockhart quoted Mr Yeltsin as saying, while Mr Clinton said that Mr Yeltsin's leaving was a "sad day" for him. (AP)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

- 2 JAN 2000

# China-Vietnam accord marks another milestone

By P. S. Suryanarayana

SINGAPORE, JAN. 3. The "historic" land border agreement between China and Vietnam, signed in Hanoi on December 30, capped a year of momentous political events heralding the new millennium in South-east Asia.

Vietnam is still in the process of integrating fully with the Association of South-east Asian Nations (ASEAN), especially with the mainstream countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore.

China, on the other hand, is of paramount geo-strategic importance to all the ASEAN States, not merely because Beijing's territorial disputes in the Spratlys with several South-east Asian countries, including Vietnam still remain unresolved. Viewed against this collective security consciousness, the latest Sino-Vietnamese land border accord brought cheer to the entire South-east Asia even as the year-end recrudescence of inter-religious violence in Indonesia's eastern Spice Islands completely eclipsed the region's frenetic preparations to be Y2K ready.

The border accord — signed by the two Foreign Ministers, Mr. Tang Jiaxuan of China and Mr. Nguyen Manh Cam of Vietnam — relates to a delineation in over 100 disputed sectors. This now sets the stage for intensified negotiations for an accord on their mar-

itime boundary in the Gulf of Tonkin.

The foreign policies of the ASEAN countries led to a flurry of new ideas such as an East Asia Security Forum (proposed by the Philippines President, Mr. Joseph Estrada), an East Asia Monetary Fund (the Malaysian leader, Dr. Mahathir Mohammad's initiative) and a five-power "entity" comprising China and Japan, besides India as also Indonesia and Singapore (a concept visualised by Indonesia's new President, Mr. Abdurrahman Wahid). Singapore's Prime Minister, Mr. Goh Chok Tong, had played a stellar role several years ago in architecting the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) as a trans-continental association and in facilitating India's entry into the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), a high-profile political-security-oriented association.

Tumultuous events in Indonesia and Malaysia during 1999 settled questions regarding the legitimacy of the rulers beyond a shadow of doubt, although Dr. Mahathir's status was never questioned in law despite the efforts by his key opponent and former heir-apparent, Mr. Anwar Ibrahim, to do so. Mr. Anwar's conviction and imprisonment in April 1999 did not, in the end, affect Dr. Mahathir's triumphal return to power in a snap general election that he called in November.

However, the rise of Islamic fundamentalism as a political force in the latest Malaysian election is being resisted in that Muslim-majority country (in striking contrast to the experiences of Islamic States in South and South-west Asia). In Indonesia, an epochal sequence of elections — a direct parliamentary poll in June 1999 and the indirect presidential selection in October, both regarded by the natives as the first truly democratic exercises — brought Mr. Wahid to power.

The interlude of a U.N.-sponsored "popular consultation" or plebiscite in East Timor, the death and destruction that followed it and the territory's separation from Indonesia ranked as the foremost events of self-determination in the world this year. The lingering and related human rights agenda in Indonesia, a theme that applies to its provinces such as Aceh and Irian Jaya as well, is a sign of a new awakening in South-east Asia.

The economic crises in various ASEAN countries were, by and large, brought to manageable proportions by the year-end, except in Indonesia. The shining economic success stories were those of Malaysia and Singapore. They brought into focus the idea of "a virtual State" as enunciated by Richard Rosecrance in a new theory of international relations for "the coming century."



# Russia, China jointly face U.S. 'threat'

**MOSCOW, JAN. 20.** Russia and China have decided to work jointly to face the perceived threat of the United States military's expansionist policies. The U.S. has conducted tests of the "kill vehicle" devised under the "Star Wars" nuclear programme. The proposed missile could have, within its range, many parts of Asia, including China. The move would be in violation of the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) treaty. As per the treaty, both Russia and the U.S. are both to limit their anti-missile defence systems, and not extend them to cover fresh areas.

Russian and Chinese defence officials expressed "alarm" over the American move. The Chinese Defence Minister, Mr. Chi Haotian, is now in Moscow holding talks on various projects. *Ria-Novosti* reported that China was to upgrade its war machine with Russian assistance. It was decided that production of jointly-made fighter planes, nuclear plants, and projects of strategic importance would be stepped up forthwith. China has placed an order for an ultra-modern Russian warship, and has already received its tenth Varshavyanka-class submarine from Russia. Furthermore,

China's share in Russian weapons exports has touched 42 per cent, *Voice of Russia* said.

Reuters reports that the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson, Mr. Zhu Bangzao, said today in Beijing that this week's missile test by the U.S. "does no good to the global and regional strategic balance and stability." All countries should "abandon anti-missile plans," Mr. Zhu added. — UNI

AFP reports from Washington:

## Cause of failure

The failure of two infrared seekers in the final six seconds of the attempted missile interception over the Pacific was the cause of its disappointing near-miss yesterday, a military source said.

The two infrared sensors had been intended to serve as the eyes of the "exoatmospheric kill vehicle" to which they were attached. But instead of guiding the kill vehicle to impact, the sensors blinded it as it sped toward a collision with a dummy missile-borne warhead fired from California, the source added.

The system "got us to the street address," said the official, who asked not to be named.

"What we failed to do is ring the doorbell," The State Department spokesperson, Mr. James Rubin, was more blunt: "the test failed," he said.

The miss marked a clear setback for the proposed Theatre Missile Defense (TMD) programme to guard against small-scale nuclear attack, which now has only one more opportunity to demonstrate its feasibility before President, Mr. Bill Clinton, decides in June whether to order the multi-billion dollar system's deployment by 2005.

Pentagon officials said that other than the crucial seeker failure, the system appeared to have performed without a major hitch throughout a complex test. A prototype of a powerful new X-band radar worked better than anticipated, detecting the target missile and its dummy warhead sooner than had been expected, said the official, who briefed reporters on condition of anonymity. The command and control center, which processes real-time data from early warning satellites and tracking radar, which it then uses to guide the interceptor missile towards the "interception basket," appeared to work as planned, he said.

# Russia moots joint missile defence system with China

By Vladimir Radyuhin

**MOSCOW, JAN. 23.** Russia may go for a joint missile defence system with China and allow it to use a Russian space-based navigation system for military purposes. 110-16 24/1

The two proposals, which would extend defence cooperation between the two nations to outer space, were discussed during a visit to Russia by China's Defence Minister, Mr. Chi Haotian, last week.

The development of a joint regional missile shield is "one of several possible countermeasures we can take in case the United States violates the ABM treaty," a senior officer at Russia's Defence Ministry told the *Moscow Times* daily.

The 1972 U.S.-Soviet Union treaty bans deployment of a national missile defence by either of the two nuclear powers, allowing each side one limited system protecting one site. Washington has been pressing Moscow to have the treaty amended to allow the U.S. military to expand its anti-ballistic missile system so it could shoot down lone missiles fired by "rogue states" such as North Korea.

Russia fears that the U.S. is, in fact, seeking to deprive it of the capability to deliver massive retaliation. Moscow says it will abandon both START I and II nuclear arms reduction treaties if the U.S. violates the ABM accord. The threat has not impressed Washington, which thinks Russia will have to scrap much of its aging nuclear missile arsenal anyway and does not have money to replace them with new missiles. Washington has a far better reason to feel concerned over Russia's initiative to build a joint missile defence system with China and share with it its advanced space-based navigation system, GLONASS.

GLONASS, or Global Navigation Satellite System, like its U.S. equivalent NAVSTAR, enables ships, planes and ground vehicles to pinpoint their location anywhere in the world. The difference between civilian and military applications is in the degree of accuracy. The military uses satellite navigation to guide missiles and rockets to their targets.

Russia's Deputy Prime Minister in charge of the military-defence complex, Mr. Ilya Klebanov, said he had offered the visiting Chinese defence chief the use of GLONASS for civilian purposes. But according to the *Izvestia* daily, the two sides discussed "possible joint use of GLONASS in the interests of the defence agencies of the two countries."

Access to Russia's ABM technologies and global satellite navigation could dramatically enhance China's defence capability. This would be a far more worrying development for

the U.S. than Russia's sales to China of the S-300 anti-aircraft system or the SU-27 and SU-30 fighter jets.

However, analysts said Moscow was probably using its new offers to China as a bargaining chip in its talks with the West over Chechnya, economic aid and debt restructuring. Russia made new defence offers to China a week after vowing to resume "military-technical cooperation" with Iran suspended under U.S. pressure four years ago.

"(The acting President, Mr. Vladimir) Putin is a pragmatic politician and he may be ready for a trade-off with the West," said Mr. Ruslan Pukhov, head of the Moscow-based Centre for Analysis of Strategies and Technologies.

Moscow is anxious to keep the West from introducing economic sanctions against Russia over its military campaign in Chechnya, to persuade the IMF and World Bank to unfreeze their suspended loans and to get Western creditors to write off or restructure Russia's \$160-billion debt.

Mr. Pukhov says the West appears to be responding to signals from the Kremlin, making conciliatory statements and sending a string of envoys to Moscow. The U.S. Secretary of State, Mrs. Madeleine Albright, set the tone last week by describing Mr. Putin as a "model" Russian President "determined to move reform forward." Mrs. Albright will meet Mr. Putin later this week, hot on the heels of the Italian and German Foreign Ministers who were in Moscow last week.

The NATO Secretary-General, Mr. George Robertson, is also expected in Moscow next month. After visiting Chechnya last week, a fact-finding delegation from the Council of Europe backed away from demanding an immediate suspension of Russia from the Council.

Moscow insists no formal agreement was reached with the Chinese Defence Minister, Mr. Chi Haotian, during his visit to Moscow last week on a joint ABM system and joint use of GLONASS. The Russian proposals are likely to be further discussed in Beijing, where the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. Klebanov, is scheduled to go in February. Moscow gives the West a choice: either ignore Chechnya and revert to normal economic and political interaction or face the threat of Russia supplying China, Iran and other Third World countries with more arms and high-end defence technologies.

"Unlike India, China is a recognised nuclear power and there're many nuclear and missile technologies that Russia could hand over to Beijing," Mr. Pukhov of the Centre for Analysis of Strategies and Technologies, said.

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