

INDIA, CHINA TO SHARE SPACE EXPERTISE

Breaking down the final frontier

Press Trust of India

BEIJING, Dec. 4. — India and China have decided for the first time to share their expertise in the peaceful use of the outer space by exploring ways to cooperate in remote sensing applications, a senior Indian space official said here today.

The first meeting of the India-China Joint Working Group on Space has just concluded here with a high-level Indian delegation, led by the Director of National Remote Sensing Agency Mr RR Navalgund, describing it as "excellent".

"The first round of the JWG was held under two bilateral agreements for the peaceful use of the outer space signed in 1991 and 2001," Mr Navalgund said.

During former Chinese Premier Mr Zhu Rongji's visit to India in January 2001, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and the China National Space Administration (CNSA) on cooperation in the peaceful use of outer space.

"Some of the broad

areas in which we (would) like to have cooperation relates to the applications of remote sensing in the areas of crop production forecasting, land and water resources management and natural resources," Mr Navalgund said.

He said India has emerged as a world leader in using remote sensing data

Steps together

- Applications of remote sensing in the crop production forecasting, land and water resources management

- * Use of space data in disaster-related applications

- * Cooperation in the areas of tele-medicine and tele-education

and this fact has been well appreciated world-wide.

"The second major area where India and China are considering to cooperate is how to use space data in disaster-related applications," he said. "We understand that China has been very active in using space and airborne data in disaster management, par-

ticularly in flood forecasting and earthquake prediction. We have been also looking at these areas for disaster-related applications," he said.

"This is an area where we want to see how we can work together," Mr Navalgund said, indicating India's keen interest.

The third area for bilateral cooperation has been identified as tele-medicine and tele-education. In this sector, India has already embarked on some ambitious programmes using satellite-based communication network, the senior Indian space official said.

In addition, the two sides are also looking at training and education.

"Currently there is lot of emphasis on how to use the remote sensing data in much wider perspective in China whereas remote sensed data and its applications have been widely used in many areas of publication in India," Navalgund said.

The Chinese delegation expressed interest to know how they can promote the use of remotely sensed data in their country, whether the expertise of India could be utilised.

THE STATESMAN

2003
5 DEC 2003

Sino-Indian software association launched

NEW DELHI, Nov. 28. — Aimed at bringing synergy between Indian software industry and the vibrant Chinese hardware sector, a China-India Software Association (CISA) was launched here today.

The association seeks to establish an institutional mechanism, to proliferate joint venture operations and trade partnerships particularly among the small and medium enterprises of India and China, CISA's chairperson, Mr Jonathan Choi, said at a press conference here.

"India can provide the embedded software to the electronic hardware manufactured by the Chinese. The Chinese can provide the hardware platform for software development of India. The Chinese need CMM and IT-enabling skills, which we can provide," the CISA co-chairman, Mr P K Sandell, said.

India's export of software and IT-enabled services is estimated to be crossing \$12.5 billion. The Chinese government aims to achieve a sale volume of software industry at \$30 billion by the end of 2005. Domestically developed software will cater to 60 per cent of this demand, he said, adding the rest of the requirement has to be outsourced.

India and China can also cooperate in sectors like petro-chemicals, biotech and business process outsourcing, Mr Choi, chairperson of the Sun Wah group, said. — PTI

India-China trade exceeds \$5 billion

Press Trust of India

BEIJING, Nov. 26. — India-China bilateral trade has crossed the \$5-billion mark for the first time in history with Indian exports growing by 85.3 per cent during the first nine months of the year, latest Chinese Customs statistics show.

Bilateral trade during January-September this year touched \$5.33 billion, up 54.8 per cent compared to the same period last year when total trade was \$3.44 billion.

India's exports to China during the first three quarters of this year touched \$2.95 billion, up

85.3 per cent compared to \$1.59 billion during the corresponding period in 2002.

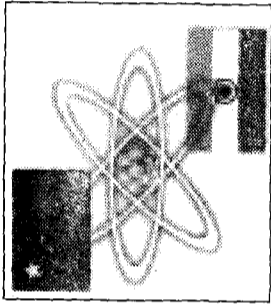
In September alone, India exported goods worth \$334 million to China, up 65.3 per cent over the same period in 2002.

China's exports to India also witnessed a growth of 28.4 per cent during the period when the communist giant shipped goods worth \$2.37 billion compared to \$1.84 billion during the first nine months of 2002.

India, thus had a favourable trade balance of \$584 million in the first three quarters compared to \$452 million in the negative during the same peri-

od last year.

However, the composition of the Indian export basket to China has not seen any substantial



change and they comprise of iron and steel, ores, plastics, organic chemicals, cotton, mineral fuels, hides and skins and machinery.

The iron and steel sector is continuing its stellar

performance in China due to the massive construction activities in the world's fastest developing nation.

During January-September period, India exported iron and steel worth \$851.9 million compared to \$140.5 million in 2002, registering a growth rate of 506 per cent.

The ores, slag and ash sector had a 72 per cent growth in the first six months of the year when \$816.6 million was earned by Indian companies compared to \$474.6 million last year during the first three quarters.

Plastics is another high-performance area where China imported \$234.4

million worth of goods from India compared to \$177.9 million last year, registering a growth of 32 per cent. Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) is emerging as one of the top players in the polymer business in China.

Indian exports of machinery to China also witnessed an impressive growth of 126 per cent during January-September period to touch \$43.1 million compared to \$19.1 million in 2002.

However, cotton exports to China continues to dwindle and during the first nine months of the year, this sector has witnessed a negative growth of 43 per cent.

Indo-U.S. ties not directed against China: Sinha

By Amit Baruah

NEW DELHI, NOV. 22. India categorically rejects the notion that New Delhi's relations with Washington should be used as a "counterforce" against China, the External Affairs Minister, Yashwant Sinha, said today. Such notions were based on outmoded concepts like balance of power, he stressed.

Delivering the Admiral R.D. Katari Memorial Lecture, Mr. Sinha said: "We also debunk the theory that India's 'Look East' policy of greater engagement with ASEAN [Association of South-East Asian Nations] is somehow aimed at containing China."

Mr. Sinha claimed that the time had, perhaps, come to deal with some of the outstanding issues between India and China in a "determined manner", without leaving them to the next generation.

"We believe the relationship has reached a level of maturity where we can discuss those [outstanding] issues with a greater sense of urgency. This updated paradigm of our relationship is both desirable and sustainable."

"The initiative on the appointment of Special Representatives [to address the boundary issue] flows from such an assessment. As Prime Minister [Atal Bihari Vajpayee] stated recently, a final resolution of the boundary question is a strategic objective and both countries should be ready to take some pragmatic decisions to achieve

it." While India and China agree that their differences should not be allowed to affect the overall development of bilateral relations, there is little doubt that a boundary settlement will give a major boost to the relationship. It will also send a powerful signal to the rest of the world that India and China have broken out of the shackles of the past," he said.

Underlining the fact that India had taken a principled position on issues of concern to China such as Tibet and Taiwan, Mr. Sinha was pleased that Beijing had started a process by which Sikkim would cease to be an issue in bilateral relations.

"Some aspects of China's relations with Pakistan, including their nexus in nuclear and missile proliferation, however, continue to cause serious concern in India as they have a direct and negative bearing on our national security environment. We regard China as a friend and we expect friends to show greater sensitivity to our security concerns." Calling for an Asian free trade area, which would include China, ASEAN, Japan and South Korea, Mr. Sinha felt this FTA was within the realm of possibility. "I am also inclined to believe that in the years to come, India and China will be key partners in regional economic arrangements transcending Asia."

India and China need to upgrade their dialogue to address each other's concerns not as adversaries, but as friends, con-

vinced that there is no fundamental contradiction in the basic interests of the two countries, he said.

"The risk of conflict or even divisive rivalry, open or covert, between two of the largest countries in the world, with huge and steadily growing economies, with nuclear weapon capabilities, with geographical contiguity and unresolved territorial issues, is a spectre that should never be allowed to haunt us or affect our search for peace and stability in this world."

The India-China "pragmatic model" of relations, where differences had not been allowed to define ties, could be applied to other situations, including Pakistan, Mr. Sinha said.

"There are probably some in our neighbourhood who seek to play their 'China connection' or 'China card' to 'counter' or even 'contain' India."

The bankruptcy of this approach is, however, becoming increasingly evident. China cannot objectively be a competitor for India in South Asia."

"That India and China have succeeded in maintaining peace and tranquillity on their borders, and are steadily increasing the lines of communication between them, brings a large measure of stability to the region. We do not and should not judge our relationship with China in the context of our bilateral relations with any other country, whether in the region or outside..."

Chinese Tango

Beijing signals a positive policy shift towards New Delhi

The three-day joint Indo-Chinese naval exercise just outside Shanghai had very little military significance, but if interpreted in symbolic terms it could mean a lot. Only a few weeks ago China conducted a similar naval exercise with their all-weather ally, Pakistan. So, was the Indo-Chinese exercise a balancing act, a part of Beijing's increasing efforts to enter into a new phase of relationship with India? This might well be the case. India-China trade is rapidly expanding, with the balance in India's favour. The political level talks on finding a solution to the border issue have had a cordial start. The Indo-Russian-Chinese trilateral talks appear to have had such an auspicious beginning as to deserve specific mention by the prime minister in his address to the commanders of the three services. On the other hand, according to media reports, China did not sign the much anticipated second Chashmer nuclear power plant agreement with Pakistan during General Musharraf's recent visit to Beijing. Are all these just a chance concatenation of events, or do they signal a major change in China's policy orientation? Such shifts are nothing new to Beijing. In 1950, the Chinese communists were exhorting their Indian comrades to struggle against the running dog of imperialism, Jawaharlal Nehru. Four years later, the same Chinese were joining in the chorus of 'Hindi-Chini bhai-bhai'. Again, in a short interval of four years, erstwhile comrades in Beijing and Moscow became implacable adversaries.

Perhaps the most dramatic change in relationships has been with the US. In 1972, Mao played host to Richard Nixon, the president of the country against which Mao had vowed a permanent struggle. China developed its strategic relations with the US despite Washington's two-China policy. Nor has American arms support to Taipei been allowed to come in the way of China-US trade crossing a hundred billion dollars. What can New Delhi glean from all this? It should be remembered that the Indo-Chinese amity in the 1950s became possible because Nehru ignored Peking's earlier barbs aimed at him and did not join the US-led anti-Chinese crusade. At that time, a friendly signal emanated from China in the form of the rice-for-jute agreement when India was suffering acute famine conditions in Rayalaseema. The recent positive signals from China should be seen in this light. The Indian elephant can indeed tango with the Chinese dragon. But only if it learns to step as lightly and adroitly as its would-be dancing partner.

Chinese, Indian navies take to the water

China Daily/ANN

BEIJING, Nov. 14. — India and China held their first ever joint naval exercises in the East China Sea today, marking an improvement in relations between the world's two most populous countries.

The Indian fleet comprises three warships — *INS Ranjit* (Guided Missile Destroyer), *INS Kulish* (Guided Missile Corvette) and *INS Jyoti* (Replenishment Tanker) — the Indian ambassador to China, Mr Nalin Surie, told *China Daily*.

“The exercise, aimed at ensuring the safety of maritime trade and improving coordination in search and rescue at sea, will be a stepping stone in enhancing inter-operability between the two navies,” said the ambassador.

“The joint search and rescue exercise by the two Navies highlights the commitment of the two countries for taking steps that will increase mutual trust and understanding and will enhance mutually beneficial and broad-based cooperation,” said Mr Surie.

The Indian task force is commanded by Rear Admiral RP Suthan, Flag-Officer-Commanding, Eastern Fleet.

In an interview to the Shanghai newspaper, *Oriental Morning Post*, Admiral Suthan said it is a common mission for navies around the world to maintain maritime safety and conduct rescue on the sea.



ON THE WATERFRONT: Tug vessels pull *INS Jyoti*, the Navy's largest replenishment tanker, during its departure from Shanghai port on Friday. — PTI

“The unprecedented bilateral co-operation in the non-traditional security field will play a great role in helping the two countries build confidence and reduce friction,” said Mr Sun Shihai, deputy director of the Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies under the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

“Such cooperation, if it continues, will also play a major role in maintaining peace and stability in the whole of Asia,” he said.

Chinese military forces have stepped up their cooperation in non-traditional security fields both regionally and internationally in recent years. They are pursuing a new security concept of “mutual trust, mutual benefit, equ-

ality and co-ordination,” a leading officer with the Foreign Affairs Office under the Chinese Ministry of National Defence told the press earlier.

Last month, China conducted similar naval exercises with Pakistan at the same venue. The drill, simulating an emergency rescue, was the first time either country had engaged in joint naval operations with another nation.

Pakistani President General Pervez Musharraf visited Beijing earlier this month, shortly after the drill. The two countries signed a joint declaration on the direction of future developments in China-Pakistan co-operation.

Last week, responding to a question on the impact of

China-India joint naval exercises on China-Pakistan relations, foreign ministry spokeswoman Ms Zhang Qiyue said China considers good relations with both India and Pakistan.

“China stands ready to continue its relationship with all its neighbours, including India and Pakistan, in the spirit of being kind to neighbours and treating neighbours as partners,” Ms Zhang said.

“China, by developing good relations with both India and Pakistan simultaneously, is asserting itself as a responsible, constructive and positive influence in South Asia,” Mr Sun said.

Mr Surie said the drill would also provide a fillip to the growing momentum in bilateral relations.

India, China hold naval exercise

By P. S. Suryanarayana

SINGAPORE, NOV. 14. Heralding the possibility of a new chapter of confidence-building cooperation, India and China today held a historic naval exercise off Shanghai along the East China Sea. The conventional three-part search-and-rescue naval exercise was successfully completed as planned, official sources said in telephonic conversation from Shanghai.

The exercise was agreed upon during the Prime Minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee's talks with top Chinese leaders in Beijing last June, and today's event was seen by both sides as a new beginning. Three Indian naval ships — INS Ranjit, INS Kulish and INS Jyoti — and two Chinese vessels — Jia Xing and Feng Chang — took part, besides helicopters on each side.

India, China to hold first-ever naval exercise

Beijing: Indian and Chinese navies would hold their first-ever joint naval exercise in mid-November, opening a new chapter in the growing bilateral ties, including military-to-military exchanges.

Indian naval ships would make a port of call at Shanghai from November 10-14, an official source said here.

The ships, along with their Chinese counterparts are scheduled to undertake "search and rescue" exercises off the coast of Shanghai in east China.

The exercise by the Chinese People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) would be the second with

The exercise was first discussed during the maiden visit to China by defence minister George Fernandes in April

a foreign navy in China's naval history.

The PLAN had conducted a similar naval exercise with Pakistani navy off the coast of Shanghai in the third week of October which turned out to be China's first-ever naval exercise with any foreign country.

According to sources, the maritime exercise will help the two sides further strengthen the capability of defending the sea frontiers and safeguarding the maritime interests.

It would also provide an opportunity to share experience and expertise in the maritime field as well as enhance mutual understanding and trust.

The exercise was first discussed during the maiden visit to China by defence minister George Fernandes in April.

This was followed up during Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's ground-breaking visit in June, during which the political green light was accorded to the holding of maritime exercise between the navies of the two countries. PTI

Trade with China all set to touch \$10 bn by '04

Our Delhi Bureau
20 OCTOBER

BILATERAL trade between India and China will touch \$10 billion by 2004, meeting the target set by both governments, commerce & industry minister Arun Jaitley said on Monday.

Trade between the two countries will touch \$7 billion at the end of 2003, he said after addressing a joint meeting of the Indo-Romanian Commission. During 2002, bilateral trade between India and China was \$5 billion. Mr Jaitley's comments are significant since they come close on the heels of a major Made in India show in Shanghai.

The two countries have also committed themselves to trade liberalisation and launched direct flight connections to encourage tourism as well as business visits across the Great Wall. "When the Indian and Chinese premiers set the target of bilateral trade worth \$10 billion, it seemed ambitious. But now it's within reach. By the end of this calendar year, trade will reach \$7 billion," Mr Jaitley said.

The minister, who returned from China recently after inaugurating the Made In India show there, said 71 investment proposals were being considered by Beijing. Commenting on the recent free

trade agreements with Asean and Thailand, Mr Jaitley said the move was aimed at giving a fillip to the trade. On the apprehensions of domestic auto component manufacturers, the commerce minister said: "All issues are being taken care of."

"By 2011, when the agreement comes into effect, the auto ancillary industry would have grown much bigger," Mr Jaitley said. Many MNC carmakers have set up shop in India and they largely source components from domestic component makers. The Indian auto-ancillary industry has progressed so well that there is no need to fear, he added.

While speaking at the Indo-Romanian joint commission meeting, Mr Jaitley said there was tremendous scope for boosting bilateral trade with Romania. Apart from traditional exports like drugs & pharmaceuticals, iron & steel, heavy engineering, chemicals and textiles, there lies great prospects in diversifying the trade basket to include non-traditional and niche products.

Dan Ioan Popescu, Romania's minister of economy & commerce, emphasised on his country's keenness on strengthening co-operation between India and Romania. He invited Indian companies to invest in Romania as a manufacturing base for exports to eastern Europe.

China still violating LAC in Ladakh

Sept 14/19

KAVITA SURJ
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

LEH, Sept. 13. — Three years ago Chinese troops had rammed into two Indian patrol boats in the Pangong lake on the Line of Actual Control. The Chinese Army is still violating the LAC in this strategic eastern part of Ladakh, the Indian Army has confirmed.

The beautiful Pangong Lake in eastern Ladakh is

at the centre of a seemingly endless dispute between India and China. Beijing claims a large part of the lake lies in its territory, while New Delhi's contention is that the Line of Actual Control is further to the east. The defence ministry, however, refuses to make an official statement on the issue.

"The Chinese do come across the LAC in the Pangong lake," said Lt-Gen. Ar-

vind Sharma, General Officer-in-Commanding, 14 Corps. The Corps is in charge of manning the LAC here.

The Army views this as a violation of the LAC and has been lodging protests "if and when required", the Lt-Gen. said. It has also been regularly interacting with the Chinese authorities.

"We look at it as a violation of the Line of Actual Control," he said. India and Chi-

na have different perceptions of the Line of Actual Control which passes through the lake, he said. "There are certain areas of difference the way Chinese view the LAC and the way we look at it. It is in these areas that their cross-border patrols do come across, so do our patrols."

On building a new road on the southern bank of the Pangong Lake near Chushul

by the Chinese, Lt-Gen. Sharma avoided a direct answer. He said: "There is no turbulence as such in these areas... We are not going to let down our guard. Let me say we are quite comfortable."

On China's reported concern over the Indo-US exercises in Ladakh, he said there was no cause for concern as the exercises were being conducted in the vicinity of Leh town.

India, China ease visa restrictions

57-11
25/9
Press Trust of India

BELJING, Sept. 28. — With bilateral relations improving and trade ties booming, India and China have eased visa restrictions, implementing one of the 10 bilateral agreements reached during the Indian Prime Minister, Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee's visit here in June.

"Indian and Chinese businessmen and tourists are the biggest gainers in the just-eased visa regime," an official source said here. For the first time, both countries have clear-cut rules in granting business, tourist, student, employment, entry and other types of visas to the nationals of both countries and to other nationals.

The major highlight of the simplified visa regime is that Indian and Chinese businessmen can now apply for a six-month multiple entry business visa. In the past, businessmen used to get only one

month single-entry visa. "This will go a long way in meeting the requirements of the business communities of the two countries at a time when our bilateral trade is booming," the deputy chief of mission of the Indian Embassy, Mr Debnath Shaw said.

Now, the Indian embassy here grants two categories of business visas to Chinese nationals: six months multiple entry business visa and two months single entry business visa.

Under the six months multiple entry business category, visa can be granted on a letter of invitation from a "recognised Indian organisation" like from recognised chambers of commerce or industry associations or other trade bodies, public sector undertakings and government-approved joint ventures. However, applicants issued multiple entry business visa for six months shall not stay for more than 90 days on each visit.

THE STATESMAN

29 SEP 2003

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Sikkim off China website

Indo china

Indo-Asian News Service

BALI, Oct. 8. — Sikkim no longer figures as an independent country on China's official website. The Chinese move, seen as a key step towards the resolution of the lingering bilateral border dispute, was announced today by the Indian foreign secretary, Mr Kanwal Sibal, soon after the Prime Ministers of the two countries had a "cordial and friendly" meeting here. The half-an-hour meeting of Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee and Mr Wen Jiabao vowed to take steps to resolve the border row.

Mr Sibal also said national security adviser Mr Brajesh Mishra and senior Chinese vice-foreign minister Mr Dai Bingguo would meet in Delhi on 23 October to give a "political push" to the efforts to resolve the border row that sparked a war in 1962.

Clearly Indian diplomats are happy over the Chi-

Base beef-up

HASIMARA, Oct. 8. — The IAF will upgrade its base here because of China's designs in gaining a presence in the Indian Ocean and its increasing friendliness with Pakistan, Bangladesh and Myanmar. Precision radars will be installed for enhanced surveillance and physical infrastructure such as security wall are being steadily built up. — SNS

Details on page 5

nese decision to remove Sikkim — a former protectorate that merged with India in 1975 overruling Beijing's protests — from the list of Asian countries. China continued to list Sikkim (after Singapore) among the Asian countries even after Mr Vajpayee's path-breaking visit to Beijing in June. "Sikkim is no longer there," Mr Sibal

said, waving a printout of the website. "The Chinese government amended the website yesterday."

Chinese officials, he said, had informed their Indian counterparts that this would be done before Mr Vajpayee met Mr Wen on the sidelines of the Asean summit. China had tacitly recognised Sikkim as part of India during Mr Vajpayee's Beijing visit, by agreeing to the use of the nomenclature "Sikkim state" in a memorandum signed by the two countries. But the website remained unchanged.

(Reacting to the Chinese decision, Sikkim chief minister Mr Pawan Chamling said there had never been any doubt that the state was part of India, SNS adds from Gangtok.)

During today's meeting, Mr Sibal said, the Chinese PM referred "effusively" to friendly ties with India and said his country was looking forward to the resolution of the boundary dispute.

JYOTI MALHOTRA

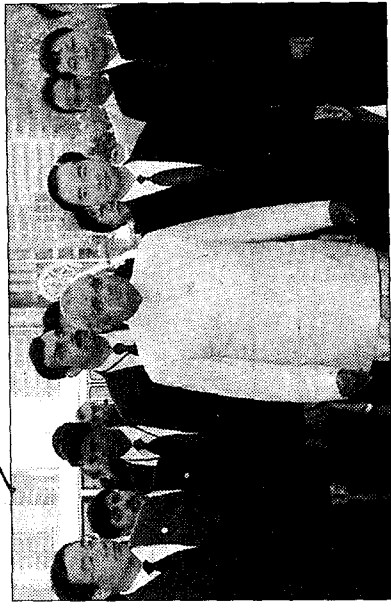
If the Dalai Lama is successful in making a compromise with China, and our Prime Minister can be a mediator in this relation, nothing will make the people of this country happier. But if the leaders of China can't be brought to the right path, then India will have no option left, except to allow the Dalai Lama to fight for the freedom of his country. — A.B. Vajpayee, MP, May 8, 1959, in the Lok Sabha

We have been in regular touch with the Tibetans, even before the visit to China. They are happy with what has happened, they don't feel cause for any complaint. — A.B. Vajpayee, prime minister, June 27, 2003, at a press conference in Shanghai

FORITY-FOUR years is a long time for consistency in politics, especially when the raw passion of youth comes face to face with the age of reason. But when all the sound and fury is done — for example over the recent "incident" between Intelligence Bureau officials and Chinese soldiers in the no-man's land of Arunachal Pradesh, said to be brought upon themselves by the IB — one of the most enduring stories in India's foreign policy, on the question of Tibet, would have taken a small step forward. Contrary to popular perception, that New Delhi "sold out" the Tibetans to China — in

That tightrope called Tibet

The Dalai Lama is happy with Vajpayee's word-play and so is Beijing. The story of confusion as triumph



return for Beijing's acknowledgement of Sikkim as being a part of India, as well as the promise of a boundary solution — Tibetan leaders in exile in Dharamsala are actually quite satisfied with the Prime Minister's June trip to China. The sentence in the Sino-Indian joint declaration that seems to have seriously offended parts of the strategic and political community in the Capital — "The Indian side recognises that the Tibet Autonomous Region is part of the People's Republic of China" — has, in fact, been welcomed by none other than Samdhong Rimpochhe, Prime Minister of the Tibetan government-in-exile. Passing through New Delhi recently, Rimpochhe told *The In-*

diian Express that "this was the best sentence the Indian Government could phrase". He added, gently, that the Tibetan leadership had a prior idea of New Delhi's negotiating strategy. "What happened in Beijing," Rimpochhe said, "was not a surprise to us." Rimpochhe's remarks confirm the perception that the Vajpayee Government, while it would like to cut a deal with China on the boundary issue, is keenly aware that the Dalai Lama's non-violent struggle to keep the Tibetan story alive touches a popular nerve at home and abroad. With the Tibetan leader himself "abandoning" the drive for Tibetan independence and once again sending his emissaries to talk to Pei-ning — talks

were held in September 2002 and May-June this year — New Delhi is hopeful that step-by-step progress can be made by all three sides in this triangular relationship. It is learnt a series of consultations between the Indian side and the Dalai Lama took place before Vajpayee's visit to China. Samdhong Rimpochhe met senior officials in the Capital, while Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal met the Dalai Lama himself. A number of encounters took place between Nalin Surie, MEA's pointperson on the China desk (now ambassador-designate to China), and the Dharamsala leadership. Surie even travelled to Dharamsala recently to bid farewell to the Dalai Lama before taking up his post.

The pre-visit negotiations, meanwhile, had been packed with drama. Since this was the first China trip by an Indian prime minister in ten years, New Delhi seemed to be under some pressure to pull off a "success". So even as a joint declaration was being wrapped up, differences on two major issues remained. First, Sikkim, which every country other than China recognises as part of India, as well as reopening trade at

Nathu La. Second, Beijing wanted the Indian side to concede that "Tibet is an inalienable part of China".

AS Air India One bearing the Prime Minister and his party lifted off for China on June 22, the joint declaration was still full of holes (or "brackets" in diplomatic jargon).

For the next 24 hours, both delegations laboured over the appropriate phraseology. It was found in the phrase, "The Tibet Autonomous Region is part of the territory of the People's Republic of China."

The Chinese were thrilled New Delhi had for the first time recognised TAR (a province created by Beijing in 1965 by breaking up the historical boundaries of Tibet) as part of the PRC. Xinhua, the state-owned Chinese news agency, was so exuberant it broke with official restraint and made the announcement a day earlier.

Meanwhile, there was quiet satisfaction on the Indian side, as well as in Dharamsala. Read the text carefully, journalists were repeatedly told, and there it was. What India had "recognised" was TAR, the truncated Tibetan province that did not include Tibetan areas of Kham

enon that exists only from 1965, while PRC is a phenomenon that exists only since 1949," he said. "Both exclude a commitment to history. Today's reality is that TAR is a part of PRC."

RIMPOCHE also pointed out that though the Dalai Lama had dropped the idea of Tibetan independence and had once again sent emissaries to negotiate with Beijing, that only pertained to Tibet's "future" status. The past, he stressed, could not be tampered with. The historical fact remained that, certainly before 1914 and even till 1949, Tibet had been independent of Beijing.

Even so, since 1954 and the first agreement on "Trade and Intercourse between Tibet Region of China and India", the "Tibet region" had always been accepted as part of "China". All

A diplomatic history of word games

- 1954:** "Being desirous of promoting trade and cultural intercourse between Tibet region of China and India..."
- 1958:** MEA note to the Chinese Embassy: "The Government of India recognises that the Tibetan region is part of the People's Republic of China."
- 1968:** India-China joint press communiqué, during Rajiv Gandhi's visit: "Indian side reiterated the long-standing and consistent policy of GOI that Tibet is an autonomous region of China."
- 1991:** India-China joint communiqué during Li Peng's visit to New Delhi: "The Indian side reiterated its long-standing and consistent position that Tibet is an autonomous region of China."
- 2003:** Joint declaration signed during Vajpayee's trip to China: "The Indian side recognises that the Tibet Autonomous Region is part of the territory of the People's Republic of China."

the successive notes and joint communiqués (see box) had noted that fact. Until now, when New Delhi allowed that a truncated TAR — only part of the original Tibet — was part of PRC, not China as it existed before 1949.

Dharamsala was more than relieved, even if Tibetan Youth Congress at first thought the Indians had quietly sold out.

In fact, a section of the Tibetan community now believes that thought contact with the BJP has not been as intense as with the Congress — the Dalai Lama has met Vajpayee only once, just after the nuclear tests in May 1998 — the BJP government has been more than "faithful" to the Tibetan cause, even reversing "concessions" given by Jawaharlal Nehru. (The Dalai Lama's autobiography, *Freedom in Exile*, gives several instances of the superior manner in which Nehru treated the newly-escaped boy lama in 1959, although they became good friends later.)

Meanwhile, the outpouring of Indian public opinion on the Tibetan question seems to have quite surprised Dharamsala. "By implying that the Indian Government had made a great concession to China on Tibet, Xinhua has actually done the Tibetan cause a great service," Rimpochhe said. "We had begun to believe that the Indian people had sort of forgotten about us, even though we lived in your country. But now we know."

India ticks off China over incursion

Saurabh Shukla
New Delhi, August 3

SINO-INDIAN RELATIONS seem to be headed towards a state of chill with New Delhi lodging a "strong demarche" with Beijing last week. India has described the Chinese reply on the incursion as "unsatisfactory" and rejected it.

Till now, New Delhi was hopeful that the incident was "localised" and that Beijing will take into account

confidence-building measures made during Prime Minister Vajpayee's recent trip to China in its official reply to India's protests. Highly placed sources say that in a written demarche, New Delhi rejected the explanation given by Beijing. It stated that the Government of India does not share the same perception and Chinese side should issue necessary instructions so that such incidents can be avoided. New Delhi also main-

tained that existing modalities under the 1996 agreement on CBM's in military field were not adhered to. In its reply the Chinese Foreign Ministry last week said that the Indian team had intruded on its territory. They also clarified that the Chinese side did not "detain the Indian team or interrogate them." Interestingly, this has been accepted by New Delhi as the report filed by Intelligence agencies and the Indian

Mission too supported this. It said that the Indian security team had entered the Chinese side and they were "escorted" back when a Chinese patrol party came across them. It also said that the area came under the territory of China.

The decision to issue a demarche was taken for two reasons. First, New Delhi wanted to register its protest at complete denial by the Chinese that they were at fault and for violation of the

1996 agreement on the CBM's in the military field.

According to the agreement, in case the two sides came across face to face, they will avoid any escalation and enter into immediate diplomatic consultations to review the situation and prevent any escalation or tension. Officials say in this case diplomatic consultations cannot be proposed unilaterally by India since the Chinese side maintained that there was no violation and no

need for any further consultation on the issue. Second, New Delhi was also upset at the Chinese insistence that Arunachal Pradesh was not a part of India.

Officials said India didn't wish to create any tension but wanted to send a stern message. It will also no rush into any immediate negotiations on the border issue and assess the situation before National Security Advisor Brajesh Mishra meets Dan Bingguo.

Handwritten initials: K.C. d, A/S

Differences exist with China on boundary demarcation: PM

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, JULY 31. While commending his Government's "look ahead" policy in foreign affairs, the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, today said that his recent visits to China, Russia, Germany and France showed India's growing importance in the international arena. Replying to a 90-minute discussion in the Rajya Sabha on his last week's statement on his four-nation tour, he said India's importance in global affairs was being realised by everyone. "We have to look to the future, take inspiration from history but do not have to get lost in its labyrinthine structure," he cautioned.

Referring to his China visit and specifically to recent reports of a Chinese incursion in Arunachal Pradesh, Mr. Vajpayee admitted that there were differences between the two countries on boundary demarcation. "The behaviour of Chinese authorities with the Indian patrol in Arunachal Pradesh was not dignified and in keeping with the agreements between us. Everyone is of the view that India and China should work together."

On Tibet, Mr. Vajpayee said India's known position was reiterated and took a dig at some members who sought to rake up a debate on it. "Tibet is a large region

and there is an autonomous part within it but I do not want a debate on it."

The Prime Minister was at his oratorical best while replying to references by the senior Congress member, K. Natwar Singh, on what he had said on China as an Opposition leader and as Foreign Minister. "Mr. Natwar Singh had in fact sent me a congratulatory letter. I had visited China even before the then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and had stressed on keeping peace and tranquility between the two countries. Rajiv Gandhi repeated it," he said.

"The times have changed. Earlier, as an Opposition leader, I used to give expression to public sentiments and colour them as well but now I keep them in mind and see them in nationalist colours," Mr. Vajpayee said. Alluding to the meeting of the Foreign Ministers of China, Russia and India, Mr. Vajpayee said it was taken note of by the international community. "There was no conspiracy. There have been suggestions of a possible China-India-Russia axis."

Pointing out that the international scene was undergoing a change, he said he favoured a cautious approach in forging bonds of friendship with Pakistan. "We went to Lahore in a hurry and had to face Kargil," he quipped but added that friendship with Pakistan was necessary. But

friendly ties with Pakistan would not mean that India should make compromises on the menace of terrorism. "We will have to crush terrorism and stamp it out." Winding up his reply, Mr. Vajpayee said India and China were cooperating on several fronts, including support to the World Trade Organisation. "There is enormous potential for expanding trade relations with China."

Earlier, intervening in the discussion, the External Affairs Minister, Yashwant Sinha, described Mr. Vajpayee as a man of peace as the one who was genuinely interested in peace. "Let us not indulge in credit-taking and blame game. The fact is that the Prime Minister's China visit came after a decade and it produced results that can be described as landmark and path-breaking."

On the Arunachal Pradesh incident, he said such sporadic incidents did take place and it could not have been "pre-meditated". While stating that Sikkim and Tibet could not be linked, he said that the issue of Tibet was to be settled between the Dalai Lama and the Chinese Government.

While opening the discussion, Natwar Singh (Cong.) had sought clarifications as to why Sikkim was not put in the joint declaration and raised the issue of Arunachal Pradesh.

India, China representatives to settle LAC issue

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, JULY 29. The External Affairs Minister, Yashwant Sinha, today clarified that the differences between India and China in relation to the Line of Actual Control in the North East had persisted over the years, as the line has not been delineated.

The two countries have nominated their representatives to sort out the issue.

He was talking about the recent "incursion" by a group of Chinese into areas regularly patrolled by Indian troops in Arunachal Pradesh leading to a face-off between the Chinese and an Indian patrol.

Mr. Sinha was addressing the Bharatiya Janata Party's weekly parliamentary party meeting this morning.

The Prime Minister, Atal Be-

hari Vajpayee, the Deputy Prime Minister, L.K. Advani, and the BJP president, Venkaiah Naidu, were present as were a large number of party MPs.

Later talking to reporters, the BJP spokesperson, V.K. Malhotra, said that Mr. Sinha told the MPs that even earlier it had been decided that "if ever" Indian and Chinese found themselves "face-to-face" they should not open fire but withdraw and then sort the matter out through diplomatic channels.

He suggested that recently something had slipped up somewhere and an "incident" had taken place.

Mr. Advani told the MPs that Vijay Divas (celebration of Kargil victory) was not observed because the Army had pointed out that each year only one day was celebrated as Vijay Divas and

that was the anniversary of victory in Bangladesh in 1971. The Army was the view that there was no need for another Vijay Divas.

The Prime Minister informed the party about his telephonic conversation with the Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister, Mayawati, saying that he had told her it was not right for her to demand the dismissal of any Union Minister — it was a reference to her demand for the dismissal of the Union Cultural Affairs and Tourism Minister, Jagmohan, in relation to the Taj Heritage Corridor controversy — as they would be there as long as they enjoyed his trust.

In the morning, Mr. Vajpayee told party MPs that while Ms. Mayawati wanted the alliance in Uttar Pradesh to continue she insisted that Mr. Jagmohan should be sacked.

THE HINDU

30 JUL 2003

Cross-border duplicity

WHEN ATAL Bihari Vajpayee went to China as the external affairs minister in the Morarji Desai government, his hosts embarrassed him by invading Vietnam, forcing Mr Vajpayee to cut short his visit. The Chinese have embarrassed him again by entering Arunachal Pradesh while he was in their country. It is entirely possible, as External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha has said, that patrolling teams of both sides occasionally cross the largely undemarcated border. The latest Chinese incursion may have been something of that nature. However, the incident has taken place at a time when there is a vague feeling in India that the Chinese have got more out of India during Mr Vajpayee's visit than the other way round.

In the matter of the Indian reiteration of Tibet as a part of China, for instance, New Delhi is being seen as having been more accommodating of Chinese sensibilities than Beijing has been of Indian feelings on Sikkim. Although the Chinese acceptance of border posts in Sikkim for trading purposes is meant to indicate Beijing's recognition of the state as a part of India, the Chinese have

refrained from saying so openly. Not only that, in a press briefing during Mr Vajpayee's visit, the Chinese said the matter of Sikkim was something for history to decide. In the context of such signs of Chinese intransigence, the incursion into Arunachal Pradesh and the Chinese claim that the state is not a part of India are bound to be regarded with considerable displeasure in India.

Arguably, public opinion in this country may favour reciprocating the Chinese reluctance to recognise Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh as parts of India by voicing doubts about Chinese 'suzerainty' over Tibet. It is possible, as Mr Sinha has said, that a proper identification of the border will dispel doubts about Sikkim, but the status of Arunachal Pradesh is bound to remain a sticking point. It goes without saying that the marginal improvement in relations as a result of Mr Vajpayee's visit has suffered a blow because of a strangely cussed attitude on Beijing's part. Its perversity is all the more evident from the fact that it is ready to accept the McMahon Line in Myanmar, but not in India. The Chinese have to be told in unambiguous terms that friendship is not a one-way street.

India, China in frontier face-off

Arunachal not India's: Beijing

Agencies
Beijing, July 25

BEIJING ON Friday put a dampener on the euphoria following Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee's recent visit to China, accusing India of violating its frontiers and maintaining that Arunachal Pradesh is not a part of India.

Hu Jintao's government — which apparently accepted Sikkim as part of India during Vajpayee's visit — denied a report in *Hindustan Times* that a Chinese military patrol had crossed into Arunachal Pradesh, and alleged that it was Indian troops who had crossed into their side.

"We have noted the relevant report. China does not recognise the so-called Arunachal Pradesh mentioned by the Indian newspaper report," Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Kong Quan said in a statement. "After investigation, the reality is that Indians crossed the eastern part of the Sino-Indian line of actual control (LAC)." Kong added that the Indians retreated following a Chinese request.

Hours after the Chinese statement, a jolted New Delhi issued a counter declaration. "Arunachal Pradesh is an integral part of India," an external affairs ministry spokesman told reporters in New Delhi.

On Thursday, India's foreign ministry had said a Chinese patrol had crossed the LAC on June 26, when the Prime Minister was visiting China. The ministry said Beijing had been asked through diplomatic channels to explain the "transgression".

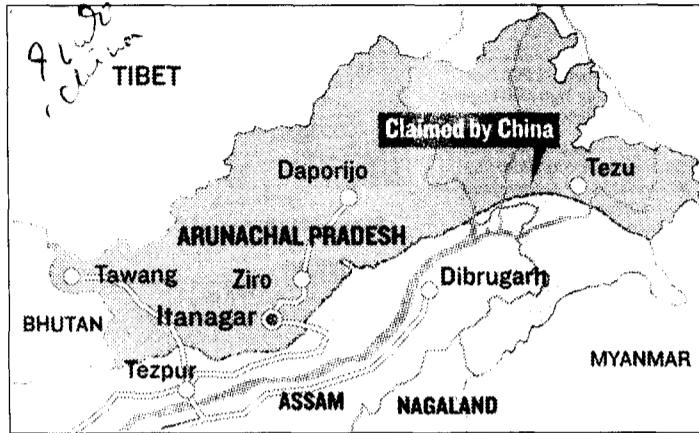
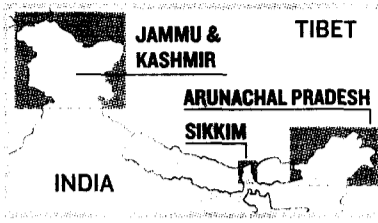
A 21-member Chinese patrol stopped a team of Indian intelligence officers about 14 km inside the Indian side of the border. The Indians were detained, questioned and then freed.

The Chinese foreign ministry said maintaining peace in the border region required a joint effort by both sides. "We hope the Indian side will strictly abide by the regulations of the agreements signed by the two countries, respect the line of actual control between the two sides and avoid similar incidents happening again," it said.

Both nations, which claim vast swathes of each other's territory, appointed top-level envoys last month to speed up a final settlement of their dispute. India says China occupied 38,000 sqkm of land in the remote Aksai Chin area and is also illegally holding 5,180 sqkm of northern Kashmir, ceded to it by Pakistan. China claims 90,000 sqkm in the eastern sector.

The Great GAME

The Arunachal dispute will take some settling



China's claim

Tibet negotiated McMahon Line with the Raj in 1913 without authority. Arunachal became part of British India after this flawed pact

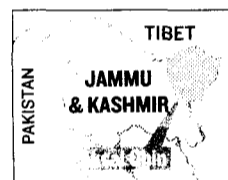
India's case

It has governed Arunachal for over 50 years and no official claim has been made to dispute India's sovereignty

Ground reality

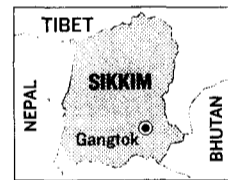
The line was drawn on a map with a thick pen. It's a broad swathe on the ground. Both sides claim areas, try to mark presence

Elsewhere: Win some, lose some



Aksai Chin

Crucial for Beijing to link with Tibet. China built a road through it, without India knowing for years



Sikkim

Last month, China finally accepted Sikkim's merger with India (tacitly) during Vajpayee's visit



YASHWANT SINHA
Foreign minister

The Chinese "do not appear to have adhered" to an agreement on the LAC signed in 1996

Intrusion violates agreement: Delhi

HT Correspondents
New Delhi/Guwahati, July 25

THE CENTRE on Friday admitted that the Chinese army had crossed the line of actual control (LAC) into Arunachal Pradesh and detained and interrogated Intelligence Bureau and Special Services Bureau officials when Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee was in China.

External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha, however, seemed to play down the intrusion as he made a statement during Zero Hour in the Lok Sabha. The Chinese side, through the intrusion, "did not appear to have adhered" to the provisions of a 1996 agreement between New Delhi and Beijing, he said.

He suggested that part of the reason for the "transgression" could be the "difference in perception" between the two countries caused by a shadowy border. "The government is aware of the transgression of the LAC by a Chinese patrol on June 26, 2003, in the Asaphila area of the Upper Subansiri district of Arunachal Pradesh. This is an area where there are differences in the perception of the LAC between the two sides," the minister said after Congress and Samajwadi Party members had raised the issue.

Sinha said, "From time to time, on account of differences in the perception of the LAC, situations had arisen on the ground that could have been avoided if we had a common perception of the LAC."

The agreement that China, in Sinha's words, "did not appear to have adhered to" concerns confidence-building measures in defence matters along the LAC. It contains a specific provision detailing the manner in which situations involving "face-to-face" contact between personnel of the two sides are to be handled.

Sinha said such "isolated" incidents could occur sporadically and that a definition of the LAC was under way. The government "regularly takes up with the Chinese side violations of the LAC through established mechanisms". South Block officials later said Chinese incursions have been reported in the western and middle sectors, too, and official claims that the incidents are "sporadic" may not be true.

The Congress government in Arunachal came down heavily on Vajpayee for failing to assert India's stand on the frontier state during his China visit. "The Prime Minister was apparently too lost in border trade on the Sikkim front to put his foot down on the status of Arunachal," state government spokesman and Education Minister Takam Sanjoy said. "We have repeatedly alerted Delhi about China's designs on Arunachal, and we expected the Prime Minister to take representatives of our state along to Beijing to put across our point."

Graphic: VINEY

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

26 JUL 2003

Delhi cool to China's red flag on Arunachal

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Reacting to China's repetition of its known stand that it does not recognise Arunachal Pradesh as a part of India, New Delhi on Friday asserted that the north-eastern state was very much its "integral part".

Beyond this terse one-liner, India sought to play down last month's border spat that, if allowed to snowball, could slow down the momentum in bilateral ties gained after Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's Beijing visit, which an official said was "a major success".

Not wishing to speak on record, sources said India did not want to vitiate the positive climate the visit had generated. He was optimistic that an incident such as the one that had occurred on June 26 in the Asaphila area of Arunachal Pradesh's Upper Subansiri district might provide the impetus to "hurry up the overall process" of resolving the long-pending border dispute.

The Beijing parleys have institutionalised an arrangement whereby this process could be "hurried up" by national

security adviser Brajesh Mishra and Dai Bingqiao, the senior-most vice minister in the Chinese foreign office. Asked whether, as per this arrangement, the interaction between the two could itself be hurried up, a source in the Prime Minister's Office discounted such a possibility. "It is not such a serious matter," he said, adding that the matter would be resolved at the foreign office level.

Earlier in the day in Beijing, Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Kong Quan rejected a Delhi newspaper report that Chinese forces had transgressed into Indian territory and said that China did not recognise Arunachal Pradesh as part of India.

Mr Kong also claimed that the "Indian side crossed the eastern sector of the line of actual control (LAC). At the request of the Chinese side, the Indian people who crossed the LAC returned to the Indian side of the LAC". Without joining issue, the MEA spokesman in Delhi said, "We have made our position on the incident clear on Thursday."

The issue figured in the Lok Sabha when external affairs minister Yashwant Sinha

said the incident had occurred as the result of "differing perceptions" by the two countries on the LAC.

Government sources sought to play down the incident, contending that the two neighbours had a long border and such intrusions had taken place in the past since there were different perceptions of the LAC, with both sides claiming certain areas to be belonging to their territory.

However, India is irked that the Chinese did not adhere to Article 6(4) of the 1996 bilateral agreement on confidence-building measures that has a specific provision for dealing with situations involving face-to-face contact between personnel and patrols of the two sides.

About the intrusion having taken place while the Vajpayee visit was on, the sources said one should not draw inferences.

Responding to members' demand for a censure motion on the issue, the external affairs minister told the Lok Sabha that incidents on the LAC "take place from time to time" because of the differences between the two countries and that the "process of clarification" was still on.

Sikkim is not part of India, notes Chinese website

New Delhi: The official website of China's ministry of foreign affairs states that "the Chinese government does not recognise India's illegal annexation of Sikkim", the Rajya Sabha was told on Thursday. A day after Prime Minister Vajpayee said in parliament that the Sikkim issue would not be allowed to stand in the way of normalisation of Sino-Indian ties, the government said that China had still formally to recognise Sikkim as an integral part of India. However, following the understandings reached during Mr Vajpayee's visit to China last month, "the process has been started by which Sikkim will cease to be an issue in India-China relations", minister of state for external affairs Vinod Khanna said. TNN

'BREACH OF 1996 AGREEMENT'

Incursion taken up with China, says Sinha

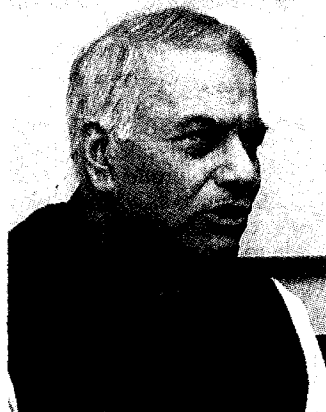
By Our New Delhi Bureau

NEW DELHI, JULY 25. The External Affairs Minister, Yashwant Sinha, today admitted in the Lok Sabha that there had been a latest incident of incursion across the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China.

This and earlier such incursions could have been avoided if the two countries had a common perception of the LAC, he said.

The Minister told the House that the Government had taken up the issue of the latest incursion with China and a response was awaited.

Mr. Sinha was responding to an adjournment motion moved by Ramjilal Suman and Chandranath Singh, both from the Samajwadi Party (SP), in the wake of a furore in the media during the past few days.



Mr. Sinha told the House that the Government was aware of the transgression of the LAC by a Chinese patrol on June 26 in the Asaphila area of Upper Subansiri district of Arunachal Pradesh.

This, he said, "is an area where there are differences in

perception of the LAC between the two countries".

The Minister said the Chinese patrol had not observed the specific provision laid down in the 1996 agreement between the two countries that concern situations involving face to face contact between patrols of the two sides.

He said the process of clarification of the LAC was under way. According to him, "the Government regularly took up with the Chinese authorities the violations of the LAC, according to our perception, by the Chinese side through the established mechanism."

Earlier, speaking on his amendment motion, Mr. Suman said that newspaper reports had mentioned that China did not even recognise Sikkim as being part of India. "While the Prime Minister was in Chi-

na, the Chinese were making incursions into Indian territory," he said.

Jagmeet Singh Brar (Congress) and Mr. Chandranath Singh referred to the fact that 10 Intelligence Bureau members were interrogated by the Chinese patrol. Both members said the matter was related to national security and urged the Government to take it seriously.

After listening to the Minister of External Affairs, the Speaker, Manohar Joshi, rejected the adjournment motion.

India, meanwhile, responded in a restrained manner to comments made by the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman that Arunachal Pradesh was not a part of India and that it was the "Indian side" which had crossed the LAC in the eastern sector.

In response to questions on the issue, the Indian External Affairs Ministry spokesman said that India had made its position clear on the June 26 "transgression" of the LAC by the Chinese side. While the spokesman did not offer a detailed response to the Chinese Foreign Ministry's comments today, official sources said there was no exchange of fire during the June 26 incident. They added that the "encounter" in Arunachal Pradesh should not be blown out of proportion given the fact that the LAC is a lengthy one. This, again, pointed to the urgent need to clarify the LAC, the sources added. They said that just because the Chinese had a certain view about the status of Arunachal Pradesh it did not mean that the State was not a part of the Indian Union.

50 Chinese sorties across LAC this year: Page 11

Arunachal Pradesh not part of India, says Beijing

BEIJING, JULY 25. Saying that it had "not recognised" Arunachal Pradesh as part of India, China today alleged that "Indian people" crossed the eastern sector of the Line of Actual Control in the north-eastern State and not its forces as claimed by New Delhi.

Denying a report published in a Delhi newspaper that Chinese forces had "transgressed" into Indian territory near the LAC when the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, was visiting Beijing, the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman, Kong Quan, said China did not recognise that Arunachal Pradesh was part of India.

"We have noted the relevant report. China does not recognise the so-called Arunachal Pradesh mentioned by the Indian newspaper re-

port," Mr. Kong said. The External Affairs Ministry spokesman had said yesterday that the Indian Government was aware of the "transgression" of the LAC by a Chinese patrol on June 26 in the Asaphila area of the upper Subansiri district of Arunachal Pradesh.

This was an area where there were differences in perception of the LAC between the two sides. Mr. Kong said, "as far as the incident mentioned, after investigations, we have found that the Indian side crossed the eastern sector of the Line of Actual Control (LAC)."

At the request of the Chinese side, the Indian people who crossed the LAC, returned to the Indian side of the LAC." China lays claim to 90,000 sq km of land in Arunachal Pradesh. — PTI

THE HINDU

25 JUL 2003

PM Tells LS About Policy Successes Vis-A-Vis Eastern Neighbour

India bends China over Sikkim status, stands firm on Tibet

Our Political Bureau
NEW DELHI 23 JULY

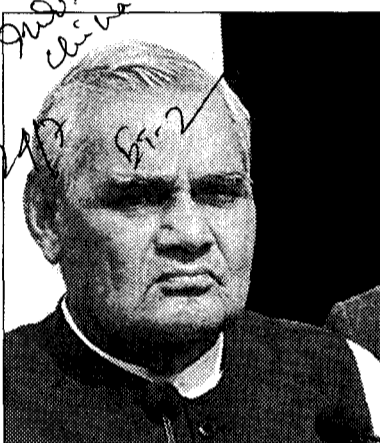
PUTTING up a strong defence of the recent border trade agreement with China, Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee on Wednesday suggested that he had extracted concessions from Beijing on Sikkim without offering anything new on Tibet in exchange.

Making a suo motu statement on his recent foreign tour to four countries, Mr Vajpayee told the Lok Sabha that the process towards China accepting Sikkim as an integral part of India had begun. He also stood by his contention that there was no change in government's decades old Tibet policy.

Describing the memorandum of understanding on border trade through the Nathu La pass in Sikkim as significant, the Prime Minister said: "With this memorandum, we have also started the process by which Sikkim will cease to be an issue in India-China relations".

While the reopening of the Nathu La pass had been well received, Mr Vajpayee had come under criticism from some quarters for having made some concessions regarding Tibet. This was sought to be projected by pointing that the joint declaration that resulted out of the summit meeting, recognised that the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) was a part of the territory of the People's Republic of China.

Mr Vajpayee, however, maintained on Wednesday that there was no change in the decade old policy on Tibet and accepting TAR as a part of the People's Republic of Chi-



ATAL: DEFT DIPLOMACY

na was not new. "We have said nothing new about the presence of his Holiness Dalai Lama or of Tibetan refugees in India" he said. The China visit, Mr Vajpayee said, fulfilled the twin objectives of establishing close relations with the new leadership there and imparting fresh momentum to the increasingly diversified bilateral cooperation.

"We have agreed to a wide-ranging, mutually beneficial engagement with China, even while simultaneously addressing our differences through amicable discussions" he said. Mr Vajpayee said a fresh momentum was sought to be given to the settlement of boundary issue by appointing special representatives who would look at it from the political perspective of the overall

bilateral relationship. He added that both countries also agreed on continuing discussions regarding LAC, without disturbing the tranquillity in the border areas.

Observing that his visit took place almost ten years after the last visit by an Indian Prime Minister to China, the Prime Minister said a recurrent theme in all his meetings was the commitment of both sides to strengthen the ongoing process of building mutual trust and understanding.

"It gave me an invaluable opportunity to personally interact with the new Chinese leadership. I was received with great warmth and courtesy and was given the distinct impression that our desire for mutual goodwill and for diversification of our bilateral relationship was fully reciprocated," he said.

The Prime Minister said the Chinese side also agreed to his suggestion for opening additional routes for the Kailash-Mansarovar yatra. The Prime Minister also informed the Lok Sabha on his talks with other world leaders, including US President George Bush, Russian President Vladimir Putin, British Prime Minister Tony Blair, Chinese Premier Hu Jintao, Chancellor Schroeder and French President Jacques Chirac, saying that all these leaders appreciated the hand of friendship extended by him to Pakistan and hoped that the latter would reciprocate.

Mr Vajpayee asserted that these leaders "spoke strongly against the menace of terrorism". On his participation in the G-8 extended dialogue in Evian, the Prime Minister said he stressed on the need to create a

The Economic Times

24 JUL 2003

Make it an Asian century

BY bureaucratic happenstance, I am the only Indian professional who witnessed all the four seasons that marked our ties with China. I accompanied S. Radhakrishnan, then vice president, on his official visit in September 1957. It was the High Summer of the "Hindi-Chini bhai-bhai" phase. We were put up in Harmony Hall inside Zhong-nan-hai, next to Chrysanthemum Fragrance (the name given to Mao's private study.) The Hundred Flowers intervention had been clipped prematurely and so Radhakrishnan warned the National Peoples' Congress that people "with raw courage" could protest, but even this brazen counsel was accepted as friendly concern. Mao himself played host at the functions for the vice-president. Alas, ties deteriorated in 1959, but it was incidental to the Tibet revolt.

The second time was when I was nominated to lead the Indian team following Chou-en-Lai's visit in April 1960. The hurriedly drafted communique, asked officials to marshal evidence "in support of the stand" of the two sides. Subsequent comments have failed to recognise that at least we from India were advocates not negotiators. The jointly compiled Indian and Chinese reports were presented to our Parliament in February 1961. The responsibility was awesome but the atmosphere was not unfriendly. This was the Autumn of Uncertainty. In May 1961, I was transferred abroad and, therefore, was away during the Forward Policy and the 1962 war.

In 1963, I was shifted as charge d'affairs. The following years constituted the Darkest Winter in our relations. I faced official cold-shouldering. During the 1965 war with Pakistan, I was regularly woken up at night and given time-bound ultimata, levelling fictitious charges, demonstrating China's pro-Pakistan bias. When India was accused of aggression, I walked out of banquets, including on National



Tracking new beginnings between India and China

JAGAT S. MEHTA

Day when Mao was present.

My last visit was accompanying Atal Bihari Vajpayee when he was foreign minister in February 1979. It was a Tentative Spring. Soon after I took over as foreign secretary, Mrs Gandhi had approved the re-upgrading of our mission. K.R. Narayanan had taken charge as ambassador in July 1976. Relations improved steadily. Prior to Vajpayee's visit it had been agreed to keep aside the boundary dispute but other contentious issues were resolved. China pledged not to give arms to the insurgents in the Northeast. We stood by our abiding friendship with the USSR. Vajpayee explained the constitutional developments in relation to Sikkim and for months China re-

and Indo-China, but did not understand the working of India's democratic parliamentary system.

It was no secret that Nehru had crusaded for trusting China and therefore it was an avoidable blunder to name him in the official comments on the revolt in Tibet in May 1959. Parliamentary and public opinion in India got so outraged that it put even Nehru on the defensive. In 1960 Nehru could not even agree to Chou-en-Lai's six points, inter alia acknowledging, "that there existed a dispute". He could not publicly note that China already exercised control over Aksai Chin. Nehru felt that builders of socialism could not be aggressive and so did not anticipate that the "Forward

The imperative now is the same with China as with Pakistan: To exorcise the legacy of the past. History cannot remain a roadblock to rational approaches for the future

frained from referring to Sikkim separately or objectionably to Kashmir. China's attack on Vietnam occurred when Vajpayee was visiting Hangchow. The accidental timing symbolised Chinese insensitivity to Indian reactions.

Oscillations in these relations reflected mutual misperceptions. Given its anti-imperialist orientation, Nehru expected liberated Asia to cooperate and give priority to national development. In 1954, India had readily conceded that Tibet was a region of China and didn't expect the differences on the border to explode the way they did. Communist China had appreciated India's spokesmanship in the UN on Korea

Policy" could be seen as provocative. The 1962 operations were not for territory but for political assertiveness.

The imperative now is the same with China as with Pakistan: To exorcise the legacy of the past. History cannot remain a roadblock to rational approaches for the future. On China, two notions prevail in India: Some argue the China-India crisis was largely due to India's provocations and a border settlement would catalyse a political improvement. Others, mostly strategic thinkers, fear a repetition of 1962 and so urge India to refine its military capability and nuclear deterrence. I share neither the sense of India's guilt nor of

impending Armageddon. Though there is no de jure agreement for "mutual accommodation" exchanging Aksai Chin for Arunachal, my view is that unless we provide major provocation, military threat to India is not likely.

A major settlement requires a constitutional amendment and can only follow political consensus in India. China is already a near-superpower. The prime minister has wisely recognised that both countries have complementarity as well as healthy rivalry. It will so remain even if there is a border settlement. The challenge is between a short-wind democracy and a nation with a marathon capacity to pursue its perceived destiny.

The governments of India and China can now identify a new shared anxiety. The rise of internal disaffection, fed by the communication revolution, poses a threat to governments everywhere. What should be of special concern is the growth of religious extremism with suicidal motivation. Both China and India have a common interest in progress on the continent including stability in Pakistan. Both countries have an interest in international multipolarity. The US is the world economic engine but its uni-polarity is yet to succeed in Iraq. China and India have both enjoyed gains from globalisation but we also share the compulsion to make it equitable.

New beginnings in bilateral relations between India and China have timely logic. India's finance minister underscored the balance of China's industry with India's capability in the service sector. Trade could double, specially if the land border's reopened. But there must be caution against reverting to the old euphoria. If the 21st is to be an Asian century — as Deng prophesied — it will have to be a blend of beneficial bilateralism, constructive regionalism and enlightened internationalism.

The writer is a former foreign secretary

India should forge relations with China without letting its guard down

Understanding each other

Handwritten: *Full China*, *HT-6*, *17/7*
By J.N. DIXIT

DETAILS OF the discussions, the joint declaration issued and the agreements signed during Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's visit are of public knowledge. In short, the specifics on which India and China had useful discussions were the following:

■ Management of the emerging new world order subjected to the unipolar power of the US. The imbalance arising from the trend has to be redressed.

■ Dealing with the shortcomings of global economic and technological arrangements under the WTO.

■ Exploring possibilities of mutual cooperation and playing an effective role in world security arrangements and the ASEAN Security Forum.

■ Examining possibilities of working together to revive the role of the UN, as well as its reforms.

■ Substantive issues affecting bilateral relations, including a review of the progress made regarding the Sino-Indian boundary.

■ Joint working group on the boundary question in relation to the agreed delineation of the Line of Actual Control (LoAC).

■ A candid discussion on the implications of Chinese defence cooperation with Pakistan on Indian security specifically, and regional security in general.

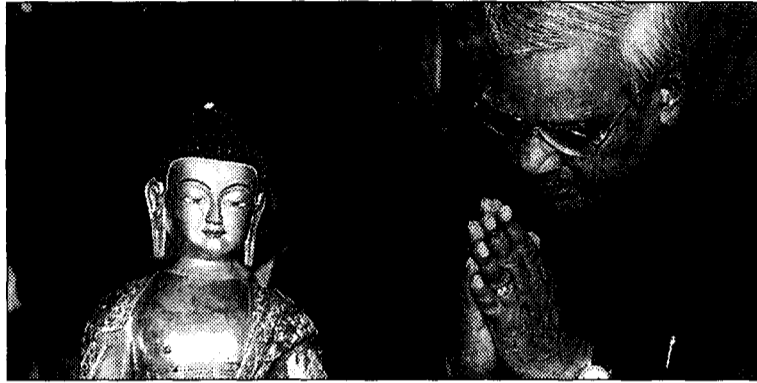
■ Coming to mutually acceptable and transparent equations on issues related to Tibet and Sikkim.

■ Charting out a scheme for expanding bilateral trade, technological and economic relations.

Official pronouncements from China from the second week of June indicate that it is willing to encourage positive trends in Sino-Indian relations. Chinese spokespersons, however, underlined that recent policy orientations of both India and China on the security dimension indicate that Vajpayee and his counterpart, Wen Jiabao, have redefined strategic and security terms of reference of bilateral relations between the two countries.

The logical expectation should be that China and India would affirm intention in their policies not to threaten each other's security. Chinese spokespersons have also indicated a willingness to discuss the substantive aspects of the boundary issue while the residual problems related to the LoAC are getting sorted out. This is apart from these spokespersons indicating a positive attitude towards expanding bilateral relations across the spectrum.

While all the right noises are be-



PRAY FOR VIGILANCE: Vajpayee at the Baima temple in Luoyang, China

ing made about Vajpayee's visit to Beijing, the outcome and the prospects need an assessment in terms of realities and practical possibilities. The boundary question is a vexed one. The most recent pronouncement of the Chinese is that they would like to resolve the issue on the basis of equality, mutual understanding, mutual accommodation and mutual adjustment.

As far as the status of Sikkim and Tibet go, India should stand by its policy decision of Chinese jurisdiction over Tibet. China should parallelly recognise Sikkim as an integral part of India. While we should express our concern regarding Chinese military cooperation with Pakistan and defence cooperation arrangements with Myanmar, there's no point in complaining to the Chinese about it. The solution is to tell them that we view their defence relationships with these two nations with concern, and that they should not object to India increasing its defence capacities to meet the challenges arising from the cooperation with these two countries.

Vajpayee signed nine agreements stipulating bilateral cooperation on separate subjects, ranging from expanding economic and technological cooperation to raising the volume of bilateral trade, to cultural and scientific exchanges. These agreements are in continuity with those signed between India and China in 1988 during Rajiv Gandhi's visit, in 1993 during Narasimha Rao's visit, as well as agreements signed during President Jiang Zemin's visit to Delhi in 1996 and PM Zhu Rongji's visit to Delhi in 2002.

The most recent agreements confirm that Sino-Indian relations are being conducted within the macro-level political framework agreed upon between Deng Xiaoping and Rajiv Gandhi in December 1988,

namely, that India and China will expand and consolidate bilateral relations in those spheres which are of mutual interest, without letting the boundary question stand in the way.

More important than the nine agreements signed this time is the joint declaration issued in Beijing. The 'declaration on principles governing inter-State relations and comprehensive cooperation' is somewhat unique in nature. India and China do not normally issue joint statements or communiqués at the end of high-level visits. The recent development indicates an increased congruence of interests and political will to cooperate with each other. Significant points in this declaration are worth recalling:

■ Both sides have affirmed that they do not and will not constitute any security threat to each other.

■ Both sides have committed themselves to not using force to resolve pending issues.

■ India and China have affirmed that a cooperative bilateral relationship will contribute to both regional and global stability and security.

Much has been made about the manner in which Tibet has been mentioned in the joint declaration. There has been some assessment that this is a shift in India's policies and accepts the Chinese stand. This assessment is ill-informed. Since 1954, India's policy has been consistent — that of acknowledging Tibet as an autonomous region of the People's Republic of China. The Chinese, perhaps, wanted a reaffirmation of this old policy because of their anxieties regarding Tibet.

On the question of China recognising Sikkim as part of India, China seems to accept the Indian jurisdiction. The agreement to resume border trade between Tibet and Sikkim will involve Indian authorities giving a visa and then stamping

travel documents of traders coming from Tibet which automatically means China's acceptance of Indian jurisdiction. One, however, feels that if India responded to the Chinese suggestion about reiterating its Tibet policy, India could have insisted on a similar formulation regarding Sikkim in the joint declaration. It is not clear why we did not take this stand.

The declaration indicates that India and China will now focus more actively on resolving the boundary issue. Discussions are to be held at two levels. The joint working group dealing with the LoAC will continue its work of delineating the line, and put in place additional confidence-building measures. Second, the two special political representatives designated by the two governments (Brajesh Mishra and Senior Vice-Minister Wu Bangguo) will explore political perspectives for a practical solution to the boundary question.

The general agreement to counter international terrorism, to create a just world order and reform the UN was also reflected in the statement. Initial reports indicate that the Indian side raised the question of Chinese defence and nuclear cooperation with Pakistan and China's regional security policies that have negative implications for us. The Chinese were ambiguous in their response, which was to be expected.

Overall, the visit was as satisfactory as it could be. There are differences of approach between India and China on issues related to non-proliferation, the presence of the Dalai Lama in India, on India's candidature for a permanent seat on the Security Council and on China's close relationship with Pakistan. The decisions at the recent summit seem aimed at tackling these issues in a rational manner without confrontation. The controversies related to India's nuclear weapons tests of 1998, Vajpayee's mention of China as the threat which led to these tests in his letter to Clinton and George Fernandes's description of China as an adversary have been overcome as it should be.

Forging a relationship with China, while keeping in mind possible undercurrents in its policies which may affect India negatively, is the practical approach. India should not remain subject to memories of the Sino-Indian conflict of 1962. There is a difference between being suspicious and alert. The need is to remain alert without entertaining excessive suspicions.

SEE TRACK

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

17 JUL 2003

17 JUL 2003

Globalization and the end of the Cold War have helped Sino-Indian ties

China revisited

CHANDRASHEKHAR DASGUPTA

India-China relations have moved forward a long way since Atal Bihari Vajpayee first journeyed to China in February 1979, as foreign minister in Morarji Desai's cabinet. A comparison of the results of his recent visit and the outcome of his earlier trip throws into relief the transformation that has occurred in the intervening quarter century in our bilateral relations as well as in the global political environment.

Vajpayee's recent trip was undoubtedly productive in terms of speeding up progress in bilateral relations. It is expected to remove a major irritant in India-China ties. Under a border trade agreement concluded during the Vajpayee visit, it was agreed to conduct trade through the Nathu La by establishing markets at Changu in Sikkim and Renqinggan in Tibet. The accord implies *de facto* recognition by China of Sikkim's position in India and the Chinese are expected to take steps in due course to convey *de jure* recognition. These steps will strengthen the mutual trust and confidence on which good neighbourly relations are built.

The Chinese, on their part, attach particular importance to a sentence in the joint declaration reading: "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." There has been some ill-informed criticism in India that this formulation is somehow a "concession" on our part. In fact, it is no more than a reiteration of our traditional position.

In the early Fifties we recognized Chinese sovereignty over Tibet. In the 1954 agreement, we acknowledged that the Tibet region (as it was then called) is a part of China. And after Beijing announced the establishment of the Autonomous Region of Tibet we have consistently stated that Tibet is an autonomous region of China. We have also repeatedly made it clear that the Tibetans residing in India will not be permitted to engage in hostile anti-China activities from Indian soil.

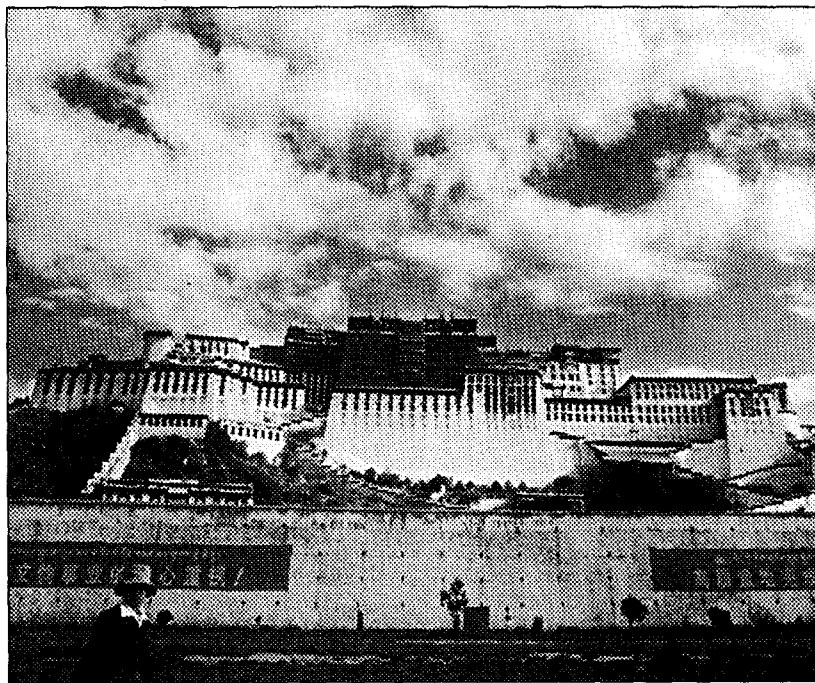
While most resident Tibetans are peaceful and law-abiding, there is a small number of trouble-makers who seek to disrupt India's ties with our northern neighbour in various ways, especially by staging unlawful protests during visits of Chinese leaders. On such occasions, the Indian government has rightly taken action under the law to restrain these elements from causing disruption or acting against our policy of non-interference in the internal af-

fairs of other countries.

While the Sikkim border trade agreement and the reiteration of India's position on Tibet were the highlights of the visit, a number of other accords also deserve notice. Among these are the decisions to appoint special representatives to explore the framework of a boundary agreement, to hold annual meetings of the foreign ministers, to form a joint study group to draw up a five-year programme for expanding trade and economic cooperation, to increase cooperation at the World Trade Organization, and to set up cultural centres in Beijing and New

Washington axis, India concluded a treaty of peace and friendship with the USSR. Anxious to cultivate his new Chinese ally, Kissinger went to the extent of secretly encouraging China to intervene militarily against India, but the latter would not be drawn into a dangerous adventure.

It was not until 1976 that the first concrete steps were taken to mend Sino-Indian ties. In that year, the two countries decided to restore diplomatic ties at the ambassadorial level. The next major step was Vajpayee's visit to China in 1979 — the first ministerial-level visit between the two countries in



Delhi. Taken together, this is indeed a good harvest.

Like his recent visit, Vajpayee's earlier journey to China was also productive. It was one of the first milestones on the road to repairing India-China relations after the 1962 conflict. By 1970, India and China had sent out signals conveying a desire to repair relations. However, despite Mao's famous smile and hand-shake with the Indian *charge d'affaires*, no progress was possible for several years. This was mainly because of a regional development whose impact was further magnified by the fact that it coincided with a major strategic realignment at the global level. When the Bangladesh liberation struggle erupted in 1971, China sided with its Pakistan ally, throwing its full diplomatic weight against Bangladesh and India. At almost the same time, using Islamabad as an intermediary, Nixon and Kissinger were putting in place a new strategic partnership with China directed at the Soviet Union.

Anticipating an Islamabad-Beijing-

ment in Cambodia, casting a new chill over India-China relations. It was not until June 1981 that the Chinese foreign minister, Huang Hua, travelled to India, reciprocating the Vajpayee visit.

The real breakthrough in India-China relations came with Rajiv Gandhi's visit to China in 1988 — the first prime ministerial visit between the two countries since Zhou Enlai came to India in 1960. Concrete steps were taken during this visit to promote all-round bilateral cooperation while the two parties sought a peaceful solution to the border issue. Thus, a working group was formed to promote trade and investment, and agreements were signed for cooperation in such fields as culture, civil aviation and science and technology. A joint working group was set up for negotiations on the boundary issue and for exploring ways and means of maintaining peace and tranquillity along the Line of Actual Control pending a resolution of the border issue.

Since 1988, India-China ties have shown steady improvement. The border areas have remained tension-free, military ties have been established and trade has risen from a negligible figure to an impressive 5 billion dollars last year. This is expected to rise to \$ 10 billion by 2005. China has moved away from its earlier policy of siding with Pakistan on Kashmir and other Indo-Pakistani issues. It now calls upon India and Pakistan to resolve these issues through peaceful consultations. The boundary issue is yet to be resolved, but there can be no doubt that the marked improvement that has taken place in the climate of relations will facilitate an eventual resolution.

The progress achieved in recent years reflects sensible management of bilateral relations by the two countries. At the same time, progress has been facilitated by two global developments. First, the integration of the Chinese and Indian economies with the global economy has opened up vast markets for each of these countries in the other. These new economic ties are helping to create a positive climate of opinion in each country about the other.

Since the early Fifties, India has recognized Chinese sovereignty over Tibet

over 16 years.

Vajpayee's 1979 journey to China was not, however, an unmitigated success. While the Indian foreign minister was still on Chinese soil, Beijing decided to "teach a lesson" to the Vietnamese by launching an armed excursion, and Deng Xiaoping added to India's discomfiture by drawing a parallel with the attack against India in 1962. Vajpayee had to cut short his visit to China. Moreover, a reciprocal visit from the Chinese side was delayed by another regional development. India established diplomatic ties with the pro-Vietnamese Heng Samrin govern-

Second, the end of the Cold War made it easier to accelerate the improvement of bilateral ties. As we saw earlier, during the last phase of the Cold War, regional developments in south and southeast Asia were viewed in China through the lens of the Sino-Soviet conflict, and developments in Bangladesh, Cambodia or Vietnam could hold up progress in India-China relations. This obstacle has ceased to exist. India and China can now concentrate their efforts on strengthening bilateral ties without having to grapple with the fall-out of a Cold War.

The author is former ambassador to the European Union and China

It is unwise for India to proceed with the LoAC issue with China any longer

Fall off the map

BY A.G. NOORANI

Ind. China

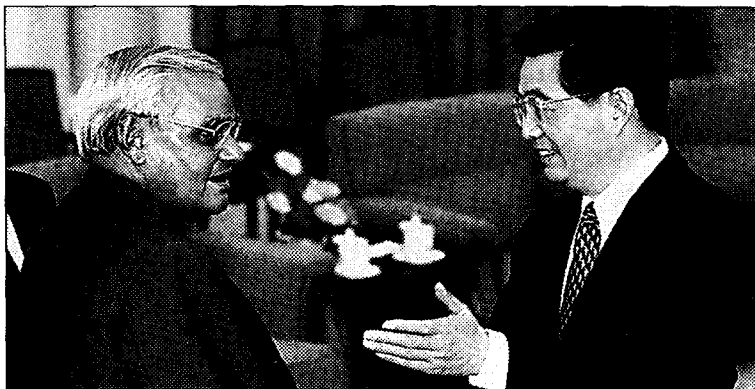
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ATAL BIHARI Vajpayee's visit to China marks a milestone on a long road towards an India-China settlement. The appointment of special representatives is a procedural progress. Their remit arouses hope — "to explore from the political perspective of the overall bilateral relationship the framework of a boundary settlement". Its fulfilment will depend on whether India is prepared to make the concessions without which no accord is possible. At the end of his visit the PM disclosed that both sides "have been discussing principles which have to be followed for an eventual boundary settlement". Therein lies the core of the problem. Simultaneously, the exercise for delineating the 4,056 km long LoAC "will continue". It has hit a big road block.

Let us recall the background. The Rajiv Gandhi-Li Peng joint communiqué of December 23, 1988, announced the establishment of a joint working group "on the boundary question". It produced the agreement of September 7, 1993, on "maintaining peace and tranquillity in areas along the Line of Actual Control in the India-China border areas". Except in the Sikkim sector, the boundary has never been defined by treaty with China, apart from the controversial McMahon Line. Both sides, however, claim a traditional customary boundary. Their views on its alignment clash as, indeed, they do on the alignment of the LoAC as well.

Article 6 of the 1993 agreement is important: "The two sides are agreed that references to the Line of Actual Control in the agreement do not prejudice their respective positions on the boundary question." Article 8 set up an experts group to "advise the joint working group on the resolution of differences between the two sides on the alignment of the Line of Actual Control" and also address issues relating to reduction of forces.

Last comes the agreement of November 29, 1996, on CBMs in the military field along the LoAC. Article 10 envisages "a common understanding" on the alignment of the LoAC. The parties agreed "to speed up the process of clarification and confirmation" of the LoAC. 'Clarification' means precise definition of its line by each side. 'Confirmation' means accord between them on the LoAC by adjustment of the two lines. LoAC maps were to be exchanged. Ever since the dispute arose



WOK THE WALK, TALK THE TALK: Vajpayee with Hu Jintao in Beijing

1959, China wanted negotiations on the dispute itself. It was never keen on defining the LoAC in the interim. India has consistently avoided those negotiations and preferred preliminary measures. At the sixth JWG meeting in July 1993, Vice-Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan suggested that the LoAC be the one "which is well-known to both sides". That means we know where you are and vice versa. But, if it is to be defined, it must be the line "drawn on November 7, 1959", Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Liu Shuqing had said that on June 15, 1987.

What was the magic about that date? Chou En-Lai's letter to Jawaharlal Nehru of November 7, 1959, defined the LoAC as "the so-called McMahon Line in the east and the line up to which each side exercises actual control in the west". This line, China says, was crossed by India in 1961-62 when it built 43 posts in Ladakh and in the east by establishing posts beyond the McMahon Line, as delineated in 1914, to accord with India's concept of the watershed. Additionally, it complained, India established in 1987 two posts in the Sumdorong Cha Valley beyond the McMahon Line.

Differences on the LoAC have been identified. In the east they are, broadly, the areas around the Namka Chu, Chen ju, Tulng La, Asaphila, Longju and Che Dong. It is Bara Hoti plus four other areas in the middle sector. In the west it is Trig, Heights, near the Karakoram Pass, Chushul, Kongka Pass, Pangong Lake and Demchok in the south, traversed by the Indus and three others. But even if these are adjusted, what of China's claim to 90,000 sq kms in Arunachal Pradesh and ours

dently, the LoAC has been 'clarified' but not 'confirmed' by accord. Exchange of maps is nothing to shout about. Only 'confirmation' of the LoAC on accord on its alignment, would be an achievement and that too, a limited one.

When the EG met in June 2002, the Indian side was in for a surprise. China refused to accept India's 'sample map' as the western sector included PoK and the 5,180 sq kms which, India says, Pakistan gave to China. The JWG's 14th meeting in November made no progress either.

This emerged as a roadblock on the *cul de sac* which India had entered. As far back as in June 1960, China's officials presented to their Indian counterparts a map and a statement excluding the entire area west of the Karakoram Pass from discussion with India. Since the exercise was about the LoAC, India could well have presented its map confined to just the line, while reiterating explicitly its caveat on the Sino-Pak accord of March 2, 1963.

The map India presented wantonly created an issue of prestige for both sides and it did so in full knowledge of China's 40-year-old stand. Its import was conveyed in plain terms by Chag Wen-Chin, leader of the Chinese team of officials in 1960. Both sides must "adopt a matter of fact attitude and avoid serious political questions unrelated to our work". This was said in the specific context of its stand on areas west of the Karakoram Pass.

China has another serious reservation: the LoAC must not become a boundary proper. On the 40th anniversary of the October 1962 war, Rong Ying, Deputy Director for South Asian Studies, China Institute of International Studies at Beijing, warned: "No attempt should be made to impose the illegal McMahon Line by taking advantage of the process of verification of the LoAC." This is a major obstacle in delineating the LoAC in the east.

China's preference has always been for a *political* settlement in one go; a package deal based on the status quo but subject to concession by both sides. This is but fair. We need to decide what we can concede and what we should insist upon. Without such a major policy decision, the special representatives will only waste time like their predecessors

8 JUL 2003

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

Settling the China border

By C. Raja Mohan

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An agreement on the boundary with China could set the tone for a final settlement of the Kashmir question with Pakistan.

GOOD FENCES make good neighbours. The absence of a settled boundary with China, let alone fences, has been at the heart of New Delhi's troubled relationship with Beijing for more than four decades. The biggest political outcome from the Prime Minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee's visit to China has been the decision by the two sides to explore a final settlement of the boundary dispute. Amidst the needless confusion over what New Delhi said and meant about Tibet and what it got from China on the recognition of Indian sovereignty over Sikkim, the far-reaching development over the boundary dispute has not received enough popular attention.

At the end of his visit, Mr. Vajpayee went on record to state that India had discussed the boundary dispute "as never before" and that "a road map" was now ready for its resolution. The Joint Declaration in Beijing had stated that the "two sides agreed to each appoint a Special Representative to explore from the political perspective of the overall bilateral relationship the framework of a boundary settlement".

This rather infelicitous sentence has masked the substantive nature of the agreement hammered out between Mr. Vajpayee and his Chinese interlocutors.

Three things stand out. First, the appointment of Special Representatives, the National Security Adviser, Brajesh Mishra, on the Indian side, and the Senior Vice-Minister, Dai Bingguo, on the Chinese side. The appointment of the two negotiators, who will explore the "framework of a settlement", marks an important shift.

On the Indian side, the Prime Minister's Office has now taken direct charge of a political exploration of the boundary settlement. The annual exercise of the Joint Working Group set up in 1988 during the visit of Rajiv Gandhi as Prime Minister has ended up as a bureaucratic exercise in the Foreign Office with no real political mandate to negotiate. Messrs Mishra and Dai are expected to meet shortly and start off the talks. The Sino-Indian boundary dispute was never going to be resolved through a debate between the legal and historical claims the two sides had presented until now. It can only be addressed on the basis of a political judgment about what is feasible.

Second is the new political will in New Delhi to negotiate a final settlement of the boundary dispute. Although India has always taken the position that it seeks an early settlement of the boundary dispute, Mr. Vajpayee has decided to face up to the full implications of that position. Until now the Indian political leadership has been content to leave the border issue alone, fully aware of the dangers of stirring up the hornet's nest of a settlement that would necessarily involve "give and take".

Moving away from positions that New Delhi has held for many decades was never going to be easy. India was happy to go along with, if not endorse, the Chinese position that the border issue could be left to future generations. All that has changed now with the decision to explore a resolution of the boundary dispute.

For all practical purposes, any final settlement would have to be along the broad lines proposed by Premier Zhou Enlai in 1960 and Deng Xiaoping's package proposal of 1980. Both essentially involved India ceding claims to Aksai Chin in the west and China giving up its claim on Arunachal Pradesh.

This has been the only pragmatic basis on which a solution could be found. This also involves a basic assumption that the Himalayas are a natural boundary between the two countries. In yielding on Aksai Chin, India would concede Chinese primacy north of the mountain range. In giving up claims for Arunachal, China will accept India's control of the southern slopes of the Himalayas. This realistic settlement has been there for the taking for a long time. But a peculiar mindset about China had gripped India since the late 1950s and led to unsustainable public posturing on the boundary dispute and an unwillingness to come to terms with the reality.

Third, the significance of Mr. Vajpayee's visit to China lies in the fact that the Government is finally ready to break out of that mindset. Ironically, Mr. Vajpayee was among the many on the right of the political spectrum in the 1950s, including a

large section of the Congress, who made it impossible for Jawaharlal Nehru to resolve the boundary dispute with China on a reasonable basis. It was also this mindset that had made the 1962 confrontation with China an inevitable one.

If Mr. Vajpayee can overcome the certain opposition from sections of his own party to a pragmatic settlement of the boundary dispute, the overall political context might be propitious for a final settlement. The Left parties will certainly back a deal on the boundary with China.

The Congress has not criticised the outcome of Mr. Vajpayee's trip and it is unlikely to object to a reasonable settlement. More fundamentally, India as a whole has largely overcome the trauma of 1962 and is looking outward with much greater self-confidence. With the business community now tantalised by the prospects in the China market, Mr. Vajpayee is now in a position to successfully sell a boundary settlement to the Indian people.

The new political mood in the country makes the 1962 Parliament resolution on regaining every square inch of the "lost" territory from China a historic rather than a living one. The argument that the Parliamentary resolution is an insurmountable obstacle to a settlement of the boundary dispute does not stand close scrutiny.

Parliaments are sovereign bodies and reflect the political sense of the times, rather than a mere commitment to past resolutions. Any final settlement of the boundary dispute with China will have to be based on a broad agreement within the Indian political class.

Building that national consensus will be a major political task for the Government as it prepares to negotiate seriously on the boundary dispute. The effort must be aimed not just at the political parties, but also the chattering classes who shape public perceptions on key issues. As negotiations move forward, the cries of "sell-out" will be heard with greater vehemence than ever before. Balancing the political imperatives of transparency about the broad direc-

tion of the negotiations with the importance of diplomatic confidentiality will be a major challenge for the Government. Persuading the Indian public to accept a recasting of the Indian territorial map that many generations have grown up with is not going to be easy. It would require a significant public effort at education.

Although the broad outlines of a boundary settlement with China are visible, the devil is in the detail. And negotiations with the Chinese establishment, as always, must be expected to be tough. While the new Chinese leadership appears amenable to a productive political dialogue, India should be fully prepared for the unexpected. A whole range of internal and external circumstances could easily create complications for the Sino-Indian boundary talks.

Negotiations on the boundary dispute will at once be diplomatically challenging and politically rewarding for India.

For one, a settled frontier with China would liberate India from the two-front problem that has stared it in the face since the late 1950s. India's strategic energies will be released to deal with other security challenges as well play a larger role in Asia and beyond.

Second, an agreement on the boundary with China could also set the tone for a final settlement of the Kashmir question with Pakistan. If reason and realism are the bases for resolving the boundary dispute with China, the political pressures on Pakistan from within the region and beyond to accept the same principles in its relationship with India are likely to increase.

Third, settled frontiers with China would open the door for immense possibilities for trade and economic cooperation between neighbouring provinces of the two countries. While the door has been cracked open between Sikkim and Tibet, the prospects are even more alluring elsewhere between India's northeast and China's southwest.

These two land-locked regions along with Myanmar and Bangladesh could witness explosive economic growth if New Delhi and Beijing agree for regional economic integration. Mr. Vajpayee is all set to negotiate a final settlement of the long-standing boundary dispute with China. Let the tough bargaining begin.

THE HINDU

A relationship beyond Tibet

TWENTY-TWENTY

BHARAT BHUSHAN

Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's China visit is being criticized for conceding advantage to China on Tibet and getting only a trading post in Sikkim in return. But what if the big story turns out to be the advanced stage of negotiations on a Tibet settlement between the Chinese and the *dalai lama*?

That something serious is afoot between the *dalai lama* and the Chinese is indicated by the attitude of the Tibetans in exile. They have not criticized India for recognizing that the "Tibet Autonomous Region" is a part of China.

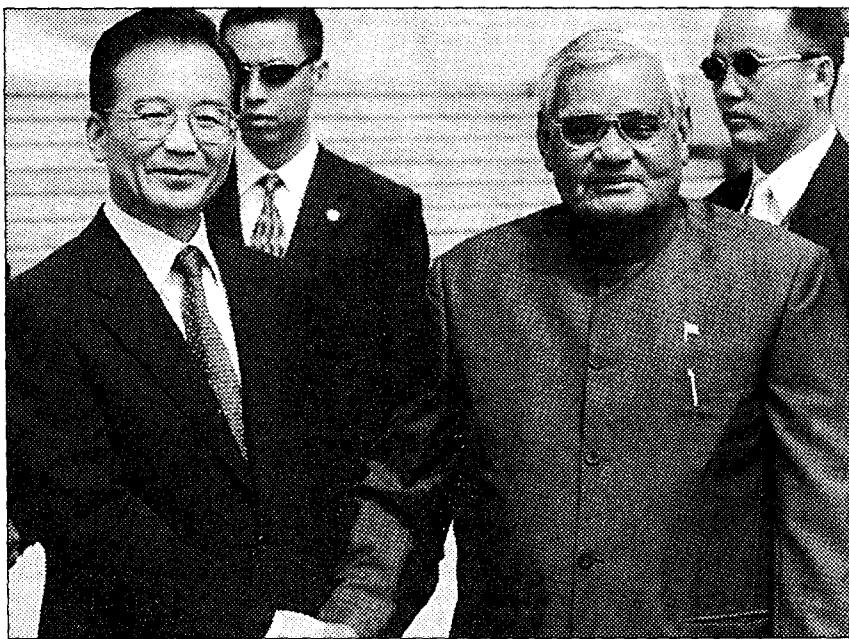
What if in addition to greater autonomy the *dalai lama* were to agree to accept a political role (say, as the vice-premier of China) while at the same time being recognized by Beijing as the supreme Buddhist leader of Tibet? Should we then not leave the Tibetans to decide what constitutes Tibet within China and what kind of autonomy it needs? Instead of semantic battles over how to describe Tibet then, India should prepare to move on with its relationship with China.

One could argue that there are three broad aspects of India's emerging China policy which take it in that direction. There is an attempt to stabilize and reduce suspicion in the relationship. Instead of endless meetings of technical experts which have stalled the border negotiations, there is a move towards using political principles for settling the issue. And the role of intensified economic cooperation in influencing the political relationship has been duly recognized.

Since the late Fifties, and especially after the 1962 war, China has dominated Indian strategic thinking. Despite four wars with Pakistan, it is essentially considered only an irritant by India. China is perceived as a strategic threat. Hence Vajpayee's letter to the US president, Bill Clinton, of May 12, 1998 rationalizing India's second set of nuclear tests and an un-deconstructed George Fernandes as the then defence minister declaring that China was India's potential threat number one.

India's neighbours, acutely aware of the deep distrust between the two countries have made use of it to their advantage. India was constantly on its toes about Nepal playing the China card as well as the growing military links between China and the countries on its eastern flank — Myanmar and Bangladesh. Then of course, there is the Chinese strategic alliance with Pakistan which is used by Beijing to keep New Delhi tied down regionally.

Each step that China took in India's neighbourhood was seen as undermin-



Strategic moves

ing its influence. Questions continue to be raised about Chinese motivations in the region: did China not fund the Kathmandu-Lhasa highway in the early Sixties to facilitate the potential movement of troops southwards? Was Rajiv Gandhi not right in imposing a trade blockade on Nepal in 1988 for acquiring Chinese anti-aircraft guns? Why is Myanmar allowing a Chinese listening post at Coco Islands? If the Chinese are building roads in Myanmar to get access to Indian Ocean, should India also not build a road to southeast Asia through Mandalay to counter its influence? Why has Khalida Zia entered into a comprehensive military cooperation treaty with China?

The stream of suspicion about China in Indian political consciousness is endless. Its negative impact is that it keeps India's policy in the region in a flux, preventing it from acquiring a desired stability.

If Sino-Indian ties are stabilized — at least at a much lower level of suspicion — then India need not be constantly preoccupied with second-guessing Chinese intentions in the region. This does not mean that the two big neighbours will not compete for influence in south Asia and beyond. Nor should one expect China to give up the strategic advantage

of its relationship with Pakistan. However, the uncertainty which has driven Indian policy not only toward Beijing but also towards its other neighbours would be reduced. The smaller countries in the neighbourhood would also not be able to play the China card wantonly.

A major step in this direction would be settling the Sino-Indian border. Finally, the Indian government seems to have decided to keep the specialists away from the negotiating table in order to take a bold political decision.

National security advisor, Brajesh Mishra, would not have been appointed as the special representative for a political settlement of the border if a considerable amount of ground work had not been done already. Although there is no evidence in the open about this, rumours have it that Mishra, who had been engaged with the Sino-Indian border issue, made at least one unpublicized visit to China to discuss this in October 2000.

The border settlement could be expected to take place within a couple of years. Jettisoning the sector-by-sector approach to the border settlement for political principles suggests giving up on the inertia associated with technical intricacies. One possibility could be that we may once again be looking at some

kind of area swap between the eastern sector (roughly corresponding to the Inner Line in Arunachal Pradesh — about 90,000 square kilometre in area) and the western sector (Aksai Chin plateau — about 38,000 sq km).

The east-west swap was first proposed unofficially by Zhou Enlai in 1960 when he talked of "reciprocal acceptance of present realities in both sectors." In 1980, the proposal was revived — once again unofficially — in an interview to an Indian defence journal by Deng Xiaoping. He suggested the package deal of China accepting the McMahon Line in the east in return for India recognizing the *status quo* in the west.

The geo-political significance of the Aksai Chin plateau — as the western route to Tibet — has reduced over time as China has built better land and air links with Tibet. In any case, India stands to be a net gainer of area in the east if it accepts a swap. The area swap proposal, if revived, would meet the security needs of both the countries and allow India to benefit from oil and gas pipelines through Xinjiang from central Asia.

The speed of movement on a comprehensive border settlement, however, would depend on evolving national consensus for it in both the countries. If jingoistic forces in India start claiming that not one square centimetre of Bharat Mata can be given up or exchanged, for example, then Vajpayee's degree of freedom in securing a border settlement would be reduced.

That enhanced economic links can underwrite a better relationship is indicated by the fact that Sino-Indian trade has been growing at the rate of 60 to 70 per cent annually without any facilitation by New Delhi. Last year the total trade between the two countries stood at about Rs 24,000 crore. The immediate goal is to double in a year.

The two trading posts in Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh together account for only Rs 9.5 crore of the total trade. Changu in Sikkim is expected to add another Rs 25 crore to Rs 50 crore a year. The tremendous potential for economic cooperation with China, if realized, will impact positively on the political ties between the two countries. This underplayed aspect of the Vajpayee's visit may yet prove to be the catalyst that would take Sino-Indian ties to a new level. Strategic experts may keep carping about the foolishness of giving up the Tibet card. Meanwhile, the world would have moved on.

India-China war games on anvil

Vishal Thapar
New Delhi, July 1

THOUGH STILL a far cry from the "bhai-bhai" sentiment, Indian and Chinese militaries are set to forge a new relationship like never before. The biggest-ever Chinese military delegation arrived in New Delhi on Sunday to discuss modalities for the first-ever Sino-Indian Air Force exercise.

The IAF sources said even fighter exercises were a possibility later this year. They described the development as a "conscious attempt" at pushing the confidence building measures and the new bonhomie at the politico-government level down to the militaries.

"This conscious attempt to extend Sino-Indian cooperation to the military field is a follow-up of the succes-

sive visits of the defence minister and Prime Minister to China," sources said. The navies of the two countries, too, are planning a basic exercise later this year.

Officially, the IAF described the visit as "a step towards betterment of Sino-Indian relations".

The 50-member high-level delegation of the air force wing of the Chinese People's Liberation Army currently in New Delhi is led by Major General Zeng. Prominent on their week-long itinerary in India are discussions with the IAF's Directorate of Concepts and Doctrines on giving shape to future engagements between the two air forces.

"The Chinese will have conceptual discussions, in which the IAF will be led by Air Vice-Marshal P.P. Raj Kumar, the Assistant Chief

of Air Staff (Concepts and Doctrines)," sources disclosed.

If the fighter exercises do materialise, the IAF will get its first opportunity to engage another air force with top-of-the-line Sukhoi. The spearhead of the Chinese air force is the Sukhoi-27, while the Indians have two squadrons of the more advanced Sukhoi-30MKI version and are poised to acquire more.

The air forces and navies of the two countries are relatively freer from the ghosts of 1962. There was no skirmish in the air during the 1962 Chinese aggression. Even at the army level, an improvement in relations has been reported.

Defence Minister George Fernandes has spoken of the relative easing of tensions, and even good inter-



Atal Bihari Vajpayee
Strikes a deal

action between the armies at places like Nathu La.

After meeting key officers at Air Headquarters here, the PLA air force delegation is slated to visit the Air Force Station at Agra, Ojhar, the National Defence Academy and other joint services institutions.

MONDAY, JUNE 30, 2003

WELL DONE

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THERE CAN BE little doubt that both India and China stand to gain importantly from Prime Minister Vajpayee's six-day visit. It has succeeded in deepening as well as broadening bilateral relations by yielding a Joint Declaration, the first of its kind between India and China; nine agreements denoting the new businesslike spread of the relationship, including a promising new agreement on border trade; a welcome thrust toward economic cooperation and bilateral trade; and a clear demonstration of high-level political will to build on the gains made in the bilateral relationship since 1988. The leadership of both countries can take credit for the mature way in which they have responded, in 2003, to the challenge of taking the India-China relationship to a new level. For Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee personally, it is a vindication of the soundness of the effort he made in February 1979, as External Affairs Minister in a disjointed Janata Party government, to bring normalcy to a problematical bilateral relationship — an early bird attempt that could not succeed because objective circumstances, external as well as domestic, were at odds with it.

The joint Declaration on Principles for Relations and Comprehensive Cooperation is a commendable exercise. It formulates core principles that should govern the India-China relationship and rolls out a road map for friendship and cooperation that goes into particulars. Understanding, and acting sincerely on, these principles must be regarded as the key to the success of the big undertaking of building "a qualitatively new relationship." As the Joint Declaration sees it, the core principles flow from the mutually perceived need to promote the economic development and prosperity of the world's two most populous countries, maintain peace and stability in the region and in the world at large, "strengthen multipolarity at the international level," and "enhance the positive factors of globalisation."

The principles themselves can be summarised as follows: (a) India and China must be committed to developing a long term cooperative "partnership" on the basis of the principles of Panchsheel, mutual respect and sensitivity for each other's concerns, and equality; (b) The two countries have a shared interest in maintaining peace, stability and prosperity in Asia and the world and a mutual desire to forge wider and closer cooperation and understanding in regional and international affairs; (c) "the common interests of the two sides outweigh their differences... the two countries are not a threat to each other... [and] neither side shall use or threaten to use force against the other"; and (d) India and China must aim for a qualitative enhancement of the bilateral relationship at "all levels and in all areas" while addressing differences peacefully, fairly, reasonably and in a way calculated to persuade the other side, and be clear that "the differences should not be allowed to affect the overall development of bilateral relations."

These, broadly, are the principles this newspaper has been advocating editorially for many years as the key to raising the India-China relationship to where it belongs, if an objective, realistic and forward-looking view were adopted. Some of these principles were tragically violated in the period 1958-1962, when the bilateral relationship turned sour, then bitter, and was finally ruptured. On the positive side, many actors, events and processes contributed, over decades, to the working out of these principles. Mao Zedong's famous smile and handshake; his 1970 "instruction" that China should work for the improvement of relations with India; Ambassador K. R. Narayanan's restorative and forward-looking work in China during 1976-78; the Vajpayee visit of 1979; the Rajiv Gandhi breakthrough visit of December 1988; Premier Li Peng's December 1991 return visit, which produced a reiterated

mutual public commitment to maintain peace and tranquillity along the Line of Actual Control (LAC); Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao's important September 1993 visit, which saw the conclusion of an invaluable agreement on Maintenance of Peace and Tranquillity along the LAC; President Jiang Zemin's late-1996 visit, which witnessed a major consolidation of this progress; high level military delegation visits in 1994, 1997 and 1998; President K.R. Narayanan's atmosphere-building visit of May-June 2000 — these represent defining moments in the evolution of these principles. For the sake of factuality, it must be noted that an ill-advised letter of May 11, 1998 written by Mr. Vajpayee to the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, in the wake of the Pokhran nuclear explosions caused a temporary setback to the relationship. However, with the Government of India making amends, that unhappy chapter was quickly closed.

Politically, the Prime Minister's visit to China has produced at least four significant outcomes. The first is the Joint Declaration itself. The second is the nomination of Special Representatives who will try and work out a framework for a boundary settlement from an overarching political perspective. This is a clear acknowledgement that progress in this area has been quite slow, although perhaps not much slower than might have been reasonably expected; and that while the work of experts and officials is important, politics holds the key to a boundary settlement in both India and China. Political India, for its part, must be clear that while positions and claims can be maintained and argued, there must be a clear break with the principle of unilateralism. A settlement of a long disputed boundary can only be based on fair, reasonable and, to the extent possible, scientific principles — above all, the principle of "give and take" famously advocated by Premier Zhou Enlai and Mr. Deng, and by many reasonable Indian statesmen over the years. Thirdly, on the question of Tibet, there seems to be a newly nuanced Indian official position. It is that India recognises that "the Tibet Autonomous Region is part of the territory of the People's Republic of China" (which is not as far a cry from saying that "Tibet is an integral part of China" as Ministry of External Affairs officials seem to imagine). The reiteration of the policy of not allowing Tibetans, including the Dalai Lama, to "engage in anti-China political activities in India" will serve to allay uneasiness and apprehensions on the Chinese side. However, this long-stated Indian policy can begin to make a better contribution to a qualitatively better India-China relationship only if there is strict adherence to, or better compliance with, the policy. Fourthly, India can take satisfaction from the official Chinese movement towards a recognition of Sikkim as an integral part of India, no matter how the small Himalayan state came into the Indian Union. This movement has come in the agreement on expanding border trade through Sikkim.

Finally, the Vajpayee visit brought a welcome focus on economic cooperation between India and China. A \$ 5 billion level of two-way trade is nothing to scoff at and the prospects are bright and exciting, especially if the Joint Study Group (of economists and officials) being set up works with a vision and without hang-ups. India's business community seems to have nothing but admiration for China's remarkable post-1979 economic transformation and policies while China's business and political leaders seem almost in awe of India's emergence on the world stage as a "software superpower." Such perceptions of mutual and complementary strengths as well as honest acknowledgement that a great deal needs to be done in overcoming mass deprivation and backwardness in the two developing countries with different systems should count for much in actualising the vision presented in the Joint Declaration.

India to exchange tariff concessions with China

By Our Special Correspondent

गुड चीन *19/6*
NEW DELHI, JUNE 28. A day after the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, returned from China, the Government today decided to exchange tariff concessions with that country on a number of items as part of a strategy to boost the economic ties.

Announcing the decision taken at a meeting of the Union Cabinet this evening, Union Minister and Cabinet spokesperson said while China had given an offer list of 182 items corresponding to 217 tariff lines, India would grant concessions on 106 items corresponding to 188 tariff lines. The concessions offered by China include tariff preferences on several products, such as textiles, chemicals, leather and diamond, already being exported by India. Now India will be eligible for concessions on 722 items, which cover around 25 to 30 of the total exports to China in value terms. The tariff lines for which India is offering concessions, on the other hand, would cover about two per cent of the country's imports from China in values.

Urban reforms

Chaired by Mr. Vajpayee, the Cabinet meeting also cleared a proposal to set up a special Rs. 500-crore fund to provide incentives to States going in for urban reforms. Under the fund, States would be eligible for Central assistance and incentives on 100 per cent grant for housing, urban development and poverty alleviation schemes and projects, if they agreed to undertake reforms in areas such as repeal of Urban Land Ceiling Act, reduction of stamp duty, introduction of doubling system, and strengthening of the municipal laws. For the scheme, the Ministry of Urban Development would sign MoUs with the States. Half of the grant would be released on signing the MoUs and the balance once the milestones are reached. An empowered committee headed by Secretary, Department of Urban Employment and Poverty Alleviation, would supervise and monitor the progress of the scheme. The funding would be in addition to annual plans of the States.

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, which met today, decided to allocate Rs. 605 crores for the national pulse polio immunisation programme this year and approved the rehabilitation and upgrading of the existing two-lane road to four lanes for the 506-km east-west corridor in Gujarat as part of the National Highway Development Project.

Atal back with Sikkim hope

ASHIS CHAKRABARTI

Shanghai, June 27: Delhi hopes China will soon initiate steps on the question of recognition of Sikkim as part of India.

Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee today hinted as much, saying: "What we want to achieve (China's recognition of Sikkim) will soon be achieved."

China will make its position clear on the issue, as a key negotiator put it, "in the not too distant future — within a few months". Talks at both official and political levels during Vajpayee's China visit have convinced India that it may now be only a matter of time.

Even the agreement on border trade through Nathu-la is being seen as a stepping-stone toward China's de jure acceptance of Sikkim's 1975 accession to India. The agreement is an unmistakable indication that China has accepted Nathu-la as the border between the two countries and by extension, Sikkim as part of India.

Addressing Indian journalists at the end of his official visit to China, Vajpayee also sought to discount fears that the joint declaration signed by him and Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao compromised India's traditional position on Tibet.

There was "nothing new and nothing was conceded", Vajpayee said. India's position on Tibet had "neither ambiguity nor inconsistency".

An argument in support of the Indian position was that it closely resembled the US state department's Tibetan Policy Act of 2002, which says that the US "recognises the Tibet Autonomous Region to be part of the People's Republic of China".

It also says that the US "encourages China and the Dalai Lama to hold substantive discussions aimed at resolution of differences at an early date, without preconditions".

Indian negotiators were at pains to explain that this precisely has been India's position and it has now been put in an official document. Like the US, India, too, wants the Tibetans to have "cultural and religious autonomy" from Beijing. (See Page 8)

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THE TELEGRAPH

Cyber fusion

So the Dragon and Tiger can e-tango but we need to get the music right

ON Thursday, Prime Minister Vajpayee addressed a seminar organised by Nasscom and the China Council for Promotion of Investment and Trade in Shanghai and talked of the potential of India and China doing business together in the IT sector. But much before that, software professionals in the US had expressed alarm over a draft bill that was being debated in Beijing which stipulated that at least 30 per cent of funding for the online information projects of the Chinese government be spent on software, with at least half of this money being used to purchase domestic Chinese software. The question raised at that juncture, of course, was whether there were enough domestic software suppliers in China to meet this demand and American lobbyists took heart from the fact that there weren't. Well, perhaps, that could change if China responds favourably to the invitation Vajpayee extended to it at Shanghai.

The prime minister's speech was interesting for two reasons. One, it provided an alternative framework for Indo-China relations based on complementarity rather than competition. Two, it underlined the need to think ahead and break out of the confines of the "traditional". Therefore, while mango farmers in India have reason to be grateful to China for partially opening its markets to them, the real quantum leap in the future — as everybody knows and as Vajpayee underlined —

has to be e-powered. There is an opportunity here, the prime minister said, for an "effective alliance" between Chinese hardware producers and Indian software professionals. Some of this is already happening with Indian IT giants looking to access Japanese markets with Chinese manpower. Infosys is to soon open an office in Shanghai, while TCS and Satyam already have a presence in that country. We now need to expand on this and perhaps the two governments should move on setting up a joint institutional mechanism to provide the necessary fillip.

There is an additional aspect to be considered here. Indian diplomacy has traditionally veered away from taking an overt interest in the business of Indian business. Therefore, the new savvy with which the government now showcases Indian IT talent is all to the good. Just look how the Americans do it. Their leaders, including very often presidents themselves, are not shy about promoting the interests of US companies and even occasionally twisting an arm to drive the point home. The Indian government has traditionally been far more conservative in these matters, ever conscious of the divide between political diplomacy and corporate lobbying. In a rapidly globalising world, however, such punctiliousness doesn't pay. India needs to sell itself with a new aggression, especially in areas like IT where it has demonstrated world class potential.

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28/6

India, China joint naval exercises soon

By Sandeep Dikshit

NEW DELHI, JUNE 27. India and China will step up military ties with the first-ever joint naval exercises planned for later this month, senior naval officers said here today. The two sides have been encouraging mutual visits by high-ranking military officials and training of Indian military officers in Chinese military institutes.

The joint exercises will be in the form of search and rescue exercises for three days on the high seas off the eastern coast. The date and venue of the exercises were being worked out by officials of the two countries, the Vice-Chief of Naval Staff, John D'Silva, said.

The Indian side had initially planned joint anti-piracy exercises in the theft-prone Malacca Straits where it had conducted anti-piracy patrols on behalf of the U.S. led 'alliance against terrorism'. However, China drew attention to certain operational difficulties, the most important being that its Coast Guard performs these functions. It was therefore decided to make a beginning, with search and rescue exercises between the two navies.

The idea was first discussed intensively at the April meeting between the Defence Minister, George Fernandes, and Chairman of the Central Military Commission, Jiang Zemin, in Shanghai. Both sides decided to work on improving bilateral military ties through greater interaction be-

tween officers and more cooperation on the high seas. Further impetus was provided by the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee's China visit.

Military-level interaction along with easing of eyeball-to-eyeball confrontation on the Sino-Indian border has been taking place gradually since the early nineties. Besides delegation level visits of military officials and India's mid-level officers undergoing courses in Chinese institutions, several concurrent steps have led to thawing of ties, the latest being the opening of border trade through Sikkim. The progress in Sino-Indian security related ties has been marked by port calls by naval vessels, exchange of maps of the middle sector on the Line of Actual Control and activation of Indo-China dialogue on mechanism to counter terrorism.

Though the annual report of the Defence Ministry was delayed by a couple of months to revise India's security related perceptions of China, it noted that the fact that "every major Indian city is within the reach of Chinese missiles cannot be ignored".

Moreover, the asymmetry in terms of nuclear forces is pronouncedly in favour of China and may get accentuated as it responds to counter the U.S. missile defence programme. It also took note of China's close defence ties with Pakistan which "takes a further edge in view of the latter's known belligerence and hostility to India and its nuclear tests".

Sino-Indian dialogue catches world's eye

By P. S. Suryanarayana

BEIJING, JUNE 27. While China has portrayed its latest summit-level dialogue with India here as a major bilateral event, the international community has evinced considerable interest in the outcome of the new Sino-Indian exchanges.

The curiosity factor, which amounts to an assessment of the strategic implications of the Sino-Indian rapport for global politics, is quite high insofar as the major Western powers are concerned, diplomatic enquiries here indicate. On a particularly critical aspect of current international concerns — post-Saddam Iraq under U.S. occupation — India and China have not expressed any common viewpoint.

It is understood that the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, and the Chinese leaders have not really zeroed in their focus on Washington's independent exchange of views with India over the choices before it regarding the U.S. suggestion that New Delhi send troops for "stabilisation" duties in Iraq. China is certainly known to watch with interest any signs of an upward trend in the U.S.-India strategic engagement.

However, authoritative Chinese sources have told this correspondent that Beijing is not apprehensive of being caught in the web of any Indo-American project that might be aimed at containing China. The farthest that India and China have gone in formulating a stand on the issue of re-fashioning the current global

system is to speak of the "importance" of their "respective roles", not a joint endeavour as such, in bringing a new international political-economic order into being.

Of considerable relevance to the international community are two issues about India's status — New Delhi's nuclear weapons and its aspiration to become a full-fledged permanent member of the United Nations Security Council.

In cyberspace imagery, the latest Sino-Indian summit has not resulted in a firm Chinese position, one way or another, on the virtual reality of India as a nuclear power outside the framework of the existing Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Significantly, in this context, India and China have now formulated their preference for "equal security for all countries at progressively lower levels of armament".

The two have pronounced themselves in favour of "nuclear disarmament and (the) elimination of nuclear weapons" as goals that could be attained through "multilateral negotiations".

Of interest to the major powers is the Sino-Indian opposition to the introduction of weapons, including nuclear arms, in outer space and to the "use or (the) threat of (deploying) force against space-based objects".

As outer space is reckoned to be the next frontier in the realm of international competition for power and pride, the Sino-Indian

opposition to the weaponisation of space is considered important. China and India have, therefore, underlined their support for peaceful uses of space technology.

On India's credentials for veto-empowered permanent membership of the U.N. Security Council, China has not committed itself, at this stage, to supporting New Delhi's candidature. China's position on this issue will be crucial at the appropriate time.

With China and India beginning to exude confidence about their future ties, despite the backlog of bilateral concerns, two other aspects of their "Declaration on Principles for Relations" have attracted attention on the international circuit. These aspects relate to the Sino-Indian pledge about their "equality" and their "sensitivity for each other's concerns".

A related formula is that India and China "are not a threat to each other" and that their new bonhomie is "not targeted at any third country".

With China and India stating that their new goodwill for each other "does not affect either country's existing friendly relations and cooperation with other countries", no seismic shift in regional or global politics is promised by either New Delhi or Beijing.

However, the international community has begun to watch if the fault lines on the Sino-Indian strategic front could yet be set right instead of being papered over.

NOTHING NEW ACCEPTED ON TIBET, SAYS VAJPAYEE

'India, China have found a path to resolve border row'

By Amit Baruah

SHANGHAI, JUNE 27. The Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, said today that India and China had not just simply discussed their boundary dispute, but had found a "path" to resolve the contentious question.

"The kind of talks that I have had on the boundary issue during this visit have, perhaps, never taken place before," the Prime Minister said at a press conference, pointing to the appointment of Special Representatives who will set the "political principles" to resolve the issue. He hoped that the "new initiative" would "accelerate the search for a solution" to the vexed problem. "Both countries had been discussing principles which are to be followed for an eventual boundary settlement."

On Sikkim and the opening of the border trade, Mr. Vajpayee said that whatever decision had been taken "would take us in the right direction". It was his belief that India's objective (formal recognition of Sikkim by China) would now be achieved early, he said.

On the concerns of Tibetan refugees in India, the Prime Minister, who returned to New Delhi at the end of a six-day visit, revealed that "Tibetan friends" had been consulted by the Government prior to his tour and even during the course of the China visit. "They are satisfied with India's spin."

Despite using the official Chinese title for Tibet (the Tibet Autonomous Region), he tried to put a "new spin" on the issue saying that India had stressed "Tibetan autonomy" in the joint declaration agreed to on Monday. "Nothing new has been accepted or said on Tibet," he said obviously answering possible criticism of the new formulation. "We have reiterated what we have been saying for years. We have stressed Tibet's autonomy," he said adding that the sentiment of Tibet's autonomy had been conveyed to the agreed statement.

In a written statement circulated to the press, the Prime Minister said about the border trade accord through Sikkim: "With this protocol, which would enable trade between

Sikkim and Tibet, we have also started the process by which Sikkim will cease to an issue in India-China relations."

On Tibet, he said: "There has been much discussion and debate on our position on Tibet, as reflected in the Joint Declaration. I do not wish to go into long and tedious explanations or analyses of words. I would only like to state that there is no ambiguity or inconsistency in our position on the Tibet Autonomous Region..."

About his visit, Mr. Vajpayee said the last few days had shown that India and China were moving in the right direction. "The road ahead is a long one, but a good beginning has been made."

The Prime Minister did not answer a question relating to the contradiction between committing India to a "multipolar" world order as contained in the joint declaration and sending troops to Iraq. Reiterating that no decision had been taken on the issue, he said that Indian troops coming in harm's way would be considered before coming to a conclusion. A deci-

sion on the troops issue would be taken after his return to New Delhi.

Asked for his impression of the new generation of Chinese leaders, the Prime Minister said that after meeting them he was sure that India could do business with them.

He ruled out the possibility of any defence agreement with China, but maintained that limited cooperation in the sector was possible. Bilateral issues and the international situation, including conditions on the Korean peninsula, had come up for discussions during his talks in Beijing.

Terming "economic cooperation" the new dimension of India-China ties, Mr. Vajpayee said there were infinite possibilities of expanding trade between the two countries.

He indicated that contentious issues such as the "supply" of missiles by China to Pakistan were not raised during the talks.

Asked if he saw the possibility of a U.S.-brokered West Asia type of peace process in South Asia, Mr. Vajpayee rejected the suggestion out of hand.

Before leaving Shanghai, Mr. Vajpayee spoke to his Chinese counterpart, Wen Jiabao, over telephone and thanked him for the hospitality extended.

Reiterating his invitation for Mr. Wen to visit India, Mr. Vajpayee agreed that they would be in regular contact on issues of mutual interest.

In his written statement, the Prime Minister said: "My discussions with President Hu Jintao, Chairman Jiang Zemin and Premier Wen Jiabao... were most cordial and fruitful."

"We got the distinct message from these meetings that China fully reciprocates our desire for mutual goodwill and for a comprehensive expansion of our cooperation in all areas. We were also in agreement that cooperative relations between India and China would be a positive force in the search for a multipolar world order. All my interlocutors stressed that the current global situation requires India and China to work together."



The Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, being greeted by the Deputy Prime Minister, L.K. Advani, and the Finance Minister, Jaswant Singh, at the airport in New Delhi on Friday on his return from China. — AFP

10-10
SATURDAY, JUNE 28, 2003

COLLABORATION, NOT COMPETITION

THERE WAS AS much positive economic content to the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee's visit to China, as political or strategic. While the latter two issues may take time to solve, there is scope and potential for immediate and significant progress in economic cooperation and stepping up of bilateral trade. The Prime Minister has touched on two very specific areas where the two 'Asian giants' could work together for substantive gains — on WTO issues and in the field of Information Technology. With the two countries accounting for one-third of the world's population and offering the biggest markets to manufacturers, a greater synergy on their part to not just formulate a joint strategy, but also shape the response of the developing economies to issues of world trade, globalisation and liberalisation, could make a deep impact on the WTO and world trade. Similarly, marrying India's software potential and expertise with China's hardware competence and proficiency in harnessing the Chinese language in the use of the internet and computer programmes could make for a win-win combination. To start with, the private sector in the two countries and the Governments should build up a closer rapport and institutionalise their linkages to bring about a qualitative and quantitative increase in bilateral trade. Considering the size of the two economies, bilateral trade remains disproportionately low — in the region of \$ 3 billion to \$ 4 billion. The short-term objective should be to double the trade in two to three years.

On the WTO front, China being a recent entrant, should find it useful to engage India in closer consultations so that the two neighbours could evolve a joint approach on issues that affect both the economies. Given the fact that they have near-identical areas of strength — as in agriculture, textiles, IT, services and manufacturing to name a few sectors — it is possible to work out a mutually beneficial position, which will also be welcomed by other

developing economies. The way in which industrialised countries are violating the spirit of the multilateral agreements, protecting sensitive sectors of their economies such as agriculture, while forcing developing countries to open up their economies to world trade, should make the latter stand up for their rights. The beneficial provisions of the Uruguay Round of talks have deliberately been kept to the last phase of implementation and the industrialised countries are now pressing for another round of comprehensive talks for further liberalisation of trade. Unless their share in world trade rises proportionately, the developing countries, especially the Least Developed Countries, run the risk of being marginalised.

In the realm of IT, some Indian companies have taken the first steps towards forging a partnership with their counterparts in China. Unless there is a frequent and high level of exchange of visits of not just the top names in IT, but also the small and medium players — who abound in China — a useful and sustained synergy cannot be achieved. Some of India's friends such as Singapore have already offered to play a catalytic role in cementing India-China economic ties. Indian companies must explore all avenues, including direct investment, partnership with Chinese firms and an entry through a known partner, to make their forays into China, even while inviting their counterparts to join collaborative ventures here. The objective of the exercise should be to team up for a mutually beneficial partnership; encourage healthy competition, but avoid unhealthy rivalry. But Indian industry should realise that it will not be a path of roses. There are major differences in systems, structures and approaches in China, which make it easier to work with local partners. It is possible that an impetus to economic cooperation will create a congenial atmosphere for the resolution of other bilateral problems and usher in an era of friendship between the two neighbours, who have remained cold to each other for too long.

28 JUN 2003

China stays firm on Tibet, Sikkim

By P. S. Suryanarayana

BEIJING, JUNE 26. China sees its latest understanding with India on the Tibetan issue as a binding formulation with no room for ambiguity about New Delhi's acknowledgment of the finality of Tibet's status. Beijing does not also concede that the new Sino-Indian memorandum on border trade can be interpreted as a pointer to China's implicit or potential recognition of Sikkim as an integral part of India.

Outlining Beijing's firm position through diplomatic euphemisms and deft strokes of the soundbite, the spokesman of the Chinese Foreign Ministry, Kong Quan, affirmed here today that India's stand on Tibet "is very helpful" and that the issue of Sikkim would still require to be "solved in a gradual manner."

He set out China's thinking on these questions of India's concern in response to questions from *The Hindu* at a regular briefing for international journalists based here.

Asked whether the specific bilateral agreement about opening a point in Sikkim for trade along the China-India border could be viewed by New Delhi as an implicit or indirect Chinese affirmation of Indian sovereignty over the entire territory of Sikkim, Mr. Kong would not endorse any such reading of the relevant memorandum. It was, he underlined, "a border trade

"agreement." The unmistakable implication of this remark was that the new memorandum was, in contrast, no border agreement that could actually define Sikkim's final status.

Mr. Kong asserted that "the purpose" of the memorandum was to "expand border trade." Noting in this context that the political status of Sikkim was still a matter of historical baggage, he said that India and China "have to respect history and reality." Reiterating that the Sikkim question could not be settled overnight, he hinted that China was in no hurry as well. Amplifying the nuance, he merely expressed China's "hope" that the Sikkim puzzle "can be solved in a gradual manner" over time.

On Tibet, Mr. Kong was very effusive about "appreciating" India's conclusive acknowledgment of the Tibetan Autonomous Region as part of the territory of the People's Republic of China — a contemporary reality which Beijing looks upon as a constant, and not a variable, in global politics of the future as well.

The Indian position on Tibet, he said, could help "enhance confidence and defuse suspicions." Asked if it was not true that India had now diluted its earlier formulation that the traditional area of Tibet, which is said to extend beyond the present-day Tibetan Autonomous Region, was part of historical China and not just the present-day People's Republic of China,

Mr. Kong said he would only point to the definitive statement in the new bilateral Declaration on principles for relations between Beijing and New Delhi.

Answering questions from Western journalists, Mr. Kong said that China and India had now agreed to "enhance consultation and cooperation" so as to evolve a "fair and acceptable" solution through "negotiations" on an "equal footing" and by maintaining peace and tranquillity along their disputed border. "Special representatives will be assigned (by both China and India) to discuss the framework of a solution" to the boundary dispute, he emphasised.

Mr. Kong would not go into the question of difficulties over the exchange of sectoral maps pertaining to the Line of Actual Control (LAC) along the disputed border.

Overall, the latest Sino-Indian agreements, reached during the ongoing visit to China by the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, would have "a very important bearing on the comprehensive development of (the bilateral) relations." Replying to a question on Myanmar, Mr. Kong noted that the Myanmar question in specific form did not figure in the Sino-Indian summit at this time. However, the two countries "are determined to maintain peace and stability in the region."

PM for India-China alliance

By Amit Baruah

27/6

India - China

SHANGHAI, JUNE 26. The Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, has said it was "self-evident" from China's "core competence" in hardware and India's in software that there existed a natural ground for an "effective alliance" in the information technology sector.

Addressing a large gathering of industry and IT professionals here today, Mr. Vajpayee went to the extent of suggesting that the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing could provide a "good opportunity" for Indian and Chinese companies to work together.

In his last public function during his six-day China trip, the Prime Minister said it was appropriate that the IT event was being held in Shanghai — a showcase of China's economic transformation and a hub for its technological development.

He also referred to the establishment of a Joint Study Group to recommend concrete measures to further trade between the two countries; an agreement officials say is akin to the closer economic relationship that India has been trying to build with Singapore. "Our experience has been that in mega events like these, a substantial proportion of the contracts awarded in the IT sector are actually sub-contracted to Indian firms by contractors from the developed countries,"

the Prime Minister said making a strong pitch for direct industry linkages.

"Indian and Chinese firms could instead join up to provide state-of-the-art solutions at cost-effective prices, thereby also cutting out the middlemen. We could even think of a joint institutional mechanism between the two Governments which could see whether modalities could be worked out for this." If economic cooperation between India and China was to break out of the present "traditional" mould then knowledge-based technologies need to occupy a far more prominent position in the economic relations.

India's IT industry had been a major success story with market capitalisation climbing from \$ 4 billion to \$ 50 billion today while India's exports were some \$ 10 billion.

"Apart from traditional on-site software development, Indian companies have also ventured into IT-enabled services like call centres, medical transcription, data digitisation, legal data bases and animation.

"More than 500 portals are being launched in India every month. Of the 70 global software companies with the highest certification for quality control, 48 are Indian.

One of the four major IT firms has recently crossed \$1 billion in revenues, and at least two other major firms are close to this im-

in IT industry

110.1

pressive figure."

India was aware of China's impressive capabilities in information and communications technologies. "China is one of the world's leaders in computer hardware. The Chinese IT industry achieved a total volume of over \$ 25 billion in hardware alone. What is perhaps less well known is that China's software industry has also been surging ahead." There was another potential strategic gain from an India-China IT partnership. Technological advantage could only be sustained with intensive research and continuous innovation.

"If countries like India and China were to concentrate on specific areas of their technological advantage, they could benefit far more than by competing across the spectrum. In combination, rather than competition, Indian and Chinese IT industries can be a potent force. This is a principle which has far wider application in South-South cooperation."

Mr. Vajpayee said that India had a national e-governance programme seeking to link grassroots public services with those at the macro level. Here again, India and China could share experiences in optimising the e-governance systems. The Prime Minister, who leaves for home on Friday afternoon, is scheduled to address a press conference in Shanghai before his departure.

RECOGNITION OF TAR NOT A CONCESSION, SAYS INDIA

Brajesh is border envoy

Press Trust of India

BEIJING, June 24. — Maintaining that it had made no concessions, India today said its recognition of the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) as part of the territory of the People's Republic of China (PRC) was consistent with its stand since 1954. The two countries also announced the appointment of two special representatives to expedite settlement of the border issue.

The appointment of Mr Brajesh Mishra, National Security Adviser and Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, and Mr Dai Bingguo, seniormost Vice-Minister in the Chinese foreign ministry, as the two special representatives was announced by external affairs minister Mr Yashwant Sinha later.

Two key documents signed yesterday after Prime Minister Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee's talks with his Chinese counterpart Mr Wen Jiabao were made public here this evening. Mr Vajpayee today wound up his discussions with the Chinese leadership, including Central Military Commission chairman Mr Jiang Zemin and President Mr Hu Jintao.

The two documents released today were a joint declaration on principles that will guide Sino-Indian ties and a memorandum on expanding border trade. Prior to their release, the Chinese foreign ministry claimed India had admitted that the TAR was an "inalienable" part of China, a claim disproved by the Joint Declaration's text which does not contain the word "inalienable".

Covering the major elements in Sino-Indian ties, the six-page first ever Joint Declaration on "principles for relations and comprehensive cooperation" says both countries will appoint a special representative each to "explore from the political perspective of the overall bilateral relationship the framework of a boundary settlement."

Indian officials rejected suggestions that concessions were made on the Tibetan question, maintaining that the formulation was merely a "reflection of the contemporary ground reality". The thrust was on taking the bilateral relationship forward and there was great success in that direction, they said. Officials explained that since 1954 the expressions used in documents on Tibet included terms such as "Tibet region of China" (1954), "Tibetan region ... part of the PRC" (1958) and



Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee is driven around in a golf cart in the Forbidden City in Beijing on Tuesday. —AFP
Another photograph on page 4

"Tibet is an autonomous region of China" (1988 and 1991). The declaration says India recognised the TAR as part of China and reiterates it will not allow Tibetans to engage in anti-China activity in India.

In the memorandum on border trade, the two countries resolved to set up an additional point on each side besides the existing ones in Himachal and Uttaranchal.

What is significant from India's point of view is that the memorandum refers to opening another pass on the "India-China border", and that on the Indian side Changgu in "Sikkim state" has been designated for this purpose. Renqinggang in Tibet has been identified as the corresponding venue on the Chinese side. India sees this as a significant step towards the ultimate recognition by China of Sikkim's merger with the Indian Union, something Beijing has

refused to acknowledge so far.

While some Indian observers saw this as an implicit acknowledgement of Sikkim being Indian territory, the Chinese foreign ministry differed with such speculation, saying the "Sikkim issue" could not be resolved "overnight" as it was "left over from history".

On the border issue, the declaration affirms a readiness on both sides "to seek a fair, reasonable and acceptable solution through consultations on an equal footing".

Earlier, Mr Vajpayee called on Mr Jiang Zemin at Yuquan Shan resort. He also visited the Forbidden City. **Invitations:** Chinese President Mr Hu Jintao and Prime Minister Mr Wen Jiabao have both accepted invitations to visit India at a mutually convenient time, it was officially announced today.

Tibetan unrest feared, page 4

THE PACKAGE

- Brajesh Mishra to be India's special representative on the border; China appoints a senior foreign ministry vice-minister
- Tibetans won't be allowed to indulge in anti-China political activity on Indian soil
- An additional border trading point to be set up in Sikkim and Tibet, besides the existing ones in Himachal and Uttaranchal
- Changu in Sikkim identified as a possible border trading pass
- China keen on a border trade outpost at Renqingang in Tibet
- Nathu La as the pass for entry/exit of people, transport and commodities

PERILS OF PEACE

Indian diplomacy seems to have floundered once again. The growing popular belief that New Delhi's foreign policy had been injected with new realism will be deeply eroded because of the latest news from Beijing and Washington, unarguably the two most important centres of power in international relations today. In Beijing, the pressure to make Mr Atal Bihari Vajpayee's visit a success seems to have forced South Block into making substantive unilateral concessions. And Islamabad seems to have outmanoeuvred New Delhi in Washington once again.

Consider first the reports from Beijing. Two agreements have emerged from the deliberations that the prime minister and his team had with their Chinese interlocutors: a declaration on principles for relations and comprehensive cooperation; and a memorandum of understanding on expanding border trade. Shorn of diplomatic gobbledegook, there is a vital concession that India makes in the declaration. It concedes that Tibet is not just a part of China, but that it would not allow Tibetans to engage in anti-China political activities in India. In letter, there is little to quarrel with the statement. In the past too, beginning in the Fifties, India had accepted that Tibet belongs to China. In reality, both the timing of the statement and its substance are a major victory for the Chinese. In recent years, India has been displaying a degree of ambiguity about its position on Tibet, particularly since the arrival of the National Democratic Alliance government. The defence minister, Mr George Fernandes, was an ardent supporter of the Tibetan cause. Moreover, the presence of the *dalai lama* and his followers in India and the huge growth in support for a free Tibet across the Western world had caused deep concern to China. Indeed, the United States of America has even appointed a special coordinator on Tibet. In short, there was an Indian "Tibet card" that could be leveraged for reciprocal concessions on vital issues of national interest. This has not happened. Indian officials claim that the opening up of border trade through Sikkim will mean a *de facto* acceptance of the state as part of India, and that they have been privately assured that Chinese maps, henceforth, will show Sikkim as Indian territory. The reality is that the Chinese have conceded virtually nothing. They had been willing to open up trade through the Nathula pass for some years now, and private assurances mean for little in international relations. Surely a country that experienced the betrayal of Shimla should have realized this.

In Washington, Mr Pervez Musharraf seems to have single-handedly outmanoeuvred the train of Indian visitors. While the most recent Indian leader to visit the US, the deputy prime minister, Mr L.K. Advani, was provided access and verbal assurances, Pakistan will get more than \$3 billion in aid and this could include transfer of conventional weapons as well. Those who had begun arguing that the age of realpolitik in Indian foreign policy had arrived may now have substantial reasons to review their thesis.

New methodology to address boundary issue

By Amit Baruah

SHANGHAI, JUNE 25. New possibilities have opened up in the India-China relationship with the two countries agreeing to "accommodate" the other on Sikkim and Tibet.

In the case of Tibet, the Indian position revolves round the play of words, which, the Chinese feel, is quite important. In return, border trade will open between Sikkim and Tibet. For the Chinese, Tibet has long been an important and, perhaps, the "core" issue in its dealings with India.

While the Indian side has clarified that the latest formulation will not have any impact on the Dalai Lama staying in Dharmasala, every Indian and Chinese joint statement has had New Delhi saying that it will not permit hostile activities by Tibetan exiles. Beyond Sikkim and China, the appointment of "political" special representatives to "explore" a new methodology to address the boundary dispute is a clear sign that the Chinese leadership feels it can do business with India. And, hopefully, resolve this intractable issue in the long-term.

On June 23, the official Chinese *People's Daily* wrote on India-China relations: "The greatest obstacle to the further development of Sino-Indian relationship is lack of adequate mutual confidence." Now, perhaps, some doses of "confidence" have been injected.

On Tuesday, the External Affairs Minister, Yashwant Sinha, made it clear that the Joint Working Group and the Expert Group working to clarify the Line of Actual Control

would continue to do their work. A more "high-level" political, parallel track would, however, work apace.

Mr. Vajpayee has put behind him the ghost of his "famous" letter that he wrote to the then American President, Bill Clinton, soon after the May 1998 nuclear tests. The fact that the Chinese responded immediately to the Prime Minister's proposal to set up "special representatives" shows that they are serious in addressing outstanding disputes with India.

Mr. Sinha, asked whether the Chinese would formally recognise Sikkim, said: "I have reasons to believe that more steps will follow". In an informal interaction, Chinese officials in New Delhi had pointed out before the Vajpayee visit that they, too, had a problem in "selling" any change in stance on Sikkim to their people, especially since Sikkim was shown as an "independent kingdom" in their maps.

But, as Indian officials pointed out, the memorandum on expanding border trade had a clause that read, "Desirous of opening another pass on the India-China border..."

So, trade with Sikkim will, the Chinese have recognised, be through the "India-China" border. On Tibet, India has for the first time used the Chinese description the "Tibet Autonomous Region" being part of the territory of the People's Republic of China. The TAR is a Chinese entity and India has used its official title. In 1988, India "reiterated" its long-standing and consis-

tent policy that Tibet was an autonomous region of China.

While there is no argument that India has conceded for decades that Tibet is part of China, John W. Garver, in his book "Protracted Contest", says about the 1988 formulation: "The use of the phrase autonomous region reminded Beijing of the promise it had made (as New Delhi understood it) in 1954-57, when India endorsed China's ownership of Tibet."

From the Indian standpoint, the fact of the matter is that Tibet is a part of Chinese territory and nothing can be done to alter that situation by India.

So, if India can allay Chinese fears and build up mutual confidence by the latest formulation in the declaration issued on Tuesday, then this can only be welcomed.

Some might argue that in return for the formulation on Tibet, a formal recognition for Sikkim as part of India should have come simultaneously.

But, the Chinese for their own reasons, have indicated that this will follow while conceding in the border trade memorandum that trade will flow through the "India-China border".

There is a need to look beyond Tibet and Sikkim and hope the equation established over the last couple of days in Beijing will be a long-term, solid one with neither country being motivated by the theory of "loss and gain" but being guided by one principle: that they must resolve their boundary dispute once and for all in the not-so-distant future.

26 JUN 2003

JOINT ECONOMIC GROUP MEET SOON

India, China to act in concert on WTO issues

By P. S. Suryanarayana

BEIJING, JUNE 25. For the first time, India and China have agreed to coordinate their strategies in support of the developing countries within the World Trade Organisation (WTO). A political-level understanding on these lines was reached during the talks that the Union Commerce and Industry Minister, Arun Jaitley, held with the Chinese Commerce Minister, Lu Fuyuan, in Beijing today.

The two countries are likely to explore the possibility of initiating a coordinated action in regard to three specific aspects of the issues at this stage in the global trade negotiations. A key aspect will be the search for special safeguard mechanisms on behalf of the developing countries in the field of agriculture.

The other identified areas of possible Sino-Indian cooperation within the WTO framework pertain to TRIPS with reference to public health issues, in the specific context of paragraph 6 of the Doha Declaration, besides investment policy and the related issue of dispute settlement.

Outlining the new Sino-Indian under-

standing on these lines, Mr. Jaitley said the significance of any concerted action within the WTO, in pursuit of the interests of the developing countries, should be seen against the reality that the two countries accounted for nearly one-third of the global population.

The compatible Chinese version of today's talks was that Mr. Lu broadly echoed India's sentiments. Mr. Lu agreed with Mr. Jaitley that China and India "share many common interests" in the current context of the "new round of talks (under the WTO)". Mr. Lu told Mr. Jaitley that the two countries should support each other and also work for the interests of the developing countries as a whole.

This altogether new dynamic in the Sino-Indian diplomatic engagement was agreed upon in the follow-up spirit of the summit-level talks that concluded here on Tuesday between the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, and the Chinese leadership, consisting of Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao, with Jiang Zemin working with them as the elder statesman.

The WTO-related understanding gave a positive twist to the current theories on the

international stage that the Indian "tiger" or, alternatively, the Indian "elephant" was beginning to get caught in a fierce competition with the Chinese "dragon" in the economic sphere.

On the bilateral front itself, the Commerce Ministers of the two countries agreed to convene a meeting of the Joint Economic Group (JEG) as soon as possible, perhaps by November/December this year. The last JEG meeting took place in Beijing in 2000.

An immediate goal is to double the existing two-way trade volume of about \$ 5 billions within the next few years, by 2005 at the latest. In the first five months of the current calendar year, the two-way trade rose to \$ 2.9 billions, reflecting a jump of 70 per cent over the corresponding period last year.

China exported goods worth \$ 1.22 billions and its imports from India were of the order of \$ 1.68 billion during January-May this year.

It was against this background that Mr. Lu said China would welcome initiatives from India to boost bilateral trade and economic cooperation.

26 JUN 2003

A Hindi-Chini road map

If it helps us cross history's great wall of mistrust, it will pay great dividends

THE joint declaration on principles for relations and comprehensive co-operation between India and China is welcome, if for no other reason than as the expression of an abiding interest in building a long-term "constructive and cooperative partnership" on a range of issues. Critics may say that almost all the items dealt with in the current declaration have been there in practically the same language in earlier agreements going back to the 1954 Panchsheel Agreement. The importance of this re-endorsement becomes apparent when it is remembered that the two countries committed to Panchsheel were at war with each other within eight years. This is because they had failed to translate principles into practical policy.

Prime Minister Vajpayee's visit and the joint declaration go a long way in deepening the substance of bilateral relations between the two Asian giants. Specific advantages to both countries include the agreement to open a trading post at Nathu La on the Indian border with China in Sikkim. This acquires even greater importance in view of the massive development taking place in Tibet, which included the building of the Golmud-Lhasa railway. Any talk of a need for Chinese recognition of Sikkim as part of China is irrelevant, bureaucratic and unnecessary, since China is in no way involved in the ac-

cession of the state to India. The Sino-Indian border in this area would continue to be affected by the parameters influencing the remaining boundary question between the two countries. And here, besides the emphasis on maintaining peace and tranquillity agreed upon during Rajiv Gandhi's China visit in 1988, the two governments have agreed to appoint Special Representatives to expedite the process of clarifying the Line of Actual Control so that incidents arising out of misunderstandings are avoided.

The challenge for managers of national policy on either side is how to "qualitatively enhance" bilateral relations and implement the agreement to "fully utilise the substantial potential and opportunities for deepening mutually beneficial cooperation" in letter and spirit. This would require initiative and innovation at all levels and in all segments of politico-economic activity. The recognition of this potential and the willingness to utilise it in economic trade and technology areas would no doubt be strengthened by the reaffirmation of the importance of the ministerial Joint Economic Group. In addition, the setting up of a new mechanism in the shape of the Joint Study Group, to examine the complementarities and draw up a five-year plan for developing bilateral trade and economic cooperation before the end of next year, could help evolve a road map for the future.

Beijing opening

5/16
2/16
Doesn't necessarily augur spring, yet

As is usual in its dealings with Beijing, New Delhi gave away more than it got in the joint declaration that Prime Minister Vajpayee signed with his Chinese counterpart, Wen Jiabao. Delhi has explicitly recognised Tibet as a part of China, something it withheld for long, but has not won reciprocal recognition from China of Indian sovereignty over Sikkim. It is assumed that by agreeing to set up trading posts on the Sikkim-Tibet border, Beijing has implicitly recognised Indian claims over Sikkim. Trading through Sikkim does not, however, preclude Beijing from using the state as a bargaining counter in future border negotiations. It, in fact, works to Beijing's advantage — not only easier entry for Chinese manufactured goods into India, but also a more convenient transit route for supplying Tibet by sea and road instead of through the Chinese mainland. New Delhi's approach seems to be to concentrate on economic co-operation for now and leave really hard issues for later, consequently one doesn't know if Vajpayee raised such matters as an end to the sinister Sino-Pak trade in nuclear weapons and missiles. The danger is that Beijing may well conclude that Delhi is a pushover, an impression that will hardly be dispelled by Vajpayee reworking the old Nehruvian clichés about Panchsheel, trysts with destiny and so on. If Islamabad is watching anxiously to see if a Sino-Indian rapprochement could jeopardise its own links with Beijing, it can breathe easy.

Even incremental progress, however, is good, and there is hope that at least the economic side of the relationship may be ironed out. India-China trade, although rising, is still only about \$5 billion, equivalent to what China trades annually with Belgium. There is scope for increasing this amount greatly, and although anxiety about cheap Chinese manufactures spelling doom for local industry has been almost a global concern, recently everyone is coming to see the benefits of the reverse side of this phenomenon — a vast Chinese market, now opened up by Beijing's accession to the WTO. Indian business has gone through a similar cycle — from panic and fear to scouting for trade and investment opportunities. If Beijing is interested in replicating Delhi's IT successes, Delhi too has a stake in learning from Beijing's excellent record in creating physical infrastructure. Perhaps, someday, intensifying trade and cultural contacts may persuade Beijing to drop its policy of using Islamabad to contain Delhi — an India bogged down with the Kashmir dispute cannot emerge as an economic and political power comparable to itself, and Beijing quietly provides the backing Islamabad requires in order to do that. There is no evidence that a dent has been made in that policy, yet.

26 JUL 2003

সিকিম নিয়ে চিন অস্বস্তিতে রাখল দিল্লিকে

২৫/৬/০৩

৫/৩/০৩ - ৫/৩/০৩

বেজিং, ২৪ জুন — সিকিম সীমান্ত দিয়ে ভারতের সঙ্গে বাণিজ্য করতে রাজি হলেও সিকিমকে ভারতের অঙ্গরাজ্য বলে মেনে নিতে এখনও চিন তৈরি নয় বলেই জানিয়ে দিয়েছে। চিনা বিদেশমন্ত্রক জানিয়েছে, সিকিমের প্রশ্নটি এভাবে রাতারাতি মেটানো সম্ভব নয়। গতকাল প্রধানমন্ত্রী অটলবিহারী বাজপেয়ীর সঙ্গে চিনের প্রধানমন্ত্রী ওয়েন জিয়াবাও-এর বৈঠকে সীমান্ত-বাণিজ্যের প্রসারের যে চুক্তি হয়, তাতে সিকিম সীমান্তে নাথু লা গিরিপথ দু'দেশের পণ্য চলাচলের জন্য খুলে দেওয়ার সিদ্ধান্ত হয়েছে। চিন সিকিম সীমান্ত দিয়ে ভারতের পণ্য আমদানি-রফতানি করতে রাজি হওয়ায় গতকাল ভারতীয় শিবির মনে করেছিল, এতে প্রকারান্তরে সিকিমের ভারতে অন্তর্ভুক্তিকেও চিন এতদিনে মেনে নিতে রাজি হল। কিন্তু আজ চিনা বিদেশমন্ত্রকের বক্তব্য জানার পরে ভারতীয় শিবির স্পষ্টতই কিছুটা অস্বস্তিতে পড়েছে। প্রধানমন্ত্রী অটলবিহারী বাজপেয়ীর চিনসফর চলার মধ্যেই চিনা বিদেশমন্ত্রক সিকিম নিয়ে স্বীকৃতির প্রসঙ্গে নেতিবাচক প্রতিক্রিয়া জানিয়ে দেওয়ায় এই অস্বস্তি আরও বেড়েছে। সরাসরি এ নিয়ে কোনও মন্তব্য না করলেও ভারতীয় শিবিরের সূত্রে ইঙ্গিত দেওয়া হচ্ছে, চিনা বিদেশমন্ত্রক প্রকাশ্যে যা-ই বলুক না কেন, সিকিম দিয়ে বাণিজ্য করার মতো বিষয়টি সীমান্ত-বাণিজ্য চুক্তির মতো গুরুত্বপূর্ণ নথিতে অন্তর্ভুক্ত করার ফলেই বোঝা যাচ্ছে, চিন এখন ধীরে ধীরে সিকিমকে ভারতের অঙ্গরাজ্য বলে মেনে নিতে প্রস্তুত বলেই মনে হচ্ছে।

সিকিমকে ভারতের অঙ্গরাজ্য হিসাবে স্বীকৃতি দিতে এখনও চিন তৈরি নয় বলে জানিয়ে দিলেও তিব্বতকে চিনের অঙ্গরাজ্য বলে ভারত মেনে নিয়েছে দাবি করে হেঁচো শুরু করেছে চিনা সংবাদমাধ্যম। চিনা সরকারি সংবাদপত্র চায়না ডেইলি বলেছে, ভারত এই চুক্তির মাধ্যমে পরোক্ষভাবে তিব্বতকে চিনের অঙ্গরাজ্য বলে মেনে নিয়েছে। যদিও ভারতের বিদেশমন্ত্রী যশবন্ত সিনহা বলেছেন, তিব্বত প্রসঙ্গে ভারতের দৃষ্টিভঙ্গী পরিবর্তনের কারণ নেই। ভারত এখন তিব্বত নিয়ে যা বলছে, তা অতীতের অবস্থানের সঙ্গে সঙ্গতিপূর্ণ। এ ব্যাপারে ১৯৫৪ সাল থেকে ভারতের অবস্থানে পরিবর্তন হয়নি।

দুই দেশের প্রধানমন্ত্রীর মধ্যে সীমান্ত বাণিজ্য প্রসারের যে চুক্তি হয়েছে, তাতে বলা হয়েছে ভারত-চিন সীমান্তের নাথু লা গিরিপথ দিয়ে দুই দেশের মধ্যে বাণিজ্যের নতুন পথ খোলা হবে। এ জন্য ভারত সিকিমের অভ্যন্তরে নাথু লা গিরিপথ থেকে অল্প নিচে ছাড়ু এলাকায় সীমান্ত বাণিজ্যের বাজার খুলবে। একই ভাবে চিনও তিব্বতের অভ্যন্তরে রেক্সিনগাং এলাকায় সীমান্ত বাণিজ্যের জন্য বাজার বসাবে। এটাও ঠিক হয়েছে যে নাথু লা গিরিপথ দিয়ে পণ্য চলাচলের সুষ্ঠু ব্যবস্থা করতে দুই দেশই নিজের নিজের সীমান্তের মধ্যে উপযুক্ত জায়গায় চেক পোস্ট বসাবে। নব্বইয়ের দশকের গোড়ার দিকে দুই দেশের মধ্যে সীমান্ত বাণিজ্য শুরু করার চুক্তি হওয়ার পরে এতদিন হিমাচল প্রদেশের শিপকি লা গিরিপথ ও উত্তরাঞ্চলের লিপলুখে গিরিপথ দিয়ে বাণিজ্য চলছিল। এবার তার সঙ্গে সিকিম সীমান্তের নাথু লা গিরিপথও যোগ হল।

ভারত ও চিনের মধ্যে সীমান্ত নিয়ে দীর্ঘদিনের বিরোধ মেটাতে এখন দু'দেশের রাজনৈতিক নেতৃত্বই আন্তরিক, তার ইঙ্গিত দিয়ে আজ সীমান্ত বিরোধ সংক্রান্ত আলোচনায় গতি আনতে দুই দেশই এ ব্যাপারে তাদের বিশেষ প্রতিনিধির নাম ঘোষণা করেছে। ভারতের তরফে জাতীয় নিরাপত্তা উপদেষ্টা ব্রজেশ মিশ্র ও চিনের তরফে বিদেশমন্ত্রকের সবচেয়ে প্রবীণ ভাইস মিনিস্টার বিশেষ প্রতিনিধি হিসাবে মনোনীত হয়েছেন। বিদেশমন্ত্রী যশবন্ত সিনহা জানিয়েছেন, বিশেষ প্রতিনিধিরা দীর্ঘদিনের এই বিরোধ মেটানোর জন্য রাজনৈতিক দিক থেকে কী করা যায় সেটা খতিয়ে দেখবেন। সীমান্ত বিরোধের খুঁটিনাটি নিয়ে আলোচনার জন্য দুই দেশের যৌথ ওয়ার্কিং গ্রুপ বা বিশেষজ্ঞদের গ্রুপের কাজে বিশেষ প্রতিনিধিরা হস্তক্ষেপ করবেন না।

গতকাল দুই দেশের প্রধানমন্ত্রীর মধ্যে আলোচনার পরে সীমান্ত বাণিজ্য নিয়ে যে চুক্তি হয়েছিল এবং দুই দেশের যৌথ ঘোষণাপত্র স্বাক্ষরিত হয়েছিল, আজ তার পূর্ণ বয়ান প্রকাশ করা হয়। বিদেশমন্ত্রী যশবন্ত সিনহা জানান, ঘোষণাপত্রে স্পষ্ট বলা হয়েছে, সীমান্ত নিয়ে বিরোধ মেটা সাপেক্ষে সীমান্তে 'প্রকৃত নিয়ন্ত্রণ রেখা' বরাবর দুই দেশই শান্তি বজায় রাখতে বদ্ধপরিকর। দুই দেশের মধ্যে এই শান্তিপূর্ণ সহাবস্থানের এই নতুন সম্পর্ক পঞ্চশীল নীতির উপরেই ভিত্তি করে গড়া হবে। দুই দেশের নেতৃত্বই একটা ব্যাপারে একমত যে ভারত ও চিনের মতো দলবহুল প্রতিবেশী দুই দেশ যদি এ ভাবে আরও ঘনিষ্ঠ হতে পারে তা হলে তা এশিয় অঞ্চলে স্থিতিশীলতা আনার সঙ্গেই বিশ্বেও প্রভাব ফেলবে। বাজপেয়ী চিনের কেন্দ্রীয় সামরিক কমিশনের চেয়ারম্যান জিয়াং জেমিন এবং প্রেসিডেন্ট হু জিনতাওয়ের সঙ্গে আলাদা আলাদা বৈঠক করেন। বেজিংয়ের পরে বাজপেয়ী চিনের সবচেয়ে গুরুত্বপূর্ণ শিল্পবাণিজ্যের শহর সাংহাই যাবেন।

—পি টি আই, রয়টার

25 JUN 2003

মোহন বাগ্য পাবলিশার

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 25, 2003

TRIUMPH OF PRAGMATISM

THE DECISION OF India and China to launch a bold political initiative to break the impasse over the boundary dispute and the reaffirmation of their readiness to seek a mutually acceptable solution should boost the expanding bilateral relations. The decision, the centrepiece of the Beijing Declaration issued at the end of the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee's summit talks with China's new leaders, is both acknowledgement of the year-long deadlock over exchange of boundary maps and the political resolve to end it at the earliest. The two sides have reaffirmed that pending an ultimate solution, they will work to maintain peace and tranquillity and continue work on delineation and clarification of the Line of Actual Control. The first joint declaration to be released by the two countries, it gives the seal of formal approval to the pragmatism and proven step-by-step approach to problem-solving that has characterised the relations in the past decade and seen peace and tranquillity prevail on the long borders between the two countries. The visit, first by an Indian Prime Minister in a decade, had aroused high expectations, which have been partially fulfilled. After the breakthroughs achieved during the visits of Rajiv Gandhi in 1988 and Narasimha Rao in 1993, there is now a clear demonstration of the political will on both sides to seek solutions to contentious issues.

The road map to bilateral cooperation that the Declaration has laid out, taken together with the memorandum of understanding on expanding border trade, has the potential to end a long period of mutual suspicion and herald a qualitatively new phase in the relations between the two neighbours. With the political initiative on the boundary question, there was some movement on the linked issues of Tibet and Sikkim. Affirming the Indian position that the Tibetan autonomous region is a part of the

territory of China and reiterating the earlier commitment not to allow Tibetans to engage in anti-China political activities, India did not apparently succeed in securing Chinese recognition of the 1975 merger of Sikkim with the Indian Union. But the agreement to expand cross border trade, which should include the traditional silk route through Sikkim, must be regarded as tacit Chinese acceptance of the reality of the merger. That China has dropped its position that India had annexed Sikkim must be welcomed on the assumption that official Chinese acceptance will perhaps come as the two travel the road to improved relations. When this Himalayan trade bridge is rebuilt, it can transform the entire region reaching across to the Tibetan plains. If Sikkim does indeed become a non-dispute, this will boost tourism around the holy sites across the mountains.

A constructive atmosphere for tackling the boundary question and differences over Sikkim and Tibet needs an environment in which the overall relationship is seen to be beneficial to both. The goals and guiding principles for bilateral relations set by the Declaration and the nine documents on cooperation in different fields that the two countries have signed must create the conditions that in the main facilitate greater people-to-people contact and enhance the interaction among professionals, including scientists, lawyers and educationists. The most striking aspect, however, of the evolving relationship is the conscious decision to anchor the bilateral relations to economics through greater trade and investments. A joint study group of economists and officials has been set up to identify new areas of promise in trade and investments, which can provide the major ingredients for an interdependent relationship. They can, besides, generate mutual trust, the lack of which has kept the two Asian giants apart for four decades.

25 JUN 2003

Special Representatives to address border issue

By P. S. Suryanarayana

BEIJING, JUNE 24. India and China have agreed to explore the "political" scope for evolving "the framework of a boundary settlement", even as the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, and the highest-ranking Chinese leaders today sought to place the entire gamut of the bilateral relationship in a new zone of realism.

The accord of this new magnitude on the border dispute formed a significant part, but only as a sub-text, of a comprehensive "blueprint" for the "beginning of a new era" as seen by the Chinese side. The two sides agreed to appoint a Special Representative each to "explore, from the political perspective of the overall bilateral relationship, the framework of a boundary settlement". Dai Bingguo and Brajesh Mishra were nominated to undertake this exercise.

By releasing the details of a memorandum on border trade and the 'Declaration on Principles for Relations and Comprehensive Cooperation', both of which were signed on Monday, India and China began a process of transparency that might gradually help clear the ambiguity about Beijing's bottom line on the Sikkim issue. While China firmly maintained, even in this new context, that the status of Sikkim was not yet a settled issue, both countries turned the



The Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, going round the Forbidden City in a battery operated cart in Beijing on Tuesday. — PTI

spotlight on the "win-win" aspects of their latest diplomatic engagement at the highest eche-

lons in a bid to keep the new process of realism on a definitive course.

In separate cameos of public diplomacy on the sidelines of the summit, Beijing interpreted

the 'declaration' as a firm endorsement of Tibet as a non-alienable part of China, while the Indian interlocutors presented the relevant formulation as only a reaffirmation of New Delhi's "consistent" line on this issue. However, this apparent dissonance did not diminish the lustre of a future-oriented 'declaration' that was unveiled as the first of its kind on the bilateral front. With both sides raising visions of a possibly new symphony of friendly sentiments but not any strategic partnership, three main aspects of the latest agreements came into focus. While the boundary issue was put on a qualitatively different trajectory, the formulations on Tibet in the 'declaration' and the political implications of the reference to Sikkim in the memorandum on border trade acquired new overtones.

India "recognises 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".

Appreciating this, China "reiterated that it is firmly opposed to any attempt and action aimed at splitting China and bringing about 'independence of Tibet' (while) the Indian side recalled that India was among the first countries to recognise that there is (but) one China". India said that its "one China policy remains unaltered". The issue of Dalai Lama's sojourn within India was not specifically addressed by either side in the 'declaration'. he separate memorandum specified that "Changu of Sikkim State" would be a new "venue for border trade market" while China agreed to "designate Renqinggang of the Tibet Autonomous Region as the venue" for the same purpose. The Nathula Pass would be used to promote trade in that sector..

From New Delhi's standpoint, the beginning of a process towards China's recognition of Sikkim as an integral part of India could be discerned in the related formulation that both countries were "desirous of opening another pass on the India-China border". The identification of Nathula as the pass with reference to the "India-China border" is seen as a pointer to the future disposition of Beijing itself.

A step forward: Page 11
Text of Declaration: Page 12

Compromise, feel analysts

Saurabh Shukla
New Delhi, June 24

OPINION IS divided on India's departure from its staid diplomatic position on Tibet. Analysts feel India has lost the diplomatic game of reciprocity following its new formulation on Tibet.

What is surprising is that while it has accepted "Tibet Autonomous Region is part of the territory of ... China" and said it won't allow Tibetans to engage in anti-China political activities in India, it has not earned the explicit recognition of Sikkim in the Joint Declaration issued during the PM's trip to China. In communiqués issued in '88 (Rajiv Gandhi's visit) and '91 (P.V. Narasimha Rao's visit), Delhi didn't go beyond saying Tibet is an autonomous region of China.

"We've compromised on the central principle of diplomacy - reciprocity. India has made concessions to China on major issues like Tibet, and the border issue by agreeing to talk on the political aspect which the Chinese wanted," said Strategic Analyst Brahma Chellaney.

Tibet stand echoes previous pacts: Sinha

Vir Sanghvi
Beijing, June 24

HAS INDIA sold Tibet down the river? Apprehensions about the reference to Tibet in the joint declaration signed on Monday between India and China in Beijing have centred around any possible change in the Indian position.

In Beijing on Tuesday, Foreign Minister Yashwant Sinha sought to allay these apprehensions. He argued that the language of the joint declaration only echoes previous statements issued by the two countries. Further, he stated, there would be no change in the freedoms accorded to the Dalai Lama by India.

The clarifications are important because the official Chinese news agency has claimed that "the Indian government has, for the first time, recognised explicitly the Tibet Autonomous Region as part of Chinese territory". The Chinese also claimed that India had recognised that Tibet was "an inalienable part of China". However, the language of the declaration does not include the word 'inalienable' and marks no difference from previous usage.

The Indian foreign ministry has released this list of previous references to Tibet in India-China documents.

Tibet position down the ages

about the continued activities in India by some Tibetans against their motherland and reiterated that Tibet was an inalienable part of Chinese territory and that it was firmly opposed to any attempt and action aimed at splitting China and bringing about "independence of Tibet". The Indian side reiterated its long-standing and consistent position that Tibet is an autonomous region of China and that it does not allow Tibetans to engage in anti-China political activities in India."

2003: Declaration on Principles for Relations and Comprehensive Cooperation between the Republic of India and the People's Republic of China

"The Indian side recognises 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 and bringing about "independence of Tibet".

1954: The Agreement between India and China on Trade And Intercourse between Tibet Region of China and India
"Being desirous of promoting trade and cultural intercourse between Tibet Region of China and India and of facilitating pilgrimage and travel by the peoples of China and India."

1958: Notes sent by the Ministry of External Affairs to the embassy of China in India

"The Government of India recognise that the Tibetan region is part of the People's Republic of China."

1988: India-China Joint Press Communique

"The Chinese side expressed concern over anti-China activities by some Tibetan elements in India. The Indian side reiterated the longstanding and consistent policy of the Government of India that Tibet is an autonomous region of China and that anti-China political activities by Tibetan elements are not permitted on Indian soil."

1991: India-China Joint Communique

"The Chinese side expressed concern



Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee with Chinese President Hu Jintao at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on Tuesday.

AFP

Unrest feared in Tibetan pockets

for copy
Ind. div
Mangal K Iyer in New Delhi

June 24. — India's recognition of the Tibet Autonomous Region as a part of the territory of China has security agencies worried about potential unrest in pockets of India where a large number of Tibetans reside.

"Normalisation of relations between the two countries is a welcome development, no doubt. But it also means security agencies will have to step up their activities to encompass the change in Sino-Indian equations," a government official said.

Intelligence agencies, for example, have begun preparing for the multi-disciplinary action committee meeting — the home ministry will be the nodal agency — scheduled after Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee, returns. Among the primary concerns is the fear that there may be an increase in localised activity among Tibe-

Tibet
tan nationals.

SR-9
"Those who are for free Tibet view themselves as freedom fighters and so far they have been relatively comfortable about the asylum which India has been traditionally providing to them," an official said. "That might change now."

Recalling an incident in the late 1990s when a Tibetan refugee in Delhi, Thubten Knordup, had set himself on fire, he said: "About 500 vehicles filled with Tibetans, mostly students had accompanied his funeral procession to Dharmasala for the last rites ... They revere him as a freedom fighter who gave his life for the cause."

"The Chinese media is highlighting India's concession on TAR and that will naturally heighten the sense of insecurity felt by Tibetan nationals here," the officer said. "It is easy to inflame sentiments and create mob situations when people - rightly or wrongly - feel threatened".

My b
At present, there are large concentrations of Tibetan nationals in Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, north Bihar and Delhi. There are also smaller pockets in Uttaranchal and Uttar Pradesh.

"While the agreements that have been worked out in Beijing during the Prime Minister's visit speaks volumes for the future tone of Sino-Indian relations, we will certainly have a lot more work to do," said a security official said.

That will include alerting the local police in these seven states and strengthening the intelligence gathering set-up in all areas where Tibetans abound. Among measures being considered for immediate implementation are "deployment of more staff and sophisticated equipment" not to mention increasing the amount of source money (paid to informants) a government official said.

25 JUN 2003

RESUMPTION OF NATHU LA TRADE

Sikkim hails

historic agreement

Statesman News Service

SILIGURI, June 24. — The agreement reached between India and China to reopen the historic trade route through Nathu La in East Sikkim has sent waves of jubilation in the Himalayan state.

Welcoming the decision, the Sikkim chief minister, Mr Pawar Chamling, today expressed satisfaction over the development. Thanking Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee, Mr Chamling said the decision fulfilled one of Sikkim's long-standing demands.

"A number of advantages would flow out of the decision to reopen the trade route through Sikkim," Mr Chamling said. He said the decision would also go a long way in building good relations between the two countries besides facilitating trade.

"As far as Sikkim is concerned, the reopening of the trade route would give a major boost to tourism and also increase commercial and export oriented activities in the region," Mr Chamling said.

The Sikkim chief minister also expects that the state would come a hub of activity and benefit enormously from the "result spin-off, which will generate employment and business opportunities for the people of Sikkim."

Expressing gratitude towards Mr Vajpayee and the deputy prime minister, Mr LK Advani, Mr Chamling said Sikkim should also be well prepared to meet the challenges as the volume of commercial activities is likely to increase with the reopening of the trade route. Chamling has now raised the demand for a dry port in Sikkim.

While the mood is a joyous one in Sikkim, it is a gloomy one in Kalimpong. The agreement on Nathu La has sent residents of Kalimpong who also traded with Tibet and mainland China through the Jelepela pass in the past, on a sulk. "It is not done," says Mr D Khati, a Kalimpong-based businessman. According to him, trade between Tibet and Kalimpong and by extension Siliguri, was on the decline since 1962. Reopening the Jelepela route has been a long standing demand of ours as well," he said. Mr Khati was one of the few Indians who made a trip right up to Pulang in Tibet through Pithoragarh in 1992 when an effort was made to re-establish trade links with China. The Government has come up with posters in Kalimpong demanding reopening of the Jelepela route.

25 JUN 2003

China still wants

‘India Gate’

Srinjoy Chowdhury in New Delhi

June 24. — Is the “India Gate” Indian? A temporary structure built in Leh in 1962 (it shares its name with the famous monument in Delhi), this was where Indian PoWs were repatriated. But China has said the Line of Actual Control should be 800 metres west of the monument.

For all the bonhomie with Beijing in the run-up to the Vajpayee visit, a concrete agreement on the LAC will not be easy. There are too many differences in perception on where to draw the line.

There are huge disagreements over the LAC in Ladakh and Arunachal while in the Central sector these are but comparatively few. In the Western sector, there are about eight disputed areas.

- The Samar Lungpa area, sandwiched between Karakoram pass and the Chipchab river, is an area of contention as Chinese maps show the LAC to be south of Lungpa. This is in the northernmost tip of the border.

- There is a dispute regarding the Trig Heights, consisting of two mountains — Points 5495 and 5459. Chinese troops have been seen in the area. They are believed to have a name for Point 5459: Manshen Hill.

- There are differences of opinion about the Depsang Ridge, south-east of the Trig Heights. The maps of both countries

differ, making this a disputed zone.

- The area between the Galwan River and the Kongka Pass is disputed.

- There are question marks about Chushul-Spanggur. Chushul is south-east of Leh and east of the India Gate.

- The two nations also disagree over Rezang La, east of Chushul. India argues that there was severe fighting there in 1962. If the place wasn't part of “India”, jawans would not have died for it. The Chinese disagree.

- Indian troops patrolled Demchok area in south-east Leh in 1962 and earlier, but the Chinese claim part of it.

The Army has reinforced its numbers in Ladakh with a full division based in Karu and a brigade in Tangtse. There are also Chinese troops in Ladakh.

The Central sector is less contentious, with only four disputed spots. These are Kaurik north of the Sutlej, Barahoti near Dehra Dun, Shipki-la and Neelang-Jadhang.

But that's not all. China claims the whole of Arunachal Pradesh. There have been sporadic intrusions here earlier, the most infamous being in the Sumderong Chu Valley near Bhutan in 1986, when the Chinese had deployed about 100 soldiers and even built a makeshift airfield. India had also occupied Thag-la ridge close to Sumderong Chu. There is also a permanent PLA outpost in Tatu.

Neighbour's envy

Two civilisations, two systems: Comparing India and China is inevitable but is it helpful?

WHEN Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee clinked glasses in friendship with his Chinese counterpart Wen Jiabao in Beijing, the rest of the world had but to take note. After all, these two men represented nearly 2.5 billion people between them, a good chunk of the world's population. There is, besides, the additional aspect that both India and China are ancient civilisations and neighbours, to boot. Little wonder, then, that media commentators the world over have rediscovered the virtues of the movie title, *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*.

The Economist in its cover story, for instance, while pointing to the fact that the average Chinese is twice as well off as the average Indian, with adult illiteracy in India thrice more than in China, prefers not to lay the responsibility for India's poor performance in terms of human development indices at the altar of democracy. Instead it blames Indian democracy for being not quite up to the mark, and sees its governance as inherently flawed in terms of being unwieldy, overly bureaucratic, fiscally inept, unambitious, corrupt and intolerant. It also points out that the non-resident Chinese have ploughed far more into the country in terms of FDI than non-resident Indians have. It ends its observations with some advice for Indian rulers: Cut down on wasteful expenditure like nuclear

weapons, reform the fiscal and legal framework, and start with a few bold gestures over Kashmir. While there may be some who bristle at what they perceive as odious comparisons coupled with uncalled for advice, we could perhaps heed the Confucian saying: Hear much, leave to one side that which is doubtful... See much, leave to one side that of which the meaning is not clear, and act carefully with regard to the rest. There is, in any case, the well-known argument, made by Amartya Sen among others, that social change is more sustainable in a democratic country like India rather than when ushered in by official diktat, or at the point of the gun, under China's totalitarian political system. *Q.S. Ullin*

But there is an additional question: While comparisons between India and China are inevitable, how helpful are they ultimately? Indeed, they work only if one country is constantly pitted against the other in a relation that is marked only by competition. Certainly, there is a strong competitive element in this country's ties with China but it would be wrong to perceive them only through this lens. There is, in fact, a great deal to be achieved in terms of political, economic and social synergy between the two nations. And high-level visitations, like that of then Chinese premier, Zhu Rongji, to India last year, or Vajpayee's current visit to China, underline this welcome trajectory.

নাথু লা ব্যবহারের প্রস্তাবে খুশি সিকিমের মুখ্যমন্ত্রী

গ্যাংটক, ২৪ জুন—ঐতিহাসিক নাথু
লা গিরিপথকে ভারত-চীন বাণিজ্যপথ
হিসেবে ব্যবহার করার প্রস্তাবকে স্বাগত
জানিয়েছেন সিকিমের মুখ্যমন্ত্রী। চীন
সফররত ভারতের প্রধানমন্ত্রী উত্তরের
প্রতিবেশী রাষ্ট্রের কাছে প্রস্তাব করেছেন,
দ্বিপাক্ষিক বাণিজ্যের জন্য সিকিমের এই
গিরিপথটিকে আবার ব্যবহার করা
হোক। ভারত সরকারের তরফ থেকে এই
উদ্যোগের জন্য প্রধানমন্ত্রী বাজপেয়ী ও
উপপ্রধানমন্ত্রী আড়বাণীকে অভিনন্দন
জানিয়েছেন মুখ্যমন্ত্রী পবন চামলিং।

চামলিং জানান, সিকিম সরকারের
দীর্ঘ দিনের দাবি ভারত মেনে
নেওয়াতেও তাঁরা খুশি হয়েছেন। তিনি
আশা প্রকাশ করেন, বাণিজ্যপথটি চালু
পথ হলে সিকিমের পর্যটন শিল্পের উন্নতি
হবে। তা ছাড়া এলাকায় বাণিজ্য ও
রফতানিও বাড়বে। এর ফলে সিকিম
উত্তর-পূর্ব ভারতের বাণিজ্যিক প্রাণকেন্দ্র
হয়ে উঠতে পারে। —পি টি আই

সিমানন্দ কীর্তিনী সিকিম

Sikkim accord may ease border discord

Just China

Alt

gfo

By Manoj Joshi
TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Beijing: After years of dithering, India and China on Monday took a definite step forward on the prickly border issue with Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Chinese premier Wen Jiabao signing a memorandum on expanding trade through the Sikkim-Tibet frontier crossing of Nathu-La.

Although the details of the memorandum will only be made public on Tuesday, it is understood that the creation of a customs post at Nathu-La will start the process of China recognising—de facto at first but eventually de jure—that Sikkim is a part of India, something Beijing has not done since the state joined the Indian Union in 1975.

The Sikkim deal has been in the works for a while, with the two sides holding focused talks over the past two years. It is learnt that the Chinese presented a draft to New Delhi five days back, which was subsequently worked upon by Indian officials.

Monday's deal is clearly a win-win outcome for both India and China. New Delhi hopes eventually to get Beijing's formal

recognition of Indian sovereignty over Sikkim, while Beijing will gain an easy transit route into Tibet, allowing it to supply the inaccessible plateau relatively cheaply by sea and road via Kolkata and Nathu La instead of through the Chinese mainland.

Asked whether he would classify Monday's talks and agreements as a breakthrough in Sino-Indian relations, a senior Indian official hesitated to answer. "It could be," he said, "but I would rather say it is the beginning of a process." The official predicted that as far as the overall border talks were concerned, "there will definitely be a sharp forward movement".

Briefing reporters earlier in the day while the talks were still on—external affairs minister Yashwant Sinha spoke of the great warmth on both sides and noted that "the world view of the two countries was similar if not identical on most issues".

Foreign secretary Kanwal Sibal said that both sides had raised outstanding issues in specific terms, but he refused to spell out the details at this stage. He said that the Chinese premier had said that there should be a three-phase approach to



SAY WEN: Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee toasts Chinese premier Wen Jiabao at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on Monday as external affairs minister Yashwant Sinha and other Indian and Chinese officials look on.

resolving the issues—(1) phase out the difficult problems; (2) don't allow them to affect the process of our mutual understanding; and (3) undertake consultations on

equal footing in a friendly atmosphere to find solutions.

Asked whether the Chinese supply of missiles and nuclear material to Pakistan had also come up for discussion, Mr Sinha declined to comment on what he said was a sensitive issue. It is understood, however, that Pakistan hardly figured on the agenda. According to a source, "Pakistan was a non-issue that basically came up for four-five minutes in the talks."

According to Mr Sinha, the Chinese Premier commended Mr Vajpayee's initiative on Kashmir and mentioned that China had an interest in a peaceful South Asia, which would contribute to stability in the region and the world.

Apart from the memorandum on expanding border trade, India and China also inked a declaration on principles for relations and comprehensive cooperation, the details of which will also be made public.

Mr Vajpayee took the opportunity of informing Mr Wen that there was a need to bring cross-border terrorism to an end as early as possible and expressed his disappointment that it was not happening.

India, China to simplify visa procedures

24/6 By Amit Baruah HQ-11

BEIJING, JUNE 23. India and China today signed nine agreements in the presence of Prime Ministers Atal Behari Vajpayee and Wen Jiabao including one simplifying visa procedures, especially for business travel.

As per the visa agreement, embassies and consulates in either country can issue under specified circumstances, six-month, multiple entry visas with multiple stays of less than 90 days each to promote trade and business. Both countries also decided to issue three-month, single entry and, if required, multiple entry visas for tourism purposes. For students, a three-month, single-entry visa could be issued.

The two countries also signed a "protocol" for "phytosanitary requirements" for export of mangoes from India to China. While the protocol for mangoes has been finalised, 16 other categories of Indian fruit and vegetables still await clearance from the Chinese. "After completion of pest risk analysis and detailed negotiations, agreement has now been reached on procedures relating to inspection, certification, packaging and labelling of all consignments of

mangoes to be exported to China from India," the Indian side said in a statement.

"Now that we have a basic understanding of the relevant procedures, it is hoped that agreement on similar protocols for all the other identified fruits and vegetables can be concluded expeditiously," it said.

They agreed to an "executive programme" on educational cooperation and exchange through sharing of experiences between educational administrators. "They will also cooperate in such areas as the development of curricula for primary and secondary school education... and conduct discussions on mutual recognition of academic degrees."

A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed for "enhanced cooperation" in the field of small hydropower, wind power and other areas of renewable energy through joint research and development activities.

"The ultimate objective is to commercialise the results of such cooperation, create business opportunities and facilitate sustainable market development in an environmentally responsible manner." Yet another MoU for cooperation in the field of

ocean science and technology for integrated coastal zone management, sea-bed resources exploration and exploitation technology, polar science and ocean energy, among other areas, was also agreed upon.

In the field of science and technology, the two countries will undertake collaborative activities in the field of natural sciences with emphasis on physical, mathematical, chemical and biological sciences.

An agreement to set up cultural centres in respective capitals, an executive programme of cultural exchanges for the period June 2003 to June 2005 was also signed in the presence of the Indian and Chinese leaders.

Finally, an MoU on cooperation on legal matters was also signed. "The MoU envisaged facilitating closer cooperation in the judicial field between India and China, through the exchange of information, experience in legal matters, including drafting of laws and implementation of legal provisions, exchange of experience and best practices... and cooperation in other legal and judicial matters of interest to both countries."

9.21.2011

A feel-good factor ¹¹ 24/6

By P.S. Suryanarayana

BEIJING, JUNE 23. The Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, raised expectations of a definitive upturn in the Sino-Indian relationship by saying that he felt "encouraged" after his discussions with his Chinese counterpart, Wen Jiabao, here today.

Speaking at a public function amid the intensive discussions between the delegations of the two countries on how best to dot the i's and cross the t's of a prospective joint declaration, Mr. Vajpayee sounded quite optimistic about the delicate political exercise with strategic implications. He said: "I am encouraged after my discussions with Premier Wen Jiabao that both our countries see an opportunity to proceed along this path" that was designed to "mend their fences" — a veiled reference to the boundary issue.

Taking time off from the political business of overseeing the meandering process of discussions, Mr. Vajpayee voiced his upbeat assessment before he and Mr. Wen signed the Declaration on Principles for Relations and Comprehensive Cooperation between the Republic of India and the People's Republic of China. Also signed, but at the ministerial level, was a memorandum on expanding border trade, also an issue with political and strategic overtones.

Addressing the students and faculty of Peking University, Mr. Vajpayee said: "One cannot wish away the fact that before good neighbours can truly fraternise with each other, they must first mend their fences. After a hiatus of a few decades, India and China embarked on this important venture a few years ago. We have made good progress. I am convinced that, with steadfast adherence to the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, with mutual sensitivity to the concerns of each other and with respect for (the) equality (of both sides), our two countries can further accelerate this process

so that we can put this difference (over the border issue) firmly behind us. I am encouraged after my discussions with Premier Wen Jiabao that both our countries see an opportunity to proceed along this path."

Mr. Vajpayee, who earlier inaugurated a Centre for Indian Studies at Peking University, amplified the theme about "mutual sensitivity to the concerns of each other" in a more forthright fashion.

He said, "we should focus on the simple truth that there is no objective reason for discord between us (India and China) and (that) neither of us is a threat to the other".

On the related hype about "rivalry" between India and China, the Prime Minister said: "As (the) two (are) large developing countries at roughly the same stage of development, sharing the same neighbourhood (and) pursuing similar growth trajectories with comparable economic priorities and similar political ambitions, it is inevitable that comparisons will be made between India and China.

It is also an unavoidable characteristic of human nature that there is always a sense of comparison between two close and equal neighbours.

But we need to clearly understand the difference between healthy competition and divisive rivalry."

Striking yet another optimistic note in this specific context, Mr. Vajpayee said that India and China had, even if only "a few decades ago", "emerged decisively from (the) dead-end of mistrust" that was caused by "the shadow of the Cold War and the consequent distortions of global international Relations".

Following this post-Cold War development, India and China "have vigorously set about recovering our mutual understanding (and) building a broad base for our cooperation and (also) redeeming the promise of our complementarities".

India, China making new beginning in ties: Fernandes

By Our Special Correspondent

AHMEDABAD, JUNE 23. The Defence Minister, George Fernandes, today indicated that both India and China were ready to make a new beginning in mutual relations forgetting the past.

Talking to presspersons here during his visit to inaugurate a national unity conference organised by the Samata Party, Mr. Fernandes said the two neighbours had relations for over 2,000 years. "For more than 99.9 per cent of the period, India and China shared good relations. It was only about 0.1 per cent of the time that the relations between the two had soured," he said.

Recalling his recent visit to China, Mr. Fernandes said that it was better that the two countries forget the "0.1 per cent period". Without referring to the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee's current visit to China, he said during his visit he was told about China's internal problems, including the growing unemployment and regional imbalance.

But both the countries were ready to make a fresh start with mutual trust and friendship, he said.

About Iraq, Mr. Fernandes said that India was yet to take a decision on sending its troops to Iraq though the Prime Minister had been authorised to take a final decision.

Pointing out that some of the NDA partners were opposed to sending troops to Iraq, he said the final decision would depend on many factors, including inputs from the Indian Ambassador to Iraq about the opinion of the Iraqi people on the issue.

The Defence Minister said many of the questions put by India to the Pentagon team that visited New Delhi last week had remained unanswered and a final decision would also depend on what answer India received.

He said the Government would try to develop a national consensus through all-party meetings on the issue.

He disagreed with claims that infiltration across the India-Pakistan border had decreased. It was still continuing, he said.

24 JUN 2003

Challenges & opportunities

RESUMPTION of diplomatic ties in 1976 came as a thaw in Indo-Chinese relationship. But to this day it remains mired in mutual suspicion over the unresolved border dispute. General Sundarji's reckless adventurism in 1986 triggered the Sumdorong Chu crisis in Arunachal Pradesh, but a restrained Chinese reaction averted a major military showdown. Rajiv Gandhi's path-breaking visit to China in December 1988 raised hopes of improved bilateral ties. The Joint Working Group set up then provided a standing mechanism for defining the modalities of negotiated settlement of the territorial dispute. The Border Peace and Tranquillity Agreement signed by Narasimha Rao in Beijing in 1983 and the Agreement on confidence building measures (CBMs) along the Line of Actual Control signed in New Delhi by Chinese President Jiang Zemin in November 1996 were major steps towards improving relations and resolving the border dispute. These agreements and a series of other CBMs taken by both sides considerably reduced the tension, and bilateral ties moved in a positive direction.

The process suffered a setback when India conducted nuclear tests in May 1998. George Fernandes' statement, terming China "potential threat No. 1", and Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's letter to President Clinton (leaked by the US State Department to *The New York Times*) portraying China as one of the threat factors justifying the nuclear tests only compounded the damage.

China condemned the nuclear tests and the stated justification as a pretext to cover up India's hegemonic ambitions, and said it had damaged bilateral ties and the global non-proliferation regime. In a change of tack, Beijing even suggested a multilateral conference on Kashmir, but realising its implications for its Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, quickly reverted to its pre-1996 stance of neutrality between India and Pakistan. Since January 1999 Beijing has welcomed the Indian initiatives to mend the bilateral relations, but has continued to insist that international community must not accept India's concept of minimum deterrence and that India and Pakistan must sign the NPT and CTBT immediately and unconditionally.

As an acknowledged regional power with unconcealed aspirations for a global role in the post-Cold War world order, China perceives

India must bring down the curtain on the nagging border dispute, even if China seems in no hurry to do so, says BIBHUTI BHUSAN NANDY



LAYING A SOLID FOUNDATION? Atal Behari Vajpayee assisted by students to plant a sapling at Peking University Exchange Centre in Beijing on Monday. Vajpayee reached Beijing late on Sunday to bolster ties with China. — AFP

India as a potential rival in Asia. It views India's military modernisation, especially its growing naval capabilities, new initiatives in the Association of South-East Asian Nations and, above all, its acquisition of nuclear weapons capabilities with misgivings as these could exacerbate Indo-Chinese political and military rivalries.

In the course of its border (mis)management, India has given occasional, albeit unnecessary and entirely avoidable, pinpricks to China. Beijing, on the other hand, has actively pursued a consistent and coherent policy of strategic containment of India, with New Delhi making no serious efforts to counter its stratagems.

China's policy approach towards India is marked by the following elements:

- Diffuse the core border issue. The 1993 and 1996 agreements have pushed the prospects of border resolution into an extra time-consuming step of first working out an agreed LAC. Beijing is using the "time bonanza" to mod-

ernise its military machine, further cement its ties with Pakistan and "nibble deeper into Indian territory" through aggressive forays across the LAC into neutral and disputed areas. This enables Beijing to raise fresh claims on Indian land.

- Make no political or diplomatic concession. China has still not accepted Sikkim as part of Indian territory, nor has it relented on its claim over Arunachal Pradesh as evident from its refusal to grant visa to an Indian delegation from that state to attend the UN International Conference on Women in July 1995. China remains vehemently opposed to India getting a permanent membership in the restructured United Nations Security Council.

- Use its strategic partnership with Pakistan and its increasingly closer ties with Myanmar, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka to isolate India in the sub-continent and force it to remain a sub-regional power.

- Use the peace in its neighbourhood to build comprehensive national power, including economic growth and military might to defeat

an enemy -- on or off a battlefield.

The end of the Cold War, disintegration of the USSR and the disappearance of the Beijing-Moscow-Washington and Beijing-Moscow-New Delhi strategic triangles have eliminated the threat to China's security from the north and led to the emergence of Sino-Russian strategic partnership geared to meeting the growing challenge of US hegemony in the contemporary unipolar world. Termination of the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Peace and Security and wide-ranging western sanctions regime, on the other hand, have heightened India's vulnerability to Sino-Pakistan nuclear weapons and missile proliferation programmes.

In the post-Cold War era, China has stepped up its military modernisation, built a massive military infrastructure in Tibet, organised a rapid deployment force with quick air-lift facilities and re-targeted its nuclear missiles towards India. For all the noise it made over India's nuclear tests in May 1998, as the *Jane's Defence Weekly* reported in

December 1998, the Chinese authorities had assessed that India would take at least 10 years to establish an operational nuclear strike capability, and hence India posed no immediate threat to China's security. In fact, the Indian military today is unsure of winning even a one-front war with Pakistan, leave aside fighting a simultaneous two-front war with Pakistan and China.

Unlike China, India, despite its size, population, scientific and industrial base and growing market, is unable to get its act together and play any significant regional role. Its failure to resolve its territorial dispute with China does not inspire confidence in India in the region. Small states in South Asia frequently play the China card to extract concessions from India. In effect, China's strategic frontiers extend well beyond its territorial borders and undermine India's stature in South Asia.

In the given scenario, China is in no hurry for an expeditious resolution of the border dispute. While giving no concessions on the border or other bilateral issues, China is confident that it can continue to satisfy the unsure and undecided Indian leadership with endless exchange of official and non-official visits and empty assurances solemnly couched in stale clichés such as "peaceful co-existence", "mutual understanding, mutual accommodation and mutual adjustment" and "fair and reasonable solution".

Prime Minister Vajpayee's visit to China is an opportunity to achieve a meaningful turnaround in bilateral relations. Some experts believe that the emerging international security environment in the context of Washington's refusal to accept the idea of a multi-polar world based on equality of status of all major powers and the growing Indo-US proximity might motivate China to offer a package deal that would *mutates mutandis* turn the LAC into a permanent border.

Instead of playing on the China threat and trying to extract mileage out of the ideological differences between China and the West, in the unlikely event of Beijing making such an offer, India should be pragmatic enough to accept it and bring down the curtain on the nagging border dispute.

(The writer is former Additional Secretary, Research and Analysis Wing, Cabinet Secretariat, retired Director-General, Indo-Tibetan Border Police, and former National Security Adviser, Government of Mauritius.)

INDIA, CHINA SIGN JOINT DECLARATION

Accord on opening border trade through Sikkim

By Amit Baruah

BEIJING, JUNE 23. India and China have signed a memorandum on opening border trade through Sikkim with its obvious implications for Beijing recognising Sikkim as a constituent State of the Indian Union.

A separate "declaration on principles for relations and comprehensive cooperation" between the two countries was also signed between the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, and his Chinese counterpart, Wen Jiabao, this evening.

While the "full details" of the landmark agreement on "expanding border trade" and the declaration will be known only tomorrow, it is understood that India has termed the Tibetan Autonomous Region as "part of the territory" of the People's Republic of China. Later, the official Chinese Xinhua news agency, without referring to the agreement on border trade, said: "The Indian Government has for the first time recognised, in an explicit way, the Tibet Autonomous Region as part of China's territory, according to an official with the Chinese Foreign Ministry."

The draft on trade through Sikkim, reportedly received by the Indian side five days ago, was clinched only this afternoon after talks between Mr. Vajpayee and Mr. Wen took place in the morning. Indian and Chinese officials are said to have worked on the draft to narrow down their differences this afternoon before it was formally signed between the External Affairs Minister, Yashwant Sinha, and the Chinese Commerce Minister, Lu Fuyan.

Clearly, a "political direction" from the Prime Ministers at their talks this morning led to further discussions between the officials and produced an agreement ending the earlier "non-agreement". India, while not going along with the Chinese draft that it accept Tibet as an "inalienable" part of China, has agreed to refer to it as "part of the territory" of China.

At present, Sino-Indian border trade takes place through the Lipulekh Pass (Uttaranchal) and the Shipki La Pass (Himachal Pradesh). With the "expan-



The Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee (left) with the Chinese Premier, Wen Jiabao (right), after signing a joint declaration, in Beijing on Monday. — AFP

sion" of "border trade" through Sikkim (the Natu La Pass), it is clear that the Chinese have dropped their 1975 position that India had annexed "Sikkim". Formal recognition will, possibly, follow.

For India and China, the methodology of negotiations used today was rather unorthodox. Usually, all agreements would have been signed in the presence of the Prime Ministers in the morning. The agreements this evening were a "departure" from the agreed programme.

On the "declaration" of principles for relations and comprehensive cooperation, officials said the text under discussion had been "cleaned up" during the day and signed by the two Prime Ministers in the evening. There were some references to clarification of the Line of Actual Control in the joint declaration.

Mr. Sinha told presspersons that Mr. Vajpayee set the tone for the talks with Mr. Wen when he called for "frank discussions" as between friends. There was,

Mr. Sinha claimed, no effort by either side to sweep anything under the carpet.

The Foreign Secretary, Kanwal Sibal, reported Mr. Wen as saying that it was time to phase out differences between India and China. In any case, these differences would not be allowed to come in the way of moving the bilateral relationship forward. Mr. Wen had suggested consultations on an equal footing in a friendly atmosphere to resolve differences, Mr. Sibal said.

When Mr. Wen commended him for extending the hand of friendship to Pakistan, Mr. Vajpayee mentioned Indian concerns on cross-border terrorism and the need for Pakistan to end it as quickly as possible. He also conveyed India's disappointment that this was not happening.

India and China, Mr. Sinha said, reiterated their commitment to the concept of multipolarity and agreed on the need to channelise "globalisation" in a positive direction. The two For-

eign Ministers were asked to arrange more regular exchanges between India and China at all levels.

Mr. Vajpayee referred to the cooperation between the two countries in the oil sector in the Sudan and also mentioned the need for more information to tackle floods in India. While welcoming the resumption of the Kailash-Manasarovar yatra, he raised the question of additional routes for the pilgrimage.

Mr. Wen announced that China was setting aside \$500 million for investment in India's infrastructure sector. Officials from the two sides would thrash out the details. Cooperation in the field of public finance was referred to with the respective central banks and Finance Ministries being involved in the task. The Chinese leader also suggested a "plan of action" to further economic cooperation and trade and pointed to the need for setting up a "joint body" between the two countries to achieve this goal.

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Pak. watching Vajpayee's China visit

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, JUNE 23. As the Pakistan President gets ready for his 'historic' tete-a-tete with the U.S. President, George W. Bush, at Camp David tomorrow, the eyes and ears of the establishment are as firmly fixed on the ongoing China visit of the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee.

Of course Pakistan has no reasons for any serious concerns on the outcome of the extraordinary visit of Mr. Vajpayee. At the same time Islamabad is fully conscious of the impact of the growing ties between Beijing and New Delhi on its India policy in particular and South Asia in general.

"We are keeping a close watch on the China wall to read all the writings about the six-day sojourn of Mr. Vajpayee," quipped a senior official in Pakistan Foreign Office.

The issue did figure at the weekly press briefing and the spokesman, Masood Khan, sought to put a spin on the subject. He said emerging Sino-Indian ties are on a different "trajectory" and would not be at the ex-

pense of close relations between Islamabad and Beijing.

"Pakistan understands the growing relations between China and India are not at the expense of Sino-Pak ties. These relationships have different trajectories," Mr. Masood Khan, said while referring to Mr. Vajpayee's visit to China.

He said Pakistan and China have a long-standing relationship. The successive leaderships and generations of the two countries have worked with one another. We completely trust each other." Stating that China has played a constructive and positive role in South Asia, he said its relations with South Asian nations, particularly with Pakistan, has been a factor of peace and stability in the region.

He said China honoured Pakistan by inviting Prime Minister Zafarullah Jamali, as the first foreign leader to Beijing to meet the new Chinese leadership. "This was a great honour for Pakistan, and it reflected the close understanding between the two countries."

Mr. Khan advised India to stop accusations of cross-border interference and asked it to engage in meaningful discussions to resolve all outstanding issues between the two countries. He was responding to an allegation by Mr. Vajpayee about cross-border interference prior to his departure for Beijing.

He said India should put an end to these statements and "try to engage each other to discuss all outstanding issues. India should avoid (making) public statements and (instead) come to the negotiating table to discuss issues of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations."

Referring to Mr. Vajpayee's visit to Beijing, the spokesman termed China's influence as very stabilising in the region. He said, "instead of Mr. Vajpayee and the Indian leadership trying to mislead Beijing we hope that China will persuade India to come to negotiating table." He also recalled the Chinese Prime Minister's recent statement calling upon the two countries to resolve their differences peacefully.

বরফ গলছে : তিব্বত, সিকিম নিয়ে অবস্থান নরম দু-দেশের নাথুলা সীমান্তে এবার ভারত-চীন বাণিজ্য

বেজিং, ২৩ জুন (পি টি আই)— সিকিমের নাথুলা সীমান্তপথে ভারতের সঙ্গে বাণিজ্যে সম্মত হয়েছে চীন। শুধু বাণিজ্যিক দিক থেকে নয়, সামগ্রিকভাবেই ভারত-চীন সম্পর্কের ক্ষেত্রে এটি একটি বিরাট অগ্রগতি। ভারতীয় কূটনীতিকদের বক্তব্য, সিকিম যে ভারতেরই অংশ, চীন এবার কার্যত তা মেনে নিচ্ছে। বিনিময়ে ভারতও ঘোষিতভাবে তিব্বতকে চীনের অংশ বলে মেনে নিচ্ছে বলে খবর। সফররত প্রধানমন্ত্রী অটলবিহারী বাজপেয়ী এবং চীনের প্রধানমন্ত্রী ওয়েন জিয়াবাওয়ের মধ্যে দীর্ঘ আলোচনার পর দুটি গুরুত্বপূর্ণ নথি স্বাক্ষরিত হয়েছে। একটি দু-দেশের সীমান্ত বাণিজ্য সম্প্রসারণ সংক্রান্ত সমঝোতাপত্র। অন্যটি দুই প্রধানমন্ত্রীর স্বাক্ষরিত এক তাৎপর্যপূর্ণ যৌথ ঘোষণাপত্র, যাতে দু-দেশের সম্পর্কের দিশা নির্দেশিত হয়েছে। এটি প্রকাশিত হবে কাল। জানা গেছে, তিব্বতকে চীনের অংশ হিসেবে ভারত স্বীকার করেছে যৌথ ঘোষণাপত্রে। উল্টোদিকে সিকিমের ভারতভুক্তি সরাসরি মেনে না নিলেও সীমান্ত বাণিজ্য সম্প্রসারণ সংক্রান্ত সমঝোতাপত্রে চীন রাজি হয়েছে সিকিমের সীমান্তপথ ধরে ভারতের সঙ্গে বাণিজ্য শুরু করতে। উল্লেখ্য, সিকিমের ভারতভুক্তি কখনই চীনের স্বীকৃতি পায়নি। এই সমঝোতাপত্রটিতে স্বাক্ষর করেছেন বিদেশমন্ত্রী যশোবন্ত সিংহ এবং চীনের বাণিজ্যমন্ত্রী লু ফুয়ান। ঐতিহাসিক গ্রেট হল অফ দি পিপল-এ সারা দিনের আলাপ-আলোচনার পর রাতে যৌথ ঘোষণাপত্রটিতে সই করেন দুই প্রধানমন্ত্রী। চীনের প্রধানমন্ত্রী এই ঘোষণাপত্র স্বাক্ষরকে একটি 'বড় ঘটনা' বলে উল্লেখ করেছেন। চীনের সরকারি সংবাদ সংস্থা শিন হুয়াকে তিনি বলেছেন, দুই প্রতিবেশীর সর্বাঙ্গিক সহযোগিতার একটি রূপরেখা এতে দেওয়া হয়েছে। দু'দেশের সম্পর্কের এক নতুন ধাপ আভাসিত হয়েছে এই ঘোষণাপত্রে। আজ দুই প্রধানমন্ত্রীর বৈঠকে সীমান্ত-বিতর্ক এবং সিকিম প্রসঙ্গ ওঠে। সীমান্ত-বিতর্ক চূড়ান্তভাবে মিটিয়ে ফেলার প্রক্রিয়াকে ত্বরান্বিত করার ব্যাপারে জোর দেন চীনের প্রধানমন্ত্রী। উঠেছিল পাকিস্তান প্রসঙ্গও। জঙ্গি অনুপ্রবেশ রোধে পাকিস্তান উপযুক্ত ব্যবস্থা নেয়নি বলে অসন্তোষ প্রকাশ করেছেন অটল। উল্টো দিকে, ওয়েন জিয়াবাও স্বস্তি প্রকাশ করেন নতুন করে বাজপেয়ী শান্তির উদ্যোগ নেওয়ায়। হিমাচলপ্রদেশ থেকে মানসযাত্রার সংক্ষিপ্তর পথটি ভারতীয় পূণ্যার্থীদের জন্য খুলে দেওয়ার আর্জিও জানিয়েছেন বাজপেয়ী। আজ তিয়েন আন মেন স্কোয়ারে গ্রেট হলে আসতেই অটলকে ২১টি তোপধ্বনিতে স্বাগত জানানো হয়। তারপর চীনের তিন বাহিনীর সামরিক অভিবাদন গ্রহণ করেন অটল। এরপর



প্রধানমন্ত্রী বাজপেয়ীকে আনুষ্ঠানিক অভ্যর্থনা। পাশে চীনা প্রধানমন্ত্রী ওয়েন জিয়া বাও। সোমবার বেজিংয়ে।

ছবি: পি আই বি

বৈঠকে বসেন জিয়াবাওয়ের সঙ্গে। প্রথমে বিদেশমন্ত্রী ও সীমিত কয়েকজন সঙ্গীকে নিয়ে আলোচনা হয় প্রায় এক ঘণ্টা। তারপর সমস্ত অফিসারকে নিয়ে বৈঠক। সেখানে স্বাক্ষরিত হয় ৯টি চুক্তি। দু'দেশের নাগরিকদের জন্য ভিসার প্রক্রিয়া সরল করার চুক্তিটিও রয়েছে এর মধ্যে। গুরুত্ব পেয়েছে বিশেষভাবে বাণিজ্যিক সহযোগিতার দিকগুলি। প্রধানমন্ত্রী জিয়াবাও জানান, ভারতে পরিকাঠামো খাতে ৫০ কোটি ডলার অর্থ বিনিয়োগ করবে চীন। বিকেলে পিকিং বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে ভারতচর্চ বিভাগের উদ্বোধন করে অটল জানান, আগামী পাঁচ বছর এই বিভাগটি চালানোর জন্য বছরে ১০ লাখ টাকা করে দিয়ে যাবে দিল্লি। এখানে ভাষণ দিতে উঠে অটল উল্লেখ করেন, অধ্যাপক তান উন শানের উৎসাহ ও সহযোগিতায় বিশ্বভারতীতে চীনাভবন তৈরি করেছিলেন

রবীন্দ্রনাথ ঠাকুর। পিকিং বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে ভারতচর্চা বিভাগে প্রথম স্থানাধিকারী ছাত্রকে দেওয়া হবে তান উন শান সম্মান, পুরস্কার হিসেবে তিন সপ্তাহের জন্য ভারতভ্রমণের সুযোগ। অটল এই অনুষ্ঠানে চীনের প্রয়াত নেতা তং শিয়াও ফিংকে উদ্ধৃত করে বলেন, 'একশ শতক হয়ে উঠুক এশিয়ার শতক। বিরোধকামী শক্তিগুলিকে প্রতিহত করে ঘনিষ্ঠ হোক এশিয়ার দুই বৃহত্তম জাতির দেশ। এর আগে চীনা প্রধানমন্ত্রীর সঙ্গে বৈঠকে বাজপেয়ী বলেন, 'চীনে অর্ধশ শতক শান্তি, শান্তি, শান্তি, শান্তি-বর্তা নিয়ে। ভারত আর চীন 'শুধু' প্রতিবেশী তাই নয়। দুনিয়ার সবচেয়ে জনবহুল এ দুই দেশের মধ্যে পারস্পরিক বিশ্বাস আর বোঝাপড়ার পরিবেশ থাকা দরকার। আমাদের বোঝাপড়া আরও বহুদূর এগোবে।' বাজপেয়ী ওয়েনকে বলেন, 'বেজিংয়ে আসতে পেরে আমি খুব খুশি। আপনি সম্ভবত জানেন, চীনে আমি এই প্রথম আসিনি। ১৯৭৯-তে বিদেশমন্ত্রী থাকার সময়ে এবং ১৯৯৩-তে প্রধানমন্ত্রী নরসিংহ রাওয়ের সঙ্গে সংসদীয় দলের সদস্য হিসেবে চীনে এসেছিলাম। এই অল্প সময়ের মধ্যে চীনের দারুণ উন্নতি দেখে আমি বিস্মিত।' বাজপেয়ীকে স্বাগত জানিয়ে ওয়েন জিয়াবাও বলেন, 'আমার বিশ্বাস, আপনার চলতি সফরের ফলে দু দেশের সম্পর্কে বড় ধরনের অগ্রগতি ঘটবে।' অটলের সফর ঘিরে ভারত-চীন ঘনিষ্ঠতা নিয়ে নানা মহলে জল্পনা-কল্পনা চলছে। ইসলামাবাদে পাক বিদেশমন্ত্রকের এক মুখপাত্র এর পরিপ্রেক্ষিতে আজ বলেন, চীনের সঙ্গে আমাদের বন্ধুত্ব এতে প্রভাবিত হবে না। সন্ত্রাস নিয়ে ভারত চীনকে ভুল বোঝাতে চাইছে বলেও অভিযোগ করেন তিনি। ৯ চুক্তি স্বাক্ষর: চীন ও ভারতের মধ্যে ৯টা দ্বিপাক্ষিক চুক্তি স্বাক্ষর হয়েছে। এই বিষয়গুলির মধ্যে রয়েছে ভিসা প্রক্রিয়ার সরলীকরণ, আইন ও বিচারক্ষেত্রে সম্পর্কবৃদ্ধি, শিক্ষা, খাদ্য প্রক্রিয়াকরণ, বিজ্ঞান ও প্রযুক্তি, মহাসাগর বিজ্ঞান, সাংস্কৃতিক কেন্দ্র স্থাপন প্রভৃতি। ভারত থেকে আম রপ্তানির ব্যাপারে একটি প্রোটোকলও স্বাক্ষরিত হয়েছে। অটল কথা দিয়েছেন, ভারতে বিনিয়োগের ক্ষেত্রে আর সব দেশের মত একইরকম সুবিধে পাবে চীন। যশোবন্ত সিংহ জানিয়েছেন যে, দু দেশের সাধারণ মানুষের মধ্যে যোগাযোগ ও বিশ্বাসের সম্পর্ক স্থাপনে চীনা প্রধানমন্ত্রী বিশেষ জোর দিয়েছেন। আগামী মাসে শুরু হবে কৈলাস-মানস সরোবর যাত্রা। এই যাত্রায় ভারতীয় তীর্থযাত্রীদের সুবিধে ও স্বাচ্ছন্দ্য আরও বাড়ানো নিয়েও অটল-ওয়েন বৈঠকে আলোচনা হয়েছে। এই তীর্থযাত্রার জন্য তিব্বতের দিকে একটি অতিরিক্ত রাস্তা খোলার কথা এখন বিবেচনাধীন।

24 JUN 2003

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VAJPAYEE BEGINS SIX-DAY VISIT

'Compelling logic for closer ties with China'

By Amit Baruah

BEIJING, JUNE 22. The Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, arrived to a cordial and "correct" welcome at the Beijing international airport this evening at the beginning of a six-day visit to China. He was received by the Chinese Vice-Foreign Minister, Wang Yi, and the Chinese Ambassador to India, Hua Junduo.

In a statement, the Prime Minister, who leads a delegation that comprises the External Affairs Minister, Yashwant Sinha, and the Commerce Minister, Arun Jaitley, said: "There is a compelling geographical, political and economic logic for closer relations between our two countries."

"I believe that my discussions with the new Chinese leadership would help in building better understanding and trust between our two countries," he said adding that India attached "high priority" to relations with this "important neighbour".

"Our two countries have developed a wide canvas of mutually beneficial cooperation... we have been developing and diversifying our relations even while simultaneously addressing our differences," Mr. Vajpayee, who will hold formal talks with his Chinese counterpart, Wen Jiabao, tomorrow, said.

"As the world's two largest and most populous developing countries, India and China need to remain in close touch on major issues of global concern... I hope to see for myself the remarkable economic transformation that China has undergone over the past decade," he added.

As India and China adopt the building block approach to their relationship, differences between them on several issues, however, remain. For instance, sources told this correspondent that Indian and Chinese officials were unable to agree on a set of non-Line of Actual Control confidence-building measures that were being discussed. The Indian side was hoping to conclude this agreement on CBMs during the Vajpayee visit.

The sources said that the Chinese had reservations about the use of the term "non-LAC" itself. The CBMs being discussed related to the exchange of visits by military commanders and advance notice of military exercises by the respective nations. These measures have been under discussion from around the



The Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, on his arrival at the airport in Beijing on Sunday. — AP

time the then Chinese Premier, Zhu Rongji, visited India in January 2002.

On Sikkim, too, the sources said that the Chinese were playing "hard-ball". If India was to be presented with a "road map" to Chinese recognition of Sikkim, then they wanted New Delhi to declare in advance that both Tibet and Taiwan were "inalienable" parts of China. After India made this statement, the Chinese would announce the "road map" on Sikkim. India already recognises Tibet and Taiwan as parts of China, with Tibet being described as an "autonomous" region of China.

Clearly, such an approach found few takers and, hence, the Sikkim issue remains where it was. However, the sources pointed out that given the contentious history of ties between the two countries, differences of approach were bound to be there. A *quid pro quo* on Sikkim has not found favour in New

Delhi. Yet another agreement being negotiated at the official level was one on bilateral investment protection. That, too, could not be clinched on the issue of "national treatment" to Chinese companies operating in India. Given the tough negotiating positions that officials of the two countries are known to adopt, there appears to be an obvious need for the political leadership to "step in" and give directions to their officials. As has been pointed out, India views the relationship with China not simply in terms of this visit, but as a process.

Whatever be the roadblocks, none can fault the two sides for trying to negotiate difficult issues. A number of agreements to facilitate issuing of business visas, in the science and technology sector, setting up cultural centres in respective centres and an agreement in the education sector will, of course, be signed.

We are awaiting outcome of Bush-Musharraf talks: PM

NEW DELHI, JUNE 22. Voicing concern over the continuing cross-border terrorism, the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, today said that India would await the outcome of the talks between the Pakistani President, Pervez Musharraf, and his U.S. counterpart, George W. Bush, at Camp David on June 24.

"Our concerns are on cross-border terrorism which should stop. Our friends (in the international community) have agreed with us on this score," the Prime Minister told presspersons at the airport shortly before emplaning for China. Asked about his expectations from the Musharraf-Bush talks, he said, "let us see what emerges out of it and what measures follow". — PTI

MONDAY, JUNE 23, 2003

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THE SINO-INDIAN POTENTIAL ✓
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THE PRIME MINISTER, Atal Behari Vajpayee's six-day visit to China, officially beginning today, sets the stage for the two giant neighbours to give a major new thrust to their bilateral relations. It is an opportunity to turn a historic potential into a reality by giving the relations greater depth through closer economic cooperation and political understanding. The visit is taking place at a time of unprecedented flux in international relations, when, through their combined leadership, the two can impart a needed balance to global affairs, rudely shaken by the American doctrine of pre-emption and the war on Iraq that followed its unveiling. During his brief interaction with China's new President, Hu Jintao, in St. Petersburg, Russia, late last month, Mr. Vajpayee gave expression to a vision of India and China making this an Asian century of peace and progress. China's Prime Minister, Wen Jiabao, also underscored the need for "more democracy" in international relations in his interview to *The Hindu*. The visit of P. V. Narasimha Rao more than a decade ago laid the foundation for peace and tranquillity on the long and disputed borders through an exemplary mechanism of consultations. Mr. Vajpayee and Mr. Hu can now transform this to bring more concrete, tangible benefits for the two peoples.

Given the political will on either side, there is no reason why the mutual wariness and suspicion that has characterised the relations in the past cannot be replaced with trust and confidence in each other. The visit of the Defence Minister, George Fernandes, to China in late April demonstrated the readiness of both sides to put the past, in particular the bitter recent past, behind and look ahead to building a mature relationship that reflects the potential. Imbibing one major lesson of the end of the Cold War, the two should move decisively to give economics and trade a greater weight in bilateral relations on the premise that this provides

a better context for resolving outstanding political disputes. That the Government realises the value of this is attested by the accompanying large delegation of businessmen whose early fears of being swamped by Chinese products have given way to a search for openings in the Chinese market. Indian industry's exploration of the Chinese market and Indian trade and investment in China, begun in a piecemeal fashion, can receive a major boost with political blessings. In the context of the extraordinary speed at which bilateral trade has grown in the past decade — from \$ 350 million in 1993 to \$ 5 billion last year — clearly the opportunity for growth in overall trade and investments is huge.

There can be an immediate beneficial impact on the political relations if the two countries decide to let trade and commerce flow freely — and let them resume across the traditional silk route. Since preparations began for Mr. Vajpayee's long awaited visit to China, there has been speculation that Beijing may agree to formally recognise the 1975 merger of Sikkim with India — and help revive trade via Sikkim to the Tibetan region of China. This can additionally spur trade in the east, between the booming Chinese province of Yunnan and India's eastern region. The agenda in Beijing will doubtless cover the vexed boundary question, the difficulties on which both recognise, and the strategic cooperation between China and Pakistan, which Beijing steadfastly denies has worked to undermine India's interests. On the global stage, there is a concurrence of views on many international issues like the war on Iraq and the dangerous instability arising from unilateralism and unipolarity. If the Vajpayee visit results in imparting greater depth to bilateral relations through more intensive economic cooperation and reduced political friction, the continent may have taken one more step toward the dream of an Asian century.

23 JUN 2003

History's burden

578 Can Delhi hope for a Beijing spring? ^{23/6} India - China

That Beijing has described the border dispute with India as a "burden left over from history" that is ripe for solution is a positive sign and an opportunity for Vajpayee to grasp on his upcoming trip to China. Beijing is correct when it says that it has solved land border issues with most of its neighbours — but for the one with India. Some might argue that sustaining the border dispute is deliberate tactics at the instance of "all-weather ally" Pakistan to pin down a large military force on the China border. But the present approach to resolve the dispute, adopted at Indian insistence, is a pettifogging one — it calls for delineation on a map of every mile of territory actually held by both sides, followed by an exchange of maps, followed by discussions about who can give up what. That of course involves a lot of detailed work favoured by bureaucracies; the disadvantage is that it will take forever to arrive at an agreement. There is going to be a lot of prevarication about who holds what, since each side knows that what it claims about the territory it holds will influence the shape of the final settlement. It would be a lot quicker to get to the real point straightaway — who gets what in a final settlement — and for that Vajpayee needs to go over the heads of both bureaucracies and sit down directly with Hu Jintao or Jiang Zemin. The present trip looks like an opportune moment to take some bold and substantive steps with regard to a dispute frozen since the last 40 years.

What has changed that Beijing is showing greater interest in mending fences with New Delhi? For one, there is the prospect of economic cooperation — not only the question of access to the growing Indian market, but the realisation that it is possible to storm world markets by bringing together China's low-cost hardware and manufacturing skills with India's low-cost software and design skills. Now that China has entered the World Trade Organisation, it will probably adopt similar positions on multilateral trade as India, in which case Beijing and Delhi together will carry greater clout at the WTO if they coordinate and align their positions. On the strategic level, Beijing is worried at Washington having established bases in Central and South Asia. Given the troubles Delhi is having with its western neighbour, with the Pakistani dictator's idea of making peace by brandishing Kargil and nukes at India, Vajpayee could pressure his hosts in Beijing by telling them that Beijing's continued backing of Islamabad's anti-Indian policies could push India into a strategic alliance with the US. Of course, Beijing too has interests, and Vajpayee could reassure it over Tibet — there is not much help Delhi provides the Dalai Lama other than allowing his people to reside in India. For a settlement of the border dispute Vajpayee must be prepared to concede some territory, for example the Aksai Chin where Delhi's claims are none too strong. Without give there can, of course, be no take.

Past dogs them, but a future lies ahead

Declaration on Principles for Relations and Comprehensive Cooperation Between the Republic of India and the People's Republic of China

AT the invitation of Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China H.E. Wen Jiabao, Prime Minister of the Republic of India H.E. Atal Behari Vajpayee paid an official visit to the People's Republic of China from 22 to 27 June 2003.

During this visit, Premier Wen Jiabao held talks with Prime Minister Vajpayee. Their Excellencies President Hu Jintao of the People's Republic of China, Chairman Jiang Zemin of the Central Military Commission, Chairman Wu Bangguo of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress and Vice President Zeng Qinghong of the People's Republic of China held separate meetings with Prime Minister Vajpayee. The talks and meetings were held in a sincere and friendly atmosphere.

Leaders from both countries noted with satisfaction the progress made over recent years in bilateral relations. This is conducive not only to their respective development, but also to regional stability and prosperity. The two sides recalled the historical depth of their friendly contacts. India and China are the two largest developing countries of the world with centuries-old civilisation, unique history and similar objectives. Both noted that the sustained economic and social development in the two countries, representing one-third of humanity is vital for ensuring peace, stability and prosperity not only in Asia but also in the whole world.

The two sides agreed that India and China have a mutual desire for good neighbourly relations and have broad common interests. They agreed to fully utilise the substantial potential and opportunities for deepening mutually beneficial cooperation.

Friendship and cooperation between the two countries meets the need to: promote the socio-economic development and prosperity of both India and China; * Maintain peace and stability regionally and globally;

■ Strengthen multipolarity at the international level; and
■ Enhance the positive factors of globalisation.

■ Both sides affirmed that they would abide by the following principles, promote a long-term constructive and cooperative partnership and, on this basis, build a qualitatively new relationship:

■ Both sides are committed to developing their long-term constructive and cooperative partnership on the basis of the principles of Panchsheel, mutual respect and sensitivity for each other's concerns and equality;

■ As two major developing countries, India and China have a broad mutual interest in the maintenance of peace, stability and prosperity in Asia and the world, and a mutual desire in developing wider and closer cooperation and understanding in regional and international affairs;

■ The common interests of the two sides outweigh their differences. The two countries are not a threat to each other. Neither side shall use or threaten to use force against the other; and

■ Both sides agree to qualitatively enhancing the bilateral relationship at all levels and in all areas while addressing

differences through peaceful means in a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable manner. The differences should not be allowed to affect the overall development of bilateral relations.

Both sides agreed to hold regular high-level exchanges between the two countries. This will greatly enhance mutual understanding and expand bilateral relations. With a view to deepening their coordination and dialogues on bilateral, regional and international issues, both sides agreed on the need for annual meetings between Foreign Ministers of the two countries. They also agreed that personnel exchanges and friendly contacts between ministries, parliaments and political parties of the two countries should be further enhanced.

The two sides welcomed the positive momentum of bilateral trade and economic cooperation in recent years and shared the belief that continued expansion and intensification of India-

China economic cooperation is essential for strengthening relations.

Both sides shared the view that existing complementarities between their two provide an important foundation and offer broad prospects for further enhancing their economic relations. In order to promote trade and economic cooperation, both sides will take necessary measures consistent with their national laws and rules and international obligations to remove impediments to bilateral trade and investment. They reaffirmed the importance of the ministerial meeting of the Joint Economic Group (JEG) and agreed to hold the next (seventh) JEG meeting within the year.

The two sides will set up a compact Joint Study Group (JSG) composed of officials and economists to examine the potential complementarities between the two countries in expanded trade and economic cooperation. The JSG would also draw up a programme for the development of India-China trade and economic cooperation for the next five years, aimed at encouraging greater cooperation between the business communities of both sides. The Group should present a study report and recommendations to the two Governments on measures for comprehensive trade and economic cooperation by the end of June 2004.

The two countries will launch a financial dialogue and cooperation mechanism to strengthen their dialogue and coordination in this sector. The two sides agreed to enhance cooperation at the WTO, which is not only to mutual benefit but also in the broader interest of developing countries. The two sides will hold dialogues on a regular basis in this regard.

Historical and cultural links between India and China will be strengthened, inter-alia, through the promotion of exchanges in culture, education, science and technology, media, youth and people-to-people relations. They agreed to set up Cultural Centers in each other's capitals and facilitate their establishment. Both sides will work towards the enhancement of direct air and shipping links, tourism, exchange hydrological data in flood season on common rivers as agreed,

25/6 cooperation in agriculture, dairy, food processing, health and other sectors.

They agreed on the need to broaden and deepen defence exchanges, which will help enhance and deepen the mutual understanding and trust between the two armed forces. They confirmed that the exchange of visits by their Defence Ministers and of military officials at various levels should be strengthened.

The two sides exchanged views on the India-China boundary question and expounded their respective posi-

29/9 The Chinese side expressed its appreciation of the Indian position.

India and China recognised the primacy of maintaining international peace. This is a prerequisite for the socio-economic development of all developing countries, including India and China. The world is marked by diversity. Every country has the right to choose its own political system and path to development. As two major developing countries, India and China acknowledged the importance of their respective roles in the shaping of a new

threat posed by terrorism to them and to global peace and security. They resolutely condemned terrorism in any form. The struggle between the international community and global terrorism is a comprehensive and sustained one, with the ultimate objective of eradication of terrorism in all regions. This requires strengthening the global legal framework against terrorism. Both sides shall also promote cooperation on counter-terrorism through their bilateral dialogue mechanism.

India and China face special and similar challenges in their efforts to protect the environment while simultaneously forging ahead with rapid social and economic development. In this context, the two sides agreed to work together in a practical manner to cooperate on preserving the environment and ensuring sustainable development and to coordinate positions on climate change, biodiversity and other issues in multilateral fora.

The two sides exchanged views on the India-China boundary question and expounded their respective positions. They reiterated their readiness to seek a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable solution through consultations. They reiterated their commitment to continue implementation of the agreements signed for this purpose, including the clarification of the Line of Actual Control



India recognises that the Tibet Autonomous Region is part of the territory 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 it is firmly opposed to any attempt and action aimed at splitting China and bringing about 'Independence of Tibet'

tions. They reiterated their readiness to seek a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable solution through consultations on an equal footing. The two sides agreed that pending an ultimate solution, they should work together to maintain peace and tranquility in the border areas, and reiterated their commitment to continue implementation of the agreements signed for this purpose, including the clarification of the Line of Actual Control.

The two sides agreed to each appoint a Special Representative to explore from the political perspective of the overall bilateral relationship the framework of a boundary settlement.

The Indian side recognises 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 and bringing about "Independence of Tibet".

The Indian side recalled that India was among the first countries to recognise that there is one China and its One China Policy remains unaltered.

international political and economic order. The international community must help the developing countries to eliminate poverty and narrow the gap between the North and the South through dialogue and cooperation so as to achieve common prosperity.

The two sides acknowledged the vital importance of the role of the United Nations in world peace, stability and development. They are determined to continue their efforts in strengthening the UN system. They reaffirmed their readiness to work together to promote reform of the UN. In reform of the UN Security Council, priority should be given to enhancing representation of the developing countries.

Both sides stood for continued multilateral arms control and disarmament process, undiminished and equal security for all at progressively lower levels of armament and for multilateral negotiations aimed at nuclear disarmament and elimination of nuclear weapons. They are firmly opposed to introduction of weapons in outer space, use or threat of force against space-based objects and support cooperation in development of space technology for peaceful purposes.

The two sides recognised the

The two sides supported multilateral cooperation in Asia, believing that such cooperation promotes mutually beneficial exchanges, economic growth as well as greater cohesion among Asian countries. The two sides viewed positively each other's participation in regional and sub-regional multilateral cooperation processes in Asia.

The two sides stated that the improvement and development of India-China relations is not targeted at any third country and does not affect either country's existing friendly relations and cooperation with other countries. The two sides agreed that the official visit of the Prime Minister of India to the People's Republic of China has been a success, has contributed to enhancing mutual understanding and trust between the Governments, leaders and peoples of the two countries, and marks a new step forward in strengthening the all-round cooperation between India and China in the new century.

Prime Minister Vajpayee invited Premier Wen Jiabao to visit India at a mutually convenient time and conveyed to President Abdul Kalam an invitation from President Kalam to visit India. The Chinese side accepted the invitations with appreciation. The dates of the visits will be settled through diplomatic channels.

On behalf of the Government and the people of India, H.E. Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee thanked the Government and the people of China for the warm welcome received by him and his delegation.

(Signed in Beijing on June 23, 2003, in Hindi, Chinese and English)

In Beijing, it's business

Economic opportunity and mutual security: These are the priorities during the PM's China visit

PRIME MINISTER Vajpayee's visit to China is expected to be more than a routine bilateral contact, especially since it has been a decade since Prime Minister Narasimha Rao was in Beijing. A joint declaration would no doubt define these ties appropriately. There is a substantive convergence of views in Beijing and New Delhi on the international situation, while the interests of the two would not necessarily coincide on every issue. China and India have both pursued independent foreign policies over the past five decades. The world situation now is in a state of flux. A deeper look would reveal that more of Chinese and Indian interests would be served better by further transition of the international order toward a non-polarised, non-hegemonic framework which would allow them greater flexibility and autonomy of decision making to pursue their national interests.

At the same time, human development remains the strategic priority for both countries. This requires faster growth of economic and trade opportunities, and assured peace. Our outstanding disputes, complex as they are, must be seen in that context so that we are clear about our priorities. The issue of where the Sino-Indian border actually lies is a complex one and difficult to resolve since it con-

cerns large tracts of territory between two countries deeply sensitive about their sovereignty. The strategic logic of the 1988 statement and the 1993 agreement was the need to stabilise the frontiers by the maintenance of peace across them. This is why the demarcation of the Line of Actual Control is so important since that would ensure that incidents like the 1987 Sumdorong Chu spat do not recur.

We do not require a certificate from China to endorse the reality that Sikkim is a part of India. In any case, an agreement to open a border post on India's northern border in the Sikkim region would be an acceptance of this reality by Beijing. Trade between the two countries has been growing rapidly at an average annual growth rate of over 32 per cent. As the two countries engage each other in the economic trade arena, they are also discovering greater opportunities for the further expansion of this trade. Every possible measure and opportunity needs to be exploited to speed up the momentum of bilateral trade and investments. Enhancing border trade must also be seen in this context and trading expanded in volume and through border posts all the way from the Karakoram Pass in J&K in the west, through Sikkim, to the eastern tip of our borders.

Disputed maps and dreams of road maps

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23/6/2003

By P. S. Suryanarayana

BEIJING, JUNE 22. The global context of the official visit to China by the Prime Minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, at this time is defined by the latest U.S. military triumph in Iraq, as also the resultant fallout, besides the ongoing "war on international terrorism" and India's continuous moral support for the new Chinese leaders in their continuing battle against the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS).

Ahead of Mr. Vajpayee's arrival here today, the Chinese Prime Minister, Wen Jiabao, has pointed out that his administration has brought the new disease under control. Beijing itself, the worst SARS-hit city in the world, has been grappling with a climatic haze rather than the disease itself in recent days. However, SARS-detective devices and measures such as body-temperature checks and thermal scanners are still very much in evidence, and this situation has given Mr. Vajpayee's visit a touch of the unreal, even if not a strategic dose of the surreal. Beijing is still on the World Health Organisation's advisory against non-essential travel. Now, who can argue that Mr.

essential kind. However, external to the China-India "real-politics" is the outward symbolism of whether or not Beijing would see the Vajpayee visit as the case of "a friend in need" being "a friend indeed", in view of the Indian leader's gesture of visiting this city when it has still not fully come out of the SARS eclipse. In any case, this city has been, for some time now, the home to hoardings that proclaim that "Beijingers are friends to all the world".

While the hype about the Vajpayee visit has been very high on the Indian side, the Chinese authorities, too, have paid considerable attention. Mr. Vajpayee's prospective talks with his main host-interlocutor and Chinese counterpart, Mr. Wen, will be as important as those with Hu Jintao, China's President and General Secretary of the governing Communist Party of China, and Jiang Zemin, who commands the Central Military Commission at the party and regional levels.

As for the issues that might be covered during these talks, the two countries are not likely to embark on a space odyssey-like joint mission to reshape the current world order. Although this does not mean

on the international stage will not figure very prominently in the Sino-Indian dialogue, the main thrust areas will be bilateral in scope at the bottom line. An effort might be made by both China and India to formulate a future-oriented joint commitment to cooperate with each other with some vision and purpose, according to diplomatic sources.

Any such joint commitment, whatever be the nomenclature of the document on it, would embody the bilateral resolve even if multilateral issues are touched upon.

There is no paucity of specific issues in the Sino-Indian spectrum — the unresolved boundary dispute, the "status" of Sikkim, the Dalai Lama-Karma-pa sojourn, the Pakistan factor and the geopolitical shadow/sunshine of the U.S.

Of all these, the disputed maps, as noticed during the recent Sino-Indian failure to exchange maps concerning the western sector of the Himalayan border, are of particular importance to any road maps that the two sides might now wish to envision for the future of bilateral ties.

The sensitivities of addressing these issues through public

manner that the Chinese Prime Minister has not responded to some of the questions from *The Hindu* in his interview.

These unanswered issues pertain to several key aspects including a relatively lesser one like that of a timeline for the resolution of the border dispute.

Thailand for free trade accord with India

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, JUNE 22. Thailand has indicated that it is in favour of a bilateral free trade agreement with India. According to a statement issued by India, the Thailand Commerce Minister, Adisai Bodharamik, communicated this to Arun Jaitley, Minister of Commerce and Industry, during discussions in Sharm El-Sheikh in Egypt. Both Ministers are in Egypt to participate in the WTO informal Ministerial meeting.

The statement said that Mr. Bodharamik also conveyed Thailand's interest in raising the level of bilateral trade with India. The trade between the two countries is at present valued at

HINDU

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36 Bangla nationals arrested

BEHRAMPORE, June 21.
— Thirty six Bangladeshi
nationals were arrested
from the Indo-Bangla bor-
der near Sagarpada of
Jalangi police station,
Murshidabad, police said.
Five Indian citizens who
reportedly accompanied the
Bangladeshis to sneak into
Bangladesh were also
arrested.

Those held had crossed
over to India from Lalpur
police station in Natore dis-
trict in Bangladesh.

SP, Murshidabad, Mr
Dhirendre said, "These
Bangladeshis were settled
in Rajasthan from where
they arrived at Jalanghi via
Howrah station. Their plan
was to enter Bangladesh
and come back to India
after a month's visit to their
ancestral establishments."

Among the Bangladeshis
held, 12 were men, 11
women and the rest chil-
dren. Police said that all of
them are daily wage earn-
ers and came over to India
in the last seven to eight
years in search of employ-
ment. — SNS

THE STATESMAN

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MO'BIKES & MIDDLE KINGDOM

Sell, don't sell out, to China. *ML*

METAPHORS and imageries abound in the context of Sino-Indian summits. While all the stuff about dragons and elephants and the Great Wall and Taj Mahal, not to mention Asian giants and oldest civilisations, makes good copy, a more prosaic angle could capture the bilateral potential better. Consider Indians riding Chinese motorcycles and the Chinese popping Indian pills. China is a very competitive manufacturing country and India ranks high globally as a quality, low cost centre for services ranging from information technology to pharmaceuticals. Trade and investment in these sectors could put Sino-Indian relations on a fast track even as issues like border demarcation, China's Pakistan-pandering and its barely disguised hostility to India's strategic thinking are carefully and perhaps fruitlessly negotiated. The core concern of the Prime Minister's China visit, therefore, must be to push real economic cooperation issues and not allow old differences to block new opportunities. This does not mean, as many Indian strategists fear, that India should forget that the Chinese leadership has adversarial notions about aspects of Sino-Indian relationship. Beijing's unwillingness to settle the border disputes forces New Delhi to maintain large army presence on both the Indo-Chinese and Indo-Pakistani fronts. A resolution of the Sino-Indian differences would allow India to concentrate on Pakistan — something Islamabad does not want and Beijing is happy to oblige because it also serves its own interests in terms of keeping India guessing. *ML*

On a broader level, China wants to emerge as Asia's military and strategic hyperpower and a strong India can be an irritant in that quest. It could not have escaped Indian policymakers' notice that Beijing has been less than enthusiastic about New Delhi's ambitions for a seat at the Security Council. The question of getting beguiled by Chinese charm offensive, if there's one, therefore does not arise. India also needs to remember its own strengths — it's a democracy reforming its economy. China is a single-party political anachronism that has been economically more successful — although official data is notoriously unreliable — but will have huge problems with political reform. This is a country, after all, which persecutes groups like Falun Gong, which democracies like India would simply let be, and have tanks fire on its own citizens asking for political liberty.

Naturally, the Prime Minister will not be mentioning Tiananmen Square. But he can certainly speak approvingly of political liberty, just as Bill Clinton did when he had visited China. American Presidents have kept China's economic potential in mind even while dealing with strategic and repression issues. India can do the same. Indian business in fact is likely to find China a good place to do business in since the areas India's strengths are, like IT and pharmaceuticals, are precisely those where China wants to attract foreign capital via tax and duty breaks. New Delhi can reciprocate by being a little less cagey on Chinese investment in India. True, there are the examples of Chinese espionage in US scientific and commercial establishments. But blanket bans are not the answer. Let the dragon enter and watch it.

Asian giants may get closer

SNS AND PTI

NEW DELHI/ BEIJING, June 21. — Though the Indo-China border dispute is not likely to be resolved during the Prime Minister's six-day visit to China, the foreign office did not rule out the possibility of the matter being discussed.

Briefing reporters on the eve of Mr Vajpayee's trip the MEA secretary, Mr Kanwal Sibal today said, "There is absolutely no expectation on either side that this visit will result in any settlement of the boundary dispute".

"That process is already underway, the process is defined and its stages are defined, it will be a diplomatic mistake to try and artificially speed it up," he said and added "this process is independent of the visit".

Asked whether the matter would figure in the talks Mr Vajpayee held with his Chinese counterpart Mr Wen Jiabao and other leaders, Mr Sibal did not rule out the possibility and said "all aspects of bilateral discussions can be discussed".

Meanwhile, Mr Wen today said Beijing was ready to advance the pace of talks for a "fair" and "mutually acceptable" solution to the vexed Sino-India boundary issue and emphasised the need for keeping the border areas peaceful.

In an interview to Indian journalists before Mr Vajpayee's six-day official visit to China from tomorrow, Mr Wen said the boundary issue is "a historical burden on our two countries left over by the colonialists." "The Chinese side stands for a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable solution to the issue, a solu-

tion that can be found through bilateral talks in accordance with the principles of consultation on an equal footing, mutual understanding, mutual accommodation and mutual adjustment," Mr Wen said.

He said that while the two sides are negotiating a solution to the border issue, Beijing and New Delhi should do their "very best" to keep the border areas peaceful and tranquil.

During the interview he allayed fears that China might emerge as a threat and seek hegemony in the region because of its rising economic and military might. He also wanted India and Pakistan to settle the Kashmir issue through peaceful dialogue.

On Vajpayee's visit, the first by an Indian Prime Minister in a decade, Mr Wen said it "will have a positive impact on bilateral relations and regional peace and stability."

On the boundary issue, Mr Wen pointed out that to clarify and confirm the alignment of the Line of Actual Control in the China-India border is provided for under the relevant bilateral agreement.

"The Chinese side has always held a positive attitude towards this. We are ready to join the Indian side in advancing this process," he said.

Senior Chinese foreign ministry officials this week indicated that the boundary issue would be on top of the agenda of Chinese leaders who would meet Mr Vajpayee separately during his three-day stay in Beijing.

India accuses China of occupying approximately 38,000 sq km of territory in Kashmir. In addition, under the so-called Sino-Pakistan "boundary agreement" of 1963,



Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee briefs party on the agenda during his China visit during a meeting at his residence in New Delhi on Saturday. — AFP

Pakistan illegally ceded 5,180 sq km of Indian territory in PoK to China.

At the same time, China lays claim to 90,000 sq km of land in Arunachal Pradesh.

Mr Wen said he was looking forward to meeting Mr Vajpayee in Beijing on Monday for their first-ever contact. The Chinese Prime Minister is scheduled to host an official welcoming ceremony for Mr Vajpayee at the Great Hall of

the People, followed by official talks. Reacting on the recent easing of tension between India and Pakistan, Mr Wen noted that his Indian counterpart has extended a hand of friendship to Pakistan, which helped turn the tense relationship around.

Visit crucial: Ivanov

Terming Mr Vajpayee's China visit as "important", Russia has said the activation of

ALLY IN DRUG WAR

CHIANGMAI (Thailand) June 21. — India today joined four Asian nations in a new plan to tackle production and trafficking of opium, heroin and methamphetamine. Under the plan opium-producing nations will help farmers substitute their poppy crops with other so that they can earn a living.

The communication, information technology and disinvestment minister, Mr Arun Shourie, who is here to attend the second Asia Cooperation Dialogue, and foreign ministers from Thailand, Laos, Myanmar and China discussed and endorsed the plan at a breakfast meeting here. — PTI

New Delhi-Beijing dialogue would give a new fillip to on-going India-Russia-China interaction on global issues of common concern, a report adds from Moscow.

"This is an important visit, it reflects the tendencies which we today can see, namely — expansion of dialogue and contacts between the states of the region," Russian foreign minister Mr Igor Ivanov was quoted as saying by his ministry's information service.

"Russia always attaches significant importance to its dialogue with China, it is our strategic partner. For us India is also a most important strategic partner in the region and the world as a whole, that's why the dialogue between Moscow, Beijing and Delhi will continue and we welcome activation of dialogue between Delhi and Beijing," Mr Ivanov said.

THE STATESMAN

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'CONSULTATION ON EQUAL FOOTING' NEEDED

China for fair, reasonable solution to border row: Wen

By P. S. Suryanarayana

BEIJING, JUNE 21. The Chinese Prime Minister, Wen Jiabao, has underlined a new principle of Sino-Indian equality as one of the norms for the final settlement of his country's boundary dispute with New Delhi. The principle of "consultation on an equal footing" was first propounded by China only very recently, and Mr. Wen has now conspicuously emphasised this new idea ahead of the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee's imminent official visit to Beijing from Sunday evening.

Obviously looking at the present state of China-India ties through the prism of Beijing's "new security concept" for global stability, Mr. Wen said, in an interview to *The Hindu* and PTI here, that this novel "security concept" itself "is based on the common interests of all nations" in the political context of "China's independent foreign policy of peace".

On the Sino-Indian frontier question, which is expected to top the strategic check list of the agenda for talks between Mr. Vajpayee and the top Chinese leadership here early next week, Mr. Wen said that "pending a solution, the two sides should do their very best to keep the border areas peaceful and tran-



The Chinese Prime Minister, Wen Jiabao

quil". Without delving into the recent episode of a virtual standoff between the two countries over the exchange of maps concerning the western sector of the border, he said that "the Chinese side stands for a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable solution to the (overall) issue". This solution, in his view of Chinese 'positivism', "can be found through bilateral talks in accordance with the principles of consultation on an equal footing, mutual understanding, mutual accommodation and mutual adjustment".

The pattern of mutuality forms the centre-piece of China's advocacy of a "new security concept" for global peace too. Outlining the key elements of

this "concept" as "mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality and coordination" among countries across the global spectrum, Mr. Wen called for "more democracy in international relations". China would "never... seek hegemony" in world affairs, he maintained in a veiled rebuttal of the controversial theory that a 'new Chinese empire' is already on the prowl in the international arena. As for Beijing's more immediate "needs", he cited "particularly a sound environment in its surrounding areas" of geopolitical importance so that China could then "accelerate (its) modernisation drive (and) accomplish national re-unification". India and Pakistan, fall squarely within China's geopolitical neighbourhood so defined.

Given this notion of a tranquil neighbourhood, the addition of "equality" as the first factor in the search for a settlement of the China-India border dispute acquires an importance that is yet to be decoded. Diplomatic sources have indicated to this correspondent that the accent that Mr. Wen has now placed on "equality" in the Sino-Indian context is a matter of some fine-tuned thinking at the highest echelons of the new Chinese leadership that consists of Hu Jintao and Mr. Wen him-

self besides Jiang Zemin as elder statesman. This may have something to do with China's sense of wanting to address India's sensitivities, diplomats said. On India-Pakistan issues, which inevitably impinge on the Sino-Indian process of rapprochement, Mr. Wen did not respond to a specific question from *The Hindu* about the perception that Pakistan is to China what Israel is to the United States in a strategic interpretation of foreign policy. However, according to Mr. Wen, China would, "as a neighbour and friend to both India and Pakistan", continue to urge them to "seek an effective solution to the Kashmir problem through peaceful dialogue". He did not hint at any thinking about a Chinese role in or relevance to this process. Mr. Wen, who answered select questions from out of those given for the interview, underlined the possibilities in Sino-Indian economic cooperation and other bilateral issues in a manner indicative of some form of a future-oriented joint commitment to cooperation. This has been advocated by Chinese observers such as Wang Hongwei and others.

Details of interview: Page 9
'India, China must learn from history': Page 8

WTO: U.S. claims victory in textile complaint

WASHINGTON, JUNE 21. Rejecting India's challenges, the U.S. today claimed it has emerged victorious in a World Trade Organisation complaint brought by New Delhi, a decision likely to keep India from increasing exports to the U.S. markets.

"A WTO panel has upheld U.S. laws on determining the country of origin of textile and apparel products in a dispute brought by India challenging these rules," the U.S. Trade Representative, Robert B. Zoellick, said. "Rules of origin are used to determine the country of origin of imported goods," he said adding the U.S. laws are consistent with U.S. WTO obligations, rejecting all of India's challenges.

"This is an important victory for American trade laws and American textile trade. Detailed U.S. rules of origin for textiles help make sure that everyone

plays by the rules...," Mr. Zoellick said. India had said that its exports of unfinished cotton fabrics that were finished or dyed in the U.S. should not be counted against its quota.

India said the U.S. rules were unfair as it had adopted the different rules for silk goods.

The two upheld U.S. rules that were enacted under a 1996 law setting standards for countries of origin for textiles.

The WTO panel rejected India's arguments that U.S. rules of origin improperly differentiate between textile and apparel products and other industrial products, and that the U.S. rules were adopted to protect the U.S. textile industry from competition.

Instead, the panel agreed with the U.S. that the rules of origin are entirely consistent with U.S. obligations under the WTO Agreement on Rules of Origin. — PTI

SATURDAY, JUNE 21, 2003

SHORTSIGHTED STRATEGY

THE LATEST PRONOUNCEMENTS of the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf, strike a discordant note and must most certainly be deemed to be unhelpful to the current moves to improve relations with India. They run contrary to his repeated assertion that he is ready to go the extra mile to help normalise relations and are particularly unfortunate at this juncture when the peace process, begun on the initiative of the Indian Prime Minister, is delicately poised. Even conceding that his remarks are addressed in the main to his domestic audience, the context in which they have been made and the mixture of belligerence and barely concealed ultimatums to India will not go unnoticed. Gen. Musharraf's domestic compulsions are understandable and in his fight to keep at bay religious fundamentalists who are on the rampage at home he needs all the support from every quarter within and outside the country. As he travels to Washington, it is apparent that one of his objectives in launching the anti-India tirade is to pre-empt the Islamic political opposition at home and discourage the impression that he may be yielding ground under pressure from the Bush administration. The calculated attempt to portray his country as the wronged one vis-à-vis India following the American arms embargo may also serve to secure greater financial and military assistance from the U.S. where he is perceived as a partner and close ally in the war against terror.

In the context of the current peace initiative, this is a shortsighted strategy and is incompatible with his simultaneous offer to take two steps for every step that India takes on improving relations. Closely following his controversial remark to an Indian television channel on the possibility of a second Kargil incursion — its denial as a misquote was nothing more than an afterthought — he returned to the theme dur-

ing an interview to the BBC's Asia Today programme. He warned that the lull on the Line of Control would not last indefinitely in the absence of movement on the question of Kashmir. This was queer logic since he had promised both the U.S. and the U.K. to end cross-border terrorism. The implication was as clear as it was self-implicating: the claimed lull in cross-border terrorism would end when Pakistan decides to revive support to the militants at a time of its choosing. In an interview to *The Times* of London, Gen. Musharraf laid out the case for the U.S. and the U.K. to lift the arms embargo against Pakistan and issued another ultimatum. Speaking of a military "imbalance" which he urged the two countries to set right, the Pakistani leader went on to hint darkly of a resort to "non-conventional" arms in the event of war. It was irresponsible resort to nuclear blackmail, not far removed from that practised with little success by the North Korean regime.

Neither Gen. Musharraf's fulminations nor the rhetoric of L.K. Advani during his visit to the U.S. earlier or New Delhi's inexplicable decision to oppose the admission of Pakistan into the Asean Regional Forum will hopefully vitiate the atmosphere of bilateral cordiality that has been achieved so far following Mr. Vajpayee's offer of the hand of friendship on April 18. With as many hurdles as hardliners on either side, the progress has been slow and halting but by sub-continental standards is quite remarkable. An Indian parliamentary team is touring Pakistan and the Delhi-Lahore bus service, which heralded the first of Mr. Vajpayee's peace ventures, is ready to resume. In the absence of direct air connections, the official Pakistan team to discuss the restoration of the suspended bus service reached Delhi via Dubai. Such absurdities serve the interests of the people of neither country.

THE HINDU

21 JUN 2003

A chance for closer ties

By P. S. Suryanarayana

9th China
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21/6

IS CHINA a special state in the international arena? Can India play a definitive China card to confound either the United States or Pakistan and secure a place among the big powers of the world? The answer to the first question is that the power-conscious U.S. has often treated China as a special country since their strategic rapprochement in the early 1970s. The answer to the second question, however, is that India can hardly play a China card in the present circumstances despite the ongoing two-way friendly idiom.

What, then, is the strategic scope or the political-economic significance of the visit to China by the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee? China has certainly come a long way in recognising India as a potential power to watch and engage diplomatically. This reflects a far cry from 1962 and also from Beijing's general perception of New Delhi, following its nuclear-weapons testing in 1998, as a state that was out to try and "contain China". The prospect of a sustainable diplomatic engagement with India at all levels is, therefore, something that Beijing is likely to assess during Mr. Vajpayee's visit from June 22. What is the state of play in regard to a few key aspects of Sino-Indian relations? China has, in the run-up to the Vajpayee visit, sought to portray India as a partner and not a rival. The more immediate context of China's latest look-at-India policy is that of the global cross-currents caused by the recent military triumph of the U.S. in Iraq and the resultant possibilities as also uncertainties of an emerging made-in-Washington world order.

A logical corollary to this context will be the inclination of the new Chinese leaders to judge for themselves the current state of the U.S.-India equation. They will look to find out whether and, if so, how far, India would become an able and a willing partner (or junior partner) of the U.S. insofar as Washington itself might wish to rein in Beijing on the international stage. As heirs to a hoary tradition of "statecraft" that spans nearly three millennia, the present-day Chi-

nese leadership, comprising Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao in association with Jiang Zemin as their senior, will look for signals beyond the issue of whether or not India sends its troops to join the U.S.-guided "stabilisation force" in Iraq. As a country that sees itself as a civilisation and not just another state-player, China tends to look at the big picture. Beijing knows that the long-term U.S.-India strategic nexus, if it should evolve at all, will not be determined by just one issue, however important, such as In-

to Beijing is the U.S.' commitment to regard Taiwan, sanctuary to the forces that the Communist Party of China trounced in 1949, as an integral part of the People's Republic of China.

Moreover, the 'One China policy' subsumes recognition of Beijing's sovereignty over Tibet and Xinjiang too. It can, of course, be argued that the U.N. Charter enjoins all member-states to respect the territorial integrity of one another. Given Washington's material support for Taiwan,

today as to encourage East Asians to look to New Delhi for protection.

On a related issue, Beijing has so far not decided whether India could become a veto-empowered permanent member of the U.N. Security Council. It remains to be seen whether this is a matter of China's reluctance or, simply, realism over what is today a less urgent issue. India's credentials for a permanent Security Council seat will be a delicate issue for China as long as it can see Pakistan in much the same strategic terms as the U.S. views Israel in a different region. For the present, China tends to believe that its equation with Pakistan should not be seen by India as a trilateral matter. This sets limits to India's elbowroom to play a China card to confuse Pakistan.

So, how real is the present Sino-Indian bonhomie? On a purely strategic plane, several Western Sinologists such as David Shambaugh argue that "Sino-Indian relations are filled with mutual suspicion, even if they have stabilised since the 1998 nuclear detonations". It was this aspect that the Defence Minister, George Fernandes' visit to China last April was supposed to ease. His smooth visit is seen to have actually set the stage for Mr. Vajpayee's.

At another level, China sees the recent Hu-Vajpayee encounter as a reasonably adequate get-acquainted session. The positive atmospherics of the prospective Wen-Vajpayee summit may also be related to the general upward trajectory of confidence-building measures (CBMs) that the two sides have taken since Rajiv Gandhi's China visit in 1988. However, the latest complications over the exchange of maps concerning the western sector of the disputed Sino-Indian border can be seen as a wake-up call for the CBM mangers in both countries.

China's views on its strategic connectivity with Pakistan as also on Sikkim and Bhutan besides Arunachal Pradesh form the overall historical backdrop for this aspect of the maps issue. It is now up to Mr. Vajpayee and his Chinese hosts to think outside the box of ancient and recent history and enhance CBMs.

It is now up to Mr. Vajpayee and his Chinese hosts to think outside the box of ancient and recent history and enhance confidence-building measures.

dia's participation, or otherwise, in the U.S.-led "stability-forces" in Iraq outside the conventional United Nations peace-keeping framework.

It is against this background that authoritative Chinese sources have told this correspondent that Beijing is not really worried that it might be contained through any U.S.-India project of this kind. The simple but profound factor at work, according to them, is China's own sense of confidence in dealing with the U.S. through its strategic engagement that has endured pressures and tensions over time. A fact that may not be conducive to any bid by India to drive a wedge in the Sino-U.S. matrix. China's special status acquires importance in this context as the virtual reality that underpins the confidence of the new leaders in Beijing as they seek to chart out a definitive foreign policy.

What is this special status about? Unlike in the case of the former Soviet Union, an aggregation of territories and a superpower-peer of the U.S. for some four decades, Washington has, since the early 1970s, affirmed continuously that it would pursue a 'One China policy'. Washington first did so to woo China and spite the former Soviet Union. Of more than psychological importance

though, the U.S.' acceptance of 'One China' is a special case indeed. In some contrast, the U.S. continues to treat the Kashmir issue as a dispute between India and Pakistan. Now, Beijing has a task on its hands to pin the U.S. down to its pledge of a 'One China' policy forever, but Washington's acknowledgment of the principle is a strategic dividend. This enhances China's current standing in its dealings with other countries, including India.

In a 2003 treatise, a compelling but controversial one on the People's Republic, "The New Chinese Empire", the Sinologist, Ross Terrill, points out that "the entire balance of power in East Asia would change if Taiwan went out of existence as a separate entity".

While a non-nuclear Japan's confidence in its security relationship with the U.S. would wane in such a scenario, Terrill argues that "parts of East Asia would look to India as a balancer for China". This scenario, which indirectly envisions the fulfilment of the U.S.' commitment to a 'One-China' policy, flows from a debatable assumption that Washington was either wrong or insincere in giving that undertaking to Beijing in the first place. The Sino-Indian equation, too, is not of such competitiveness

India, China look forward to buoyancy in ties

HD-11
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By Amit Baruah

NEW DELHI, JUNE 20. Atal Behari Vajpayee will be the fourth Prime Minister to visit China after Jawaharlal Nehru (October 1954), Rajiv Gandhi (December 1988) and P.V. Narasimha Rao (September 1993) when he arrives in Beijing for a six-day visit on June 22.

In 1979, Mr. Vajpayee as the External Affairs Minister travelled to China — a visit that marked the beginning of high-level exchanges between the two countries. His visit came after India and China exchanged ambassadors in 1976 — for a full 15 years the two countries were not represented by ambassadors.

Mr. Vajpayee's visit is crucial as it will be the first tour of China by an Indian Prime Minister after the nuclear tests of May 1998.

As India and China look forward in their relationship, it has not gone unnoticed in China that Mr. Vajpayee's visit comes at a time when a World Health Organisation advisory suggesting the postponement of "all but essential travel" in view of the SARS threat through China has brought the situation under control.

The Prime Minister, who met the Chinese President, Hu Jintao, on May 31 in St. Petersburg, Russia, will have the opportunity for extensive discussions with the entire

Chinese leadership, including the Premier, Wen Jiabao, and the Central Military Commission, Jiang Zemin.

Though there were suggestions from Chinese officials in New Delhi of some "forward movement" on China accepting Sikkim as part of India, the latest indications are that this might well prove elusive.

In fact, sources here have been trying to comprehend the statements made by Chinese officials here at a time when there is no apparent reference made to the issue when External Affairs Ministry officials visited Beijing for discussions on the joint declaration that will be issued by the two countries.

Though the sources conceded that China could simply make an announcement accepting Sikkim as part of India, the draft joint declaration does not make any reference to Sikkim.

But the "big story" is the growing trade relationship — bilateral trade has now reached \$5 billions — and is poised to grow further.

"If the present trend in (trade) growth rate continues, the target of \$10 billions as envisaged by the (then) Chinese Prime Minister (Zhu Rongji) during his last visit to India (January 2002) may be achieved in the next five years," Arvinder Singh, an Indian scholar on China, said at a recent seminar.

The "Chinese goods phenomenon", that is the influx of cheap Chinese goods in the Indian markets, that created quite a stir in India two or three years ago, has not deterred Indian business from exploring opportunities in China, according to Dr. Singh.

Despite all this, there remains a certain stiffness in bilateral interaction. The ghost of "historical baggage" still seems to be hovering around.

The former External Affairs Minister, Jaswant Singh, renewed contacts with Beijing after the "China-as-a-threat" scenario receded into the background. "The threat chapter is over. The Pokhran chapter is now behind us... we've lost time, but that phase is over," Mr. Singh said in Beijing on June 16, 1999.

His successor, Yashwant Sinha, said here on January 27: "India and China have shown the wisdom to move ahead in their bilateral relations even as contentious issues such as the border dispute are separately addressed."

"India's policies will not be based on fear of Chinese power nor envy of China's economic achievements. They will be based on the conviction that a prosperous India is inevitable. So is a strong and prosperous China," Mr. Sinha added.

THE HINDU

21 JUN 2003

China identifies basis for ties with India

By P.S. Suryanarayana

JUN 19. China today indicated its intention to press for an improvement in its relationship with India on the "basis of equality of perceptions that the side poses a security threat to the other" as an aspect of China's thinking, it was stated at a media briefing here, which set the strategic framework for the talks that the Prime Minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, will have with his Chinese counterpart, Wen Jiabao, and other leaders in Beijing early next week. The briefing stated views of both China and India on the security dimension of their relationship and how they are meant to re-define the nature of peaceful coexistence between the two countries. With both sides having sought to repair their relationship after a certain interpretation of its nuclear detonations in 1998 had ruffled China, the new formula that has done the trick is the affirmation that the two do not threaten each other's security. On the issue of nuclear weapons itself, a senior official of the Chinese Foreign Ministry, who did not wish to be

identified, told newsmen here that the international community had developed a consensus on the subject. The apparent reference was to the existing non-proliferation regime.

While the recent visit to China by the Defence Minister, George Fernandes, had served to enhance bilateral confidence, Beijing was keen on stepping up military-level exchanges and cooperation. This would in no way complicate China's other friendships in its neighbourhood, with the sound Sino-Pakistan relationship being a strategic reality not directed against any third country, it was pointed out.

On the Sino-Indian border dispute, the official reaffirmed China's pragmatic preference for a negotiated settlement on the basis of mutual understanding, mutual accommodation and mutual adjustment. Acknowledging the difficulties encountered in the process already set in motion by the two countries, China was prepared to adopt a positive attitude in resolving the issues of clarification and confirmation of the alignment of the line of actual control. Important in this context was the existing

bilateral consensus that peace and tranquillity should prevail on the disputed boundary even before a final settlement.

About how far China might help India spread its wings on the international stage, Beijing kept New Delhi guessing on such issues as its aspiration to become a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council. China had not so far taken a definitive stand on the credentials of any of the countries aspiring for this status in world affairs.

Sinha meets Chinese Minister

UNI reports from New Delhi:

The coming visit of Mr. Vajpayee to Beijing figured prominently during talks between the External Affairs Minister, Yashwant Sinha, and his Chinese counterpart at a meeting in Phnom Penh.

The two Foreign Ministers agreed that the two countries should work together at international forums, including the WTO, in the overall interest of developing countries.

Mr. Sinha today attended a post-ministerial meeting of ASEAN plus its ten sectoral dialogue partners.

20 JUN 2003

THE HINDU

China outlines norms for border talks with India

India - China

H10-11
1976

By P.S. Suryanarayana

SINGAPORE, JUNE 17. Noting that peace and stability have prevailed along the Sino-Indian border in recent years, China today spelt out norms for further talks with India on the bilateral border dispute. The amplification of China's position by its Foreign Ministry serves as a marker for the talks that the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, is expected to have with his Chinese counterpart, Wen Jiabao, and other leaders in Beijing next week.

China identified "equality, mutual understanding and accommodation" as the basis for the "principles of consultations" that could lead to "a fair solution" of the border problem with India.

At a press conference in Beijing, the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman, Liu Jianchao, confirmed that the two sides were expected to discuss the border issue during Mr. Vajpayee's imminent official visit to China, the first by an Indian Prime Minister in a decade.

Without dwelling on the recent perceptual differences between the two countries on the exchange of maps concerning the western sector of the disputed border, Mr. Liu said that a fair settlement of the overall boundary issue could be fashioned as long as India and China followed the principles of consultations based on equality, mutual understanding and accommodation.

As for a final solution, he expressed the hope that "methods" to resolve the border question could be found through the joint efforts of China and India. On the feasibility of joint efforts, he underlined that the two sides were engaged in making concerted moves in recent years to sustain peace and stability along the frontier.

The border was peaceful at present, he pointed out. Emphasising that the Chinese side felt "joyous" over the robust growth of the Sino-Indian relationship in recent years, the spokesman expressed his conviction that the upward thrust in the present boost-phase could be maintained so long as the

two countries "adhere to the five principles of peaceful coexistence, increase mutual trust, expand common consensus and strengthen cooperation".

As two of the world's largest developing countries, China and India knew that friendly ties between them would be in the fundamental interest of their people, besides being promotive of regional and global peace and stability. China, for its part, Mr. Liu said, was willing to make efforts in conjunction with India to strengthen cooperation in various fields and "raise the constructive partnership to a new level". He cited in particular the recent trends in bilateral economic and trade ties, besides the Sino-Indian cooperation on certain aspects of current international affairs.

Echoing these sentiments, authoritative Chinese sources have told this correspondent that the overall ambience for seizing the present moment of opportunity was good, despite the recent stand that Beijing took about the unacceptability of certain maps concerning the western sector of the

The India-China engagement

By K. K. Katyal

HO-10 16/6
The approach now is to de-emphasise differences and to stress — and to build upon — common views and positions.

DURING ONE of my visits to China, the crazy idea of buying authentic silk led me to the interior of the old part of Beijing. That was during the celebrations of the golden jubilee of the revolution — in October 1999 — when, because of restrictions on main roads, the traffic was diverted to side streets. The car had to be discarded in favour of a cycle-rickshaw. Soon after, I found myself in the maze of passways, some so narrow that only one rickshaw could pass at a time. The residential buildings, old and in run-down conditions, seemed to be tilting over passers-by. This part, which foreigners are not encouraged to visit, was in sharp contrast to the new areas of Beijing, what with eight-lane roads, appropriately laced with rows of flower plants, high-rise posh buildings with massive glass frontages and concrete columns, swanky shopping malls and flyovers — modern, every inch.

My local escort explained it as a case of two Chinas, one developed, the other undeveloped. This was also evident from other known contrasting pictures — the advanced coastal region and backward interior areas or prosperous urban centres and poverty-stricken rural parts. This, high-ups in the Government and non-government think-tanks explained, led them to concentrate on the betterment of backward sectors. The development imperative, it was pointed out, also shaped foreign policy approaches, with stress on stable relations with neighbours. "We want our Indian friends to realise this", was the oft-repeated remark then. The point is stressed again now as the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, is due to visit China — the first trip at that level after 10 years.

The stability-related dimension of Chinese policy is not disputed in India. At the same time, delay by China in proceeding with normalising measures like clarifying and confirming the Line of Actual Control (LAC) and recognising Sikkim as part of India causes disquiet. There is a slight improvement in the perceptions of each side of the other, but the potential for friction needs to be rooted out in order to instil confidence and trust, both in the immediate and

long-term context. Those engaged in the intensive preparatory work for the Prime Minister's visit in the two capitals are often heard mentioning two expressions — "qualitatively new relationship" and "the vision for the future" in the bilateral field.

These may well figure in some form or the other in the joint declaration, summing up the outcome of Mr. Vajpayee's talks with his Chinese interlocutors, notably the President and General Secretary of the Communist Party, Hu Jintao.

Their discussions are certain to have a strong economic and political content. The surge in trade — it was \$ 5 billion last year and may be higher this time — has generated optimism that the target of \$ 10 billion, set by the former Chinese Prime Minister, Zhu Rongji, during his visit to India in January last year, may be met sooner than expected. The presence of top Indian figures from business and industry in China during the Prime Minister's stay is proposed to be utilised for discussions on ways to increase mutual investments and for starting joint ventures. Then there is the question of coordinating strategies in the WTO and other major economic fora.

Of late, the two sides have been bending over backwards to dispel the perception of their posing threats to each other. Nothing demonstrated the sea change on this issue more dramatically than the Defence Minister, George Fernandes' recent visit to China and the red carpet treatment accorded to him. A far cry from April 1998, when Mr. Fernandes became the symbol of unfriendliness or from May that year when India justified, in letters to the U.S. and others, the conduct of nuclear tests because of the China factor. The approach now is to de-emphasise differences and to stress — and to build upon — common views and positions. As noted by the Chinese ambassador in India, Huo Junduo, the two countries have "put in place an array of consultation mechanisms on boundary, security,

counter-terrorism and foreign policy planning and other issues". This process is intended to be continued and some specific measures may be finalised during the Prime Minister's visit — for instance, institutionalising of consultations at high levels, with one or two meetings of Foreign Ministers in a year. The direct flights between India and China, started early last year, are intended to be used to promote people-to-people exchanges and give a fillip to tourism. Memoranda of understanding will be signed on issues related to science and technology, culture, education and judicial matters. The last subject is important because of China's plans to set up a judicial system to instil confidence among the foreigners. During Mr. Zhu Rongji's visit last year, Chinese lawyers had interacted with their Indian counterparts to get a first-hand idea of the working of the judicial system here.

The downplaying of differences may not come in the way of discussion on sensitive matters such as Sikkim, the clarification of the LAC and, of course, the main boundary issue. On the eve of high-level visits in the past, hopes were invariably aroused of a finality on Sikkim. As a matter of fact, the Chinese side encouraged optimistic speculation but, in practice, there was no progress. China has made known its *de facto* acceptance of Sikkim as part of India — through its conduct at the border — but hesitated from according *de jure* recognition. Does it want a major concession as a *quid pro quo*?

The way the Chinese exchange mail and other postal items at the Sikkim border or conduct meetings of military commanders to sort out local problems shows that they treat it as the Indian territory. But they hesitate in taking the next step, of treating it legally as a part of India. For that, they suggest the border trade route — saying that the conduct of border transactions would lead to the finality that India wants. It seems odd but it is there. How the

Sikkim case is handled during the Prime Minister's visit and what is the outcome of his talks on the subject will depend on the course of the preparatory talks, now on in Beijing. China's final acceptance, needless to say, would be a major gesture of friendliness.

The delay in the clarification process, as already mentioned, has only served to convey negative signals here. Of the three sectors, the middle one has seen encouraging progress, with the two sides exchanging maps. The western sector that was taken up next proved to be a tough nut right from the beginning, with eight areas of contention. There are six such cases in the eastern sector, which are yet to be taken up.

It is 10 years since the agreement on confirming the LAC was signed and as seen here, there is no justification for the leisurely pace of negotiations. To say this is not to play down the significance of the agreement to maintain peace and stability on the border which held its ground even during the difficult period — of strained ties in the wake of India's nuclear tests.

The coming high-level contact is also important in the context of the changing strategic equations in the world, especially in the Gulf region and West Asia, with Iraq bringing about a major transformation. China had disapproved of the unilateral U.S. attack on Iraq but did not go as far as, say, France, which threatened to veto any move to secure legality from the U.N. Security Council. India, too, opposed the unilateral action but kept its criticism (*ninda*) at a low key.

There has, thus, been, an identity of views, which, hopefully, may extend to post-Iraq situations. China is opposed to other countries sending their troops to Iraq to join the "stabilisation force". However, India, which has received such a request, is yet to make up its mind. Both India and China may have reasons to worry about the play of unipolarity but, at the same time, each one, in its own way, is busy building up strategic relationship with the U.S. There is a clear *Lakshman rekha*, which the two would not cross, both in their actions and in the matter of rhetoric.

Chinese checkers

51-9
10/30

THE recent visit of India's defence minister George Fernandes to China was a welcome gesture especially after his rather abrasive comments against the country post-Pokhran II. It, however, appears that his visit was more of a formality, a kind of "breaking-the-ice" exercise. And to that end it has been worthwhile.

The actualities of the Indian-Chinese contretemps need to be analysed because ultimately they are the facts of life to be addressed by the two countries. The scheduled visit of Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee to China later this year presents the chance of a lifetime for settling the outstanding disputes once and for all.

Two key issues predicate Indo-Chinese relations: the land border dispute along the Himalayas and mutual interest in the Indian Ocean. There is a third one too: to wit India's relations with Myanmar. But fortunately the intensity of this issue was toned down once New Delhi realised that trying to preach democracy to Yangon had backfired. Nevertheless, Indian-Myanmarese relations have to get far better and as quickly as possible. In fact, the timbre of Indo-Chinese *entente* will depend largely on how tactful New Delhi can be with Yangon.

For starters let us discuss the two Indo-Chinese areas of confrontation. Obviously the border issue is of paramount importance for both. What does New Delhi propose to do about the border dispute? Exchanging maps of the three concerned sectors - western, central and eastern - under a flourish of publicity hardly means anything. We are self indulgent in believing that China will return Aksai Chin (western sector) to us as well as withdraw from Bara Hoti (central) and Sumdorong Chu (eastern) courtesy a renewed *Hindi-Chini bhai, bhai* slogan. Compounding this, we have spun a Lok Sabha resolution that truly speaking is nothing but a vote bank sleight. The border polemic is a priority matter for both the countries, and there is just one way of arriving at a compromise: India should formally cede Aksai Chin to China with the proviso that China disengage from the other two sectors.

There is every possibility of this pact materialising, considering the fact that a similar land border dispute with Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan was solved satisfactorily by China under the "Four Plus One Agreement". It is quite possible that China's new President Hu Jintao

India and China, being the dominant powers in Asia, must unite to prevent another country from spreading its tentacles in this part of the globe, opines JK DUTT



Chinese President Hu Jintao (left) and Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee. New Delhi would perhaps do good to consider Moscow's suggestion of a Russia-China-India alliance to ward off any act of belligerence by the USA.

and Prime Minister Wen Jiabao may in equal measure resolve the Indo-Chinese border matter. Ergo, New Delhi must display persevering grit in pushing this deal through as fast as possible. If we could hand over a huge chunk of our country to Pakistan on 15 August 1947 without a second thought, giving up Aksai Chin would be chicken feed in comparison.

Settling the border problem in this fashion will endow two benefits - one, the proposed land oil pipeline from Iran and Central Asia can come to Leh via Sinkiang without having to go through Pakistan, and two, neutralising Bara Hoti will enable us to resolve the long-standing Kalapani "disagreement" with Nepal that features prominently in the long standing Indo-Nepal Treaty of 1950.

Truth to tell, it is not only the land border dispute that is worrisome but also the uncertain status of a resultant clash of interests in the Indian Ocean. There is no gainsaying the strategic, economic and of late political potential of this extremely

important waterway. China has sizeably upped its maritime prowess in recent times and has been theorising a "serendipity trip" to the Indian Ocean. Erstwhile Chinese President Jiang Zemin's address at the 15th Congress of the Chinese Communist Party virtually divulges this experiment. New Delhi is seized of it, witness the upgrading of the Andaman and Nicobar-based Far Eastern Naval Command to a full fledged tri-service one. But again it would be imprudent for us to think that this new set-up will deter China from gerrymandering beyond the South China Sea.

The question is what should we do? Ideally, India should take the initiative to form an Indian Ocean Treaty comprising all the littorals of the waterway and involve the US naval centre at Diego Garcia as part of this organisation. This will put a brake on any adventure that Beijing may be contemplating. Initiating this kind of a step requires exercising *realpolitik*, something that our foreign ministry has to manage. One hopes that we would be able to get this

through. There will be many takers for this type of a treaty considering the threat perception that prevails in the whole of South and South East Asia. The fall-out of Iraq will further intensify the need for solidarity among the nations of this region under the purview of collective security. China too can become a member.

All said and done, China and India are rivals to a large extent because they are the two powers that directly or indirectly dominate the Asian scene. It would be highly inappropriate for them to get into a conflict as such a retrograde step would facilitate the ingress of any major power that might be interested in spreading its hegemony this side. Therefore China and India must present a united front not only economically but also militarily. Our defence minister's visit has highlighted the military-to-military connectivity between the two countries and both have agreed to increase this connectivity. Joint military war games and manoeuvres have to be undergone to include live firing by weapon systems.

While on Myanmar, Bangladesh

is in the process of stealing a march over us. As is well known, China and Myanmar are very close. It behoves on our part to engage Yangon in far greater dialogue plus activities than before. India's "look east" policy that our Prime Minister declared some time ago needs to be followed up with gusto, and Myanmar must be made part and parcel of this policy. Institutions like the Kunming Initiative need a great amount of encouragement from us and can give India unparalleled rewards, especially politically, if attended to in the right spirit. Myanmar is a sure-fire gateway to China, something that we have to comprehend without casting any aspersions.

India's foreign ministry has to put to use all its expertise in trans-border relations with China on the one hand and Myanmar on the other. It might be worth it to try and set up a "triumvirate" of these three nations. Our Prime Minister should have Myanmar on his agenda during his proposed China visit. The new millennium is offering us ample opportunities in international relations, opportunities that we should exploit to the fullest.

Postscript: New Delhi needs to seriously view the eminently sensible suggestion put forth by Moscow of a Russia-China-India strategic alliance for Asian security: Myanmar too can be part of this alliance, for it can provide a solid base. Such a grouping will deter any act of belligerence that the world's only superpower may have been mulling over in the Asian region. India has to take the initiative in pushing for this alliance. India's placement in the Indian Ocean Treaty as well as the advocated strategic quadruple will enhance its standing in the global circuit.

Vajpayee has considerable experience in international relations as he had been our foreign minister in the Janata Party government in the late Seventies. He has a good standing in the world as a statesman. His pronouncements on India-Pakistan *détente* have been well received by the major powers. He must realise that the turning point in India's global placement will depend on how India relates with China. He therefore needs to put into practice his vast political expertise and determinedly pursue the goal of establishing a previously inconceivable Indo-Chinese clique through radical realignments.

(The author is retired Lieutenant-Colonel of the Indian Army.)

TUESDAY, JUNE 3, 2003

47-10
3/6

AN ASIAN CENTURY, PERHAPS

gnd
china

THE HALF-HOUR MEETING that the Prime Minister had on Saturday with the new Chinese President, Hu Jintao, was perhaps the most significant of Mr. Vajpayee's many interactions in the former imperial capital of St. Petersburg. Their first face-to-face meeting since Mr. Hu took over the Presidentship of his country from Jiang Zemin earlier this year, it was not expected to and did not touch upon any specific bilateral issues. But as a prelude to Mr. Vajpayee's forthcoming visit to China, the brief encounter between the veteran Prime Minister and the younger Chinese leader served as a warm introduction. The two pledged themselves to "vigorously developing" the bilateral relationship, which has been slowly emerging from the deep freeze into which it had slipped in the wake of the strong Chinese reaction to the Indian nuclear tests of the summer of 1998. As officials work out details of the areas of agreement that will be reviewed during Mr. Vajpayee's visit later this month, the first by an Indian Prime Minister in a decade, optimism that Sino-Indian relations are set to enter a pragmatic, even dynamic, stage seems well-founded. Given the political will and the vision on both sides to look to the future, the two giant neighbours can certainly fulfil the early promise of cooperation held out by the era of 'Hindi-Chini bhai-bhai' of the 1950s and, as Mr. Vajpayee told Mr. Hu, turn this into an Asian century.

It is perhaps time to extend to other areas the pragmatism that has attended the manner in which the two countries have addressed the contentious boundary question. With the increasing people-to-people and official and non-official contacts, and with their common objective of breaking into the Group of 8 club in the coming years, the two countries have the opportunity to give economics greater weight in their bilateral relations and move the peace and tranquillity on the long borders to trade

and commerce across them. Apart from boosting trade across the Himalayas and in the east with the prosperous provinces of China, the two countries can combine forces to wield greater economic clout on the global arena to which both Mr. Vajpayee and Mr. Hu have just had a first-hand exposure as special invitees to the Group of 8 summit in Evian, France. A huge thrust to trade can come via the silk route, the reopening of which is entangled in another contentious issue: China's refusal to recognise the more than 25-year-old merger of Sikkim with India. In the background of the vastly improved political climate and increasing mutual trust, it makes eminent practical sense for Beijing to give up its opposition and facilitate re-establishment of business on this ancient route. Resolution of the Sikkim issue can revitalise the entire region stretching across to Tibet. It can also boost bilateral relations on a wide front. If the context can be created for economic cooperation on a level that matches the size of the two countries it can, in turn, provide the climate for resolving the many outstanding issues.

Only when bilateral relations between India and China acquire greater depth through intensive economic cooperation and political understanding can the combined voice of more than a third of the world's population carry credibility and weight across the global arena. The time for combined effort, in fact, has arrived. Never in the past half a century has the international community felt the absence of alternative leadership more acutely than at this juncture. The Iraq war, when unilateralism took on its most dangerous form, exposed the in-built weaknesses of the United Nations and the pathetic inability of the rest of the world to stop an act of aggression against a sovereign nation. As the continent of Europe responds through greater political and economic unity, Asia has its task cut out. India and China must provide the right combined leadership.

Secondary			
B.A. B.Ed	12	12	15
capability to provide infrastructure and facilities (land, room, etc):			
LAND ALREADY AVAILABLE	CHAIRMAN	MEMBER 1	MEMBER 2
NO	55	5	15
YES	15	30	21

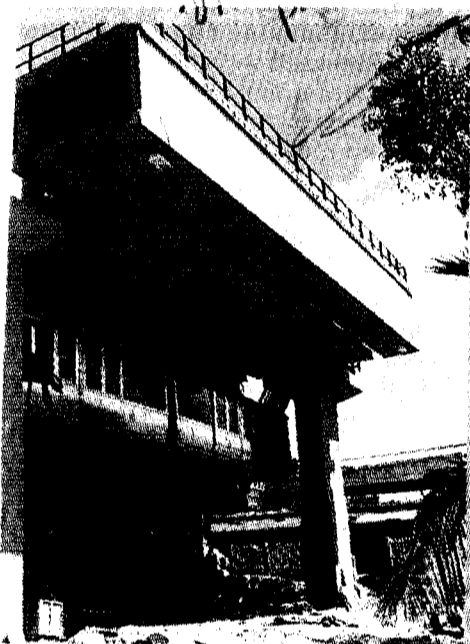
judges, who were appointed as chairmen of the 59 DSBs across the country, in the allotments that seem to have been made on extraneous considerations.

The whole scam is based on an arbitrary marking system by the DSB chairmen, under one or the other of the five heads for evaluating the

of the marking system have emerged.

The most important candidate to have been examined till now is Akali Dal MP Tarlochan Singh Tur who was selected for a BPCL pump at Sheron, Punjab in December 2000. The DSB chairman who decided in

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



IN TRANSPORT SOLUTION?

so. A full-scale model of a skybus at is project will be built Photo by Manoj Patil

has to complete work in say it's complicated work
range course
ullu runway

Chirac, Blair promise to put 'heavy pressure' on General Musharraf

PM to Hu: Let us get working

JYOTI MALHOTRA
 ST. PETERSBURG | MAY 31

95-1 116 ✓

THIS, said Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee to Chinese President Hu Jintao, should be Asia's century. For the next half-an-hour as the leaders of Asia's largest powers sized each other up in their first encounter in a St. Petersburg hotel this morning, they spoke of "vigorously developing" their relationship — considering they took up some of the largest spaces on earth and contributed about a quarter of its population.

While Vajpayee congratulated Hu on controlling SARS, the Chinese leader recalled that he had visited India in 1984 and how it had left a "deep impression" on him.

The short and sweet meeting between the two leaders did not touch upon any specifics, Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal told reporters, pointing out that it was not intended to. Sibal confirmed that "both sides have a clear desire to expand and reinforce bilateral ties, especially in the light of the Prime Minister's forthcoming visit to China."

No dates were announced, but it is reliably learnt that the trip could take place from June 22-26, in Beijing, Shanghai and a third Chinese city. A Chinese delegation has been in New Delhi over the last couple of days, discussing details of

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

George didn't ask for alternative route to Mt Kailash, says China

Beijing: In a new twist to the Kailash Mansarovar issue, China on Tuesday denied that it has rejected a suggestion by defence minister George Fernandes to use an alternative route to visit the holy mountain in Tibet and said the issue was never raised.



G. Fernandes

"As far as I know the Indian defence minister did not raise the issue during his visit to China," Chinese foreign ministry spokeswoman Zhang Qiyue told PTI here.

Mr Zhang said this when asked to comment on deputy premier L.K. Advani's statement that Mr Fernandes, during his first visit to China in late April, had raised the issue of the alternative route to Mt. Kailash via Leh and that China had rejected this suggestion.

Mr Advani had said in Delhi on Monday that Mr Fernandes had raised the issue with the Chinese authorities which was not agreed upon by China.

He had said that during his forthcoming visit next month to Beijing, Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee would once again take

up the matter.

While not directly commenting on the alternative route proposed by India, Mr Zhang stressed that China attached importance to Indian pilgrims visiting Kailash Mansarovar and that the Chinese side had done a lot of work to improve the infrastructure along the route taken by Indian pilgrims.

In the past, India has proposed the opening of a new route from picturesque Hanle area in eastern Ladakh bordering Himachal Pradesh's Kinnaur region as an addition to the traditional pilgrim route across the Lipulekh Pass in Pithoragarh district of Uttar Pradesh.

India had proposed the Hanle route to the China as the route, though almost 100 km longer than the one running through Pithoragarh, was considered safer as it was less prone to landslips during the pilgrimage months from June 2 to October 2.

Two high-level Indian delegations, including ambassador to China Shivshankar Menon, had personally trekked to Mt. Kailash last year to see the actual conditions there and had suggested several improvements in the area for the benefit of the pilgrims. PTI

A theme for Vajpayee and Hu

By C. Raja Mohan

Qin China 10-10

IF THE Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, wants a single theme to define his long overdue visit to China, it is trade and prosperity. Ten years ago, when P. V. Narasimha Rao travelled to China, his main achievement was to bring peace and tranquillity to the long and contested border between the Asian giants. That, in turn, was the product of Rajiv Gandhi's courage 15 years ago to break the post-1962 mindset on China and create a framework for a sustainable engagement with the northern neighbour.

Building on the last two prime ministerial visits to China in 1988 and 1993, Mr. Vajpayee has an opportunity to move Sino-Indian relations from peace and tranquillity on the borders to trade and prosperity across them. The absence of military conflict over the last decade is a welcome but passive state of affairs. India must now seek to expand commerce across the Himalayas in the north, between neighbouring provinces in the east, and two of the world's largest and fast growing markets.

Mr. Vajpayee, who has extended his hand of friendship to Pakistan, will surely be ready to do the same when he meets the Chinese President, Hu Jintao, in Europe next week. The brief encounter in Europe will be an important prelude to Mr. Vajpayee's impending visit to China. More results could flow quickly vis-a-vis China than Pakistan.

But is President Hu ready to reciprocate the sentiment? Going by the statements of the Defence Minister, George Fernandes, not known to be a romantic about China, the mood of the new leadership in Beijing is positive. But the proof of the pudding is in the eating. A Chinese decision to recognise Sikkim as part of India will not only remove a long-standing irritant in bilateral relations but also dramatically raise the level of political comfort in New Delhi about an intensified relationship with Beijing. Even more important, it will electrify the Himalayan region.

Pawan Chamling, the dynamic Chief Minister of Sikkim, dreams of

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While resolving political differences will take some time, India and China can move decisively to give economics a greater weight in bilateral relations.

a bus service between Gangtok and Lhasa. If buses can run between Lahore and Delhi and between Calcutta and Dhaka why not a road service between Sikkim and Tibet along the historic Silk Road going through the spectacular Natu La pass?

During a visit to Tibet last year, this columnist found there was extraordinary enthusiasm in Lhasa for reviving commerce with India through Sikkim. Tibet wants to grow through trade and globalisation. As part of this strategy, China has created new infrastructure for trade at Yatung, once home to Indian traders. Lhasa also wants the Indians to invest in its booming economy. Trading with the natural markets in south Himalayas, then, is an obvious priority. Ever since India and China fell out in the late 1950s, the Himalayan regions have become a zone of mutual distrust and rivalry. Instead of a barrier that they are now, the Himalayas can easily become a bridge between India and China.

It is not goods alone that could flow across the Himalayan frontier. Many Indians would love to go on a pilgrimage to lake Manasarovar, Mount Kailash and many other religious sites. At the moment, a very small number of Indians get a chance every year to trek to these holy sites. A few go as tourists to Tibet through Nepal. Improving the facilities and easing restrictions would allow large numbers of Indians to make the pilgrimage every year to Tibet. Besides a bus service between Gangtok and Lhasa, India and China could allow direct chartered flights between northern India and Tibet. Promotion of people-to-people contact as well as the restoration of trade links would allow both sides to overcome mutual suspicion in the Himalayas.

For decades now, India has nursed the grouse that it has been cut off from its historically kindred cultural

and economic space in Tibet, north of the Himalayas. And China has grumbled that India has tried to prevent its presence on the southern side of the mountain range. Resolving the sensitive political question of Sikkim could clear the ground for a transformation of the Himalayan region.

Equally bright are the prospects for commerce in the east. The booming province of Yunnan has been seeking regional economic cooperation with eastern parts of India, Bangladesh and Myanmar. As India overcomes its fears of being swamped economically by China, it should reconsider its reluctance to work with Beijing in promoting trans-regional economic cooperation between the eastern part of the subcontinent and southwestern China. In a globalising world, India and China cannot hope to keep each other out of their respective economic spaces.

The challenge is to manage the new realities and take advantage of them wherever possible. Economic cooperation between New Delhi and Beijing could help integrate the eastern subcontinent with the dynamic economies of China and South East Asia and allow India to get out of the sub-continental framework where regional cooperation is being slowed down by Pakistan. Instead of shadow-boxing about cooperation in the east, India and China can quickly agree to small functional steps and move forward, slowly but surely.

Overwhelming the potential for cooperation between the neighbouring provinces of India and China is the huge opportunity for growth in overall trade and investment between the two nations. Bilateral trade has galloped at an extraordinary speed in the last three years at around 25-35 per cent annually, touching \$ 5 billion in 2002. If Hong Kong and Taiwan are in-

cluded, Greater China becomes the third largest economic partner of India after the European Union and the United States. After an initial campaign to resist trade with China, the Indian industry is beginning to explore the Chinese market with increased confidence. This growth has taken place despite the lack of political support in both the capitals.

If there is a political blessing, the economic interaction between the two could explode in the coming years. India will indeed have to develop creative approaches to increase the share of manufactured goods and services in its exports to China, now dominated by commodities and semi-finished goods. Security considerations, often defined in a blanket manner, have tended to limit mutual investments. While security considerations are important among nations with adversarial record, the objective must be to manage these with efficiency rather than ban investments from the other side.

For far too long, mutual wariness has held sway over Sino-Indian relations. New Delhi and Beijing tended to sweep their own bilateral political problems under the carpet and indulge in rhetoric about a multi-polar world. But such rhetoric impresses no one, thanks to many divisive issues at hand between India and China and the low level of their ties. Sino-Indian cooperation on global issues will be credible only when there is a greater depth to bilateral relations acquired through intensive economic cooperation and reduced political friction.

While resolving political differences will take some time, India and China can move decisively to give economics a greater weight in bilateral relations. And that could in turn provide a better context for the resolution of many outstanding issues between the two countries, including the boundary question, Tibet, and Sino-Pak. strategic cooperation. An Indian emphasis on patient problem-solving on the political front must be combined with a determination to let commerce flow between the two countries.

India, China close to deal on Sikkim?

By C. Raja Mohan 19-11

NEW DELHI, MAY 18. An early resolution of Sino-Indian differences on Sikkim could lend the much-needed political substance for the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee's long-awaited visit to China, sources here say.

A formal agreement between the two Governments on the dates for the proposed trip to Beijing in June is yet to be clinched. However, a decision on an early visit to China would have to be made, one way or another, by the time Mr. Vajpayee meets the Chinese President, Hu Jintao, in Europe next week.

By that time there will be a clearer sense in both the capitals about the state of the SARS epidemic, which has cast a shadow over Mr. Vajpayee's visit.

New Delhi and Beijing know that resolving the Sikkim question would open the doors for wide-ranging bilateral cooperation across the Himalayas, boost mutual political confidence, and alter the atmosphere for Mr. Vajpayee's visit, the first by an Indian Prime Minister to China in a decade.

The meeting between President Hu, representing the new generation of leadership in Beijing, and Mr. Vajpayee is likely to take place in St. Petersburg where the two leaders will attend the tri-centennial celebrations of the famed Russian city.

If the interaction between the two leaders cannot be organised for scheduling reasons in St. Petersburg, they would still have

an opportunity to meet in France on the margins of the Group of Eight industrialised States and key leaders from the rest of the world.

It is believed that the two sides are engaged in intensive consultations on resolving the differences over Sikkim which joined the Indian Union in 1975. Beijing, which strongly condemned the move then, has been signalling since the late 1990s that it is ready to acknowledge Indian sovereignty over Sikkim.

But differences over semantics and other issues appear to have delayed the framing of the new understanding on Sikkim.

When Jaswant Singh, then External Affairs Minister, visited Beijing in March 2002, the two sides had agreed to initiate formal talks on resolving an issue that relates to Indian territorial sovereignty.

The Chinese reluctance to recognise Sikkim as part of the Indian Union has reinforced widely prevalent skepticism about Beijing's political intentions towards New Delhi. Diplomatic observers here believe Sikkim is the easiest to sort out among the many difficult questions that bedevil Sino-Indian relations.

India used to have a consulate in Lhasa, Tibet, until the early 1960s and China had a commercial mission in Kalimpong in North Bengal. It is not clear at this stage whether a border trade agreement between Sikkim and Tibet would lead to restoration of these links.

Once the question of New Delhi's sovereignty over Sikkim is settled, the Govern-

ment is prepared to open up border trade between the Indian State and China's Tibet. The historic silk road between Sikkim and Tibet at Natu La can be reopened for traffic to tourists, businessmen and pilgrims after nearly four decades.

As it seeks to rapidly develop Tibet and opens up the sensitive region to economic cooperation with its neighbourhood, Beijing is believed to be ready for a final settlement of the Sikkim question. But there is no attempt here to rush through an agreement on Sikkim merely to ensure a visit by Mr. Vajpayee to China in June.

Even if an understanding on Sikkim remains elusive for now, New Delhi might be prepared to stay with its current patient problem-solving approach towards Beijing.

Rapidly expanding annual bilateral trade, which has touched \$ 5 billions recently, and the changed international and regional environment are creating the bases for a more positive approach in New Delhi and Beijing towards bilateral relations.

Besides Sikkim, agreements on a number of other issues are being readied for Mr. Vajpayee's visit to China. These include promotion of mutual economic investment and the opening of cultural centres in each other's capitals.

In an important gesture, China is believed to be considering the return of the prime real estate belonging to the Indian consulate in Shanghai that was confiscated during the tumultuous days of the Cultural Revolution.

JOINT NAVAL ACTION AGAINST SMUGGLING

China mulling over Indian proposal

By Amit Baruah

NEW DELHI, MAY 16. There has been no immediate response from the Chinese leadership to a radical proposal made by the Defence Minister, George Fernandes, that Indian and Chinese naval forces should cooperate in anti-smuggling and anti-piracy measures.

Mr. Fernandes, who seems to have won the hearts of the Chinese by persisting with his April 20-27 visit despite the overwhelming threat of SARS, left his hosts mulling over the suggestion.

The Chinese approach, official sources said, was hardly surprising given the fact that the Chinese system of decision-making was not geared to giving spot reactions to proposals.

The proposal had generated interest since the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, was scheduled to visit China sometime this year — next month if the Defence Minister was to be believed.

The sources said that there was a "fifty-fifty" chance of Mr. Vajpayee travelling to China next month. The dates, the sources pointed out, were still being worked out.

If the Prime Minister is to travel to China next month, it can only be in the second half of June because he returns from a tour of Germany, Russia and France on June 3 and the Israeli Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon, arrives in the capital on June 10.

While China and India have gone through three rounds of strategic dialogue, the feeling here is that Beijing is still hesitant about talking substance with New Delhi. Form, it would appear, is more important than content.

Given such a scenario and past Chinese hesitancy in undertaking joint missions or exercises with other countries, Mr. Fernandes' proposal may not make quick progress.

However, from the Indian point of view, New Delhi's proposal for joint cooperation between the naval forces of the two countries in anti-smuggling and anti-piracy operations is a goodwill gesture.

It goes against the theory touted by many that India and China can only be competitors and that New Delhi is being built up as a counter-weight against Beijing's growing clout in the Asia-Pacific region.

In the context of the Prime Minister's visit, observers believe that the countries have much work to do if the tour is to be proclaimed a "success." And, if a June tour is to materialise, then a lot has to be accomplished by the two sides if the standard of past visits is to be applied.

The last Prime Minister to visit China was P.V. Narasimha Rao in September 1993 when the two countries signed an agreement on the maintenance of peace and tranquillity along the Line of Actual Control on the border. An expert group to help the Joint Working Group (JWG) on the boundary question was also set up.

Of course, the 1988 visit of the then Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi, saw the real breakthrough in bilateral relations when the two countries decided to set up the JWG on the boundary question and agreed that the border dispute should not hold up progress in other areas of the relationship.

Given the fact that the India-China bilateral relationship has been pushed along by high-level exchanges, the visit of Mr. Vajpayee is expected to be no different. A possible acceleration of the process of clarifying the Line of Actual Control could be one result of the Prime Minister's visit.

In the 14th and last meeting of the JWG on November 21, 2002, there were problems in exchanging maps in the problematic western sector of the LAC. The process had been accomplished in the middle sector, but proven problematic in the western sector.

An expert group meeting was to have taken place in January 2003 to resolve this issue, but there is no official word on whether the exchange of maps in the western sector has actually taken place.

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THE HINDU

Indo-China relations

THURSDAY, MAY 1, 2003

BUILDING SINO-INDIAN TRUST

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THE QUIET, NON-FLAMBOYANT manner in which India and China have been consolidating their bilateral relations on a broad front has marked the week-long visit of the Defence Minister, George Fernandes, to that country. No concrete results were expected from what essentially was one more step in upgrading the relations and placing them in a forward-looking mode. In terms of symbolisms and gestures, there were many, beginning perhaps with Mr. Fernandes' determination to go ahead with his scheduled visits to the two main cities of Beijing and Shanghai despite the threat posed by the outbreak of the SARS virus in China. The first visit by a Defence Minister in a decade, it was the first undertaken by an Indian leader after the recent changes at the communist party and government levels in China. The visit was significant primarily because it announced that the two countries were renewing their defence exchanges at various levels at a sensitive time of evolving global alignments that have the potential to deeply impact on regional ties. Second, Mr. Fernandes' discussions were meant to set the stage for a much-awaited reciprocal visit to China later this year by the Prime Minister.

In fact, the visit and the leader undertaking it were also themselves the message. Mr. Fernandes held wide-ranging talks with the top leadership, including the former President, Jiang Zemin, who retains the powerful post of chairman of the Central Military Commission. The apparent warmth he received during his meetings must indicate that the two Asian giants have got over the chill that hit the relations following India's nuclear explosions in the summer of 1998 and the rationale that Government leaders then proffered. The irony would not be lost in either country that it was Mr. Fernandes who during those tense times described China as India's potential threat number one, with the Prime Minister following up this campaign with

a letter to Washington in which he echoed his Defence Minister and spoke of the perceived strategic threat posed by China as a reason for New Delhi's decision to explode the nuclear devices. Mr. Fernandes' remarks then drew strong criticism from Beijing. That the misunderstandings and bitterness of those times have been put behind by both sides was evident during Mr. Fernandes' visit. His hour-long meeting with Mr. Jiang climaxed a series of discussions with the new leadership, including the Prime Minister and the Defence Minister.

The bilateral relationship has in the past four years emerged out of the low of 1998, with greater exchanges of official visits and people-to-people contacts and fast expansion of bilateral trade. If the Pakistan factor continues to cast a shadow, there is also the emerging strategic situation in the region in the wake of the events in Afghanistan and elsewhere, which demands greater interaction between the two countries. "China is willing to work with India for regional peace and stability," Cao Gangchuan, Defence Minister, told Mr. Fernandes, adding that Beijing would work for "a long-term stable and friendly cooperative relationship based on mutual trust". The two countries confronted the same challenges in national security which called for closer exchanges, Mr. Fernandes responded. Terrorism and fundamentalist militancy, for example, are certainly common threats facing both countries which can be met through sharing of experience. Despite the occasional discordant voice, the maturity that has attended the way the contentious boundary question has been handled over the decades and the resulting stability along the long border underline the efficacy of the step-by-step approach and the value of continued consultation and cooperation. Mr. Fernandes' week-long visit hopefully has created greater trust between the two countries.

Trade China

Fernandes opposes 'selective interpretation' of terrorism

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By P. S. Suryanarayana

SINGAPORE, APRIL 22. The Defence Minister, George Fernandes, today suggested that India and China 'discuss (their) differences with candour and eliminate problems extraneous to (their) relationship'.

Delivering a speech at the National Defence University in Beijing, Mr. Fernandes, now on a week-long visit to China, said "the scope for mutually-beneficial opportunities is immense" if India and China could adopt this approach within the framework of the existing bilateral "political understanding" to maintain peace and tranquillity on the border about which there had been "long-standing differences".

Noting that the differences over the border and "certain territorial matters" were being "pursued by the professionals on both sides", he did not, however, specify "the problems extraneous to (the bilateral) relationship". While Pakistan's suspected role in the terrorist activities in India could, in a technical sense, be seen

as a problem extraneous to the Sino-Indian relationship, Mr. Fernandes took care to underline the importance of terrorism as an issue in the diplomatic dialogue between New Delhi and Beijing.

He told the audience of Chinese military professionals that "our shared interests encompass a range of anxieties that include the more recent scourge of terrorism stoked by religious radicalism and deviant state support for such activities". With the implicit reference to the Pakistan-India context being quite transparent, he emphasised that "there can be no selective interpretation of this cancer (of terrorism) and the damage it can do to the global body-politic".

Without mentioning either Pakistan by name or the agenda of the terrorists with regard to Jammu and Kashmir, Mr. Fernandes said India had conveyed to its "principal interlocutors" on the world stage about the untenability of any selective interpretation of terrorism. "Your leadership is aware of this", he told the Chinese mil-

itary experts and turned the spotlight on another issue which had remained a talking point in the Sino-Indian dialogue. He said that "in (the) like fashion" of keeping the international community, including China, informed, the Indian authorities "have expressed our concerns about the transfer of sensitive technology and know-how pertaining to weapons of mass destruction and (about) the manner in which this transfer is being used to advance revisionist agendas".

He left it to the Chinese professionals to de-code the 'revisionist agendas'. On India's own nuclear tests, a subject which he had in the past interpreted in a manner that irked the Chinese leaders, Mr. Fernandes said: "India accepted the full responsibility that devolves upon a state with nuclear weapons with rectitude and restraint as the guiding doctrinal principles that underpin this capability. No-first-use is the operative feature ... though we will not be intimidated or threatened by any form of adventurism".

Mr. Fernandes held talks with the Chinese Foreign Minister, Li Zhaoxing, on a wide range of issues which did not, however, zero in on Pakistan in any specific detail. While China is understood to be generally supportive of the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee's latest diplomatic offer to hold talks with Islamabad in specified circumstances, the Pakistan question has not at all defined or clouded the Defence Minister's talks in Beijing.

The key participants in the delegation-level talks were Ambassador, Shiv Shankar Menon, as also the Defence Secretary, Subir Duttia, and the Vice-Chief of Army Staff, Shantonu Choudhary, from the Indian side, and top Chinese military officials, Yao Xingyuan and Li Yongde besides Liu Fengjun.

On a separate front, the Japanese Foreign Ministry said in Tokyo today that the Koizumi administration was still "making realistic efforts to call on ... India and .. Pakistan to join the CIBT."

THE

Time for bold new bilateral and regional initiatives

Vajpayee in China

JAIRAM RAMESH *Indo-China*

11-12 1915

In a departure from usual protocol, the defence minister, George Fernandes, has announced that Atal Bihari Vajpayee will visit China next month. Vajpayee's delayed visit during these troubled times of the severe acute respiratory syndrome will undoubtedly be appreciated by the Chinese who have had to see the cancellation of several travel plans including that of the United States of America vice-president, Dick Cheney, and of the Singapore prime minister, Goh Chok Tong.

Vajpayee's will be the fourth prime ministerial visit in the last 50 years. Jawaharlal Nehru received a very warm welcome in October 1954 and the detailed record of his wide-ranging discussions with Mao and Zhou Enlai contained in the *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru* (Second Series, Volume 27) makes fascinating reading even today. After the long chill following the 1962 war, it was Indira Gandhi who began the process of normalization of bilateral relations on January 1, 1969 by a statement that "the Indian government would be prepared to try for ways of solving conflicts with China through talks that are not based on any pre-conditions".

However, she was unable to go the full distance because of some of her foreign policy advisors who kept reminding her of Chinese "perfidy" in 1962 that killed her father and of some others who were Sovietphiles. Rajiv Gandhi's visit of December 1988 transformed the bilateral relationship. P.V. Narasimha Rao who, during the tenure of Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi, did all he could to slow down the rapprochement, was a changed man when he became prime minister and visited China in 1993. It was under his leadership that the landmark "Agreement on the maintenance of Peace and Tranquillity along the Line of Actual Control in the India-China Border Areas" was signed in Beijing in September 1993. This was followed up by another historic "Agreement on confidence-building measures in the military field along the line of actual control in the India-China border areas" that was signed in November 1996.

Vajpayee himself first went to China as the external affairs minister in February 1979 and met with Deng Xiaoping himself. This Vajpayee visit was indeed a breakthrough in a number of areas although it was to be overshadowed by China's attack on Vietnam that led him to cut short his visit. Vajpayee would undoubtedly be accompanied by his principal secretary, Brajesh Mishra. There is some history here too. Mishra was the Indian *charge d'affaires* in Beijing

when on May 1, 1970 Mao, perhaps in response to Indira Gandhi's earlier statement, turned to him at the podium of Tiananmen Square and said "India is a great country and the Indian people are a great people. Chinese and Indian people ought to live as friends, they cannot always quarrel."

Vajpayee's visit is taking place when bilateral trade is galloping and Indian business has developed a great deal of self-confidence *vis-à-vis* China. Corporate morale was low five years back but today the picture is completely different. Vajpayee will do well to take a strong business delegation with him. This would also give an impetus to the first-ever "Made in India" show

A trilateral confidence-building non-proliferation initiative involving India, China and Pakistan is in our interest. The Treaty of Tlatelolco that establishes a nuclear-free South America suggests itself as a model although it was championed by two nuclear-capable powers — Brazil and Argentina — and not between two nuclear weapons states. Even so, there is an urgent imperative for some "out of the box thinking" to deal with the consequences of nuclearization of our region.

Such an initiative could well be kickstarted through a non-official Track II that has yielded such good results on the Indo-American front.



that the Confederation of Engineering Industry is organizing in October 2003 in Beijing. While our thrust into China must be our own, there is some mileage to be had by using Singapore as a bridgehead as well. This would also, in some ways, acknowledge Goh Chok Tong's sustained advocacy of India in spite of the bad experience of Singapore Airlines in this country.

The Chinese would undoubtedly have taken note of Vajpayee's statement in Parliament on May 8 to the effect that while Pakistan's nuclear programme is India-centric, India's nuclear programme is based on threats from other countries in the region. There is nothing new in this formulation. But it is clearly time to do something about it.

Our approach to nuclear issues has been global. While this is laudable, we must explore regional options as well.

“ The Chinese would undoubtedly have taken note of Vajpayee's statement in Parliament on May 8 ”

There are other regional bodies like the six-nation Shanghai Cooperation Organization that are of great interest to India. Energy linkages with the Tarim Basin Asia could usefully be explored in an Eurasian framework. The "Kunming Initiative" involving India, China, Bangladesh and Myanmar, that envisages land connectivity, trade and mutual investments is particularly significant for our Northeast.

Although the Indo-US economic relationship is not as dynamic and spec-

tacular like the Sino-US economic relationship, Indo-US military ties have grown impressively in the last two years with many high-level exchanges of defence officers, joint army, air force and navy exercises, cooperation in training and procurement. The Chinese have watched warily. The challenge for us is to convey in as clear a fashion that deepening military collaboration with the US is not directed against China in any way even if Washington sees the rise of Chinese power as one of its three most crucial strategic concerns, next only to the rise of Islamic fundamentalism and the spread of weapons of mass destruction.

Vajpayee will also be going to Beijing at an unusual moment of time when there is, in the words of C.V. Ranganathan, India's former envoy to China and who is still among our foremost scholars on the country, "a parallelism or even coincidence of Chinese and American interests *vis-à-vis* the subcontinent". These include the promotion of an India-Pakistan dialogue, curbing proliferation of nuclear weapons, destroying terrorist networks and support for Pakistan's economic development as a modern secular nation.

This opens up new opportunities for us to try and manoeuvre an increased understanding of India's positions in relation to Pakistan with Chinese interlocutors. China's policy in the subcontinent has become more nuanced, nuclear and missile sales to Pakistan notwithstanding. China will not abandon Pakistan nor will the US — indeed, a constructive US-China-Pakistan triangle could well be in our interest.

That apart, our position on Pakistan would get a great boost in China if we are seen to be expediting movement leading to mutual agreement on the line of actual control along the Sino-Indian border. In a recent seminar organized in the capital by two think tanks, Ranganathan identified how more imaginative use could be made of the existing 1993 and 1996 agreements to arrive at a delineation of the line of actual control without prejudice to the positions of the two sides on the contentious boundary question.

A new economic China is manifest. But a new political China is also emerging. SARS will undoubtedly trigger a new culture of transparency and openness. Almost all Indians are trapped in the old mindset and are unable to see the profound implications of the transition that have taken place across the Himalayas.

15 MAY 2003

THE TELEGRAPH

India, China keen on improving military ties

By Sandeep Dikshit

NEW DELHI, MAY 2. India and China have shown interest in improving military-to-military ties through greater interaction between officers and for more cooperation on the high seas to combat arms smuggling and piracy. This emerged during a meeting in Shanghai between the senior leader and Chinese Military Commission Chief, Jiang Zemin, and the Defence Minister, George Fernandes.

Officers of both the armed forces have been visiting each other's countries since the early 90s as part of the confidence-building measures. But, this is the first time that interest has been shown by the leadership of both countries in the exchange of officers, for training in military institutes.

"We also discussed the need for cooperation between both countries to overcome the problem of piracy and arms smuggling on the high seas. Other aspects of the military-to-military relationship were discussed and certain conclusions were arrived at," Mr. Fernandes said.

Evading a direct answer on the pace of the negotiation on resolving the border issue, the Minister said, "all problems have a solution". Mr. Fernandes also mentioned that China desired greater bilateral trade and deeper economic ties through joint ventures.

The attempt by both countries to frame closer military ties comes against the backdrop of scepticism expressed about China's intentions by Mr. Fernandes' Cabinet colleagues. Last week, the Communications

Minister, Arun Shourie, in Parliament spoke about an alleged espionage attempt by a Chinese army organisation and cautioned against similar attempts in the making.

Asked about the remark attributed to him about China being India's potential enemy, he said "The whole media is telling a lie for which most people will have to make amends..." Mr. Fernandes was speaking to newsmen after a ceremony in which medicine for combating SARS was handed over to the Chinese Ambassador, Hua Junduo. Overwhelmed by the gesture of the Indian armed forces, Mr. Hua said this augured well for the future. He hoped China and India would combine together to combat common enemies such as poverty, terrorism and SARS.

THURSDAY, MAY 1, 2003

BUILDING SINO-INDIAN TRUST

THE QUIET, NON-FLAMBOYANT manner in which India and China have been consolidating their bilateral relations on a broad front has marked the week-long visit of the Defence Minister, George Fernandes, to that country. No concrete results were expected from what essentially was one more step in upgrading the relations and placing them in a forward-looking mode. In terms of symbolisms and gestures, there were many, beginning perhaps with Mr. Fernandes' determination to go ahead with his scheduled visits to the two main cities of Beijing and Shanghai despite the threat posed by the outbreak of the SARS virus in China. The first visit by a Defence Minister in a decade, it was the first undertaken by an Indian leader after the recent changes at the communist party and government levels in China. The visit was significant primarily because it announced that the two countries were renewing their defence exchanges at various levels at a sensitive time of evolving global alignments that have the potential to deeply impact on regional ties. Second, Mr. Fernandes' discussions were meant to set the stage for a much-awaited reciprocal visit to China later this year by the Prime Minister.

In fact, the visit and the leader undertaking it were also themselves the message. Mr. Fernandes held wide-ranging talks with the top leadership, including the former President, Jiang Zemin, who retains the powerful post of chairman of the Central Military Commission. The apparent warmth he received during his meetings must indicate that the two Asian giants have got over the chill that hit the relations following India's nuclear explosions in the summer of 1998 and the rationale that Government leaders then proffered. The irony would not be lost in either country that it was Mr. Fernandes who during those tense times described China as India's potential threat number one, with the Prime Minister following up this campaign with

a letter to Washington in which he echoed his Defence Minister and spoke of the perceived strategic threat posed by China as a reason for New Delhi's decision to explode the nuclear devices. Mr. Fernandes' remarks then drew strong criticism from Beijing. That the misunderstandings and bitterness of those times have been put behind by both sides was evident during Mr. Fernandes' visit. His hour-long meeting with Mr. Jiang climaxed a series of discussions with the new leadership, including the Prime Minister and the Defence Minister.

The bilateral relationship has in the past four years emerged out of the low of 1998, with greater exchanges of official visits and people-to-people contacts and fast expansion of bilateral trade. If the Pakistan factor continues to cast a shadow, there is also the emerging strategic situation in the region in the wake of the events in Afghanistan and elsewhere, which demands greater interaction between the two countries. "China is willing to work with India for regional peace and stability," Cao Gangchuan, Defence Minister, told Mr. Fernandes, adding that Beijing would work for "a long-term stable and friendly cooperative relationship based on mutual trust". The two countries confronted the same challenges in national security which called for closer exchanges, Mr. Fernandes responded. Terrorism and fundamentalist militancy, for example, are certainly common threats facing both countries which can be met through sharing of experience. Despite the occasional discordant voice, the maturity that has attended the way the contentious boundary question has been handled over the decades and the resulting stability along the long border underline the efficacy of the step-by-step approach and the value of continued consultation and cooperation. Mr. Fernandes' week-long visit hopefully has created greater trust between the two countries.

THE HINDU

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Fernandes confident on forging friendly ties with China

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SHANGHAI, APRIL 27. The Defence Minister, George Fernandes, today said his first-ever visit to China had helped in charting out a new road map for friendly relations.

"It was a visit that has enabled us to appreciate each other's concerns and sensitivities. I found that there is tremendous love for India (in China)," he told PTI here in an exclusive interview.

Summing up his impressions on the week-long official visit, the first by an Indian Defence Minister since 1992, Mr. Fernandes appeared to have taken a positive and pragmatic policy approach.

"The important thing is the sincerity on both sides to take forward steps and this is one of the major outcomes of our discussions. I noticed a genuine desire to build greater friendship with India and also to remove whatever obstructs such friendship with the acknowledgement that resolving some of the issues will take a little time," Mr. Fernandes, known for his anti-China comments before and after the 1998 nuclear tests, said.

Mr. Jiang Zemin, Chairman of China's Central Military Com-

mission, said the people of China and India enjoyed long-term friendship and exchanges and cooperation between the two countries in all fields had showed good momentum in recent years. He recalled his first visit to India in 1996 and pointed out that during that visit the leaders of the two countries decided to develop a "21st century-oriented constructive and cooperative relationship," thus guiding the growth of bilateral ties in the new century.

"As China and India are the two largest developing nations and also neighbours, to develop bilateral relations is in the fundamental interest of the two countries," Mr. Jiang told Mr. Fernandes during an hour-long meeting.

Recalling his meeting with the Chinese Premier, Mr. Wen Jiabao, Mr. Fernandes said, "Wen put Sino-Indian relations in a 'picturesque manner' when he said that for over 2,200 years of Sino-Indian relations or 99.9 per cent of the time, India and China had friendly cooperation and that only .1 per cent of the time we have had misunderstanding."

Mr. Wen stressed the two sides should build on that 99.9

per cent and identify the complementarities in matters of economic and other sectors, Mr. Fernandes quoted the Chinese Premier as saying.

Concurring with Mr. Wen's views, Mr. Fernandes stressed that the thrust of the future India-China relations should be on expanding bilateral trade and commerce and cultural exchanges and involving greater interaction between the two armed forces. "This is going to be the route to resolving our problems."

On his discussions with senior Chinese leaders, Mr. Fernandes said he exchanged views on national security, terrorism and ways to enhance military ties. He told the Chinese leaders that terrorist activities are creating dangerous situations right across the globe and countries are getting destabilised.

"I was happy to note that there was appreciation of the havoc that terrorism has caused. We need to tackle it not only through the instrument of the global coalition but also jointly by our two countries."

On matters of defence, he said the two sides discussed the issue of greater interaction be-

tween the armed forces. "There have been comings and goings, but the idea was that we should expand this interface between the armed forces of both sides. So we are going back (to India) with a deep sense of satisfaction and the conviction that this visit will be the beginning of drawing a road map for the near future."

India, Iran share view on Iraq

DUBAI, APRIL 27. India and Iran advocate the establishment of a democratically elected government in Iraq and withdrawal of the U.S.-led coalition forces from there "as soon as possible." This was stated by the Indian envoy, Pripuran Singh, after a meeting between the National Security Adviser, Brajesh Mishra, and the Iranian President, Mohammad Khatami, on Saturday.

At the meeting Iran did not raise the Kashmir issue, but Mr. Mishra briefed Mr. Khatami about the recent visit of the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, to Kashmir and his offer of talks with Pakistan. — PTI

28 APR 2003

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China for expanding defence ties

By P.S. Suryanarayana

SINGAPORE, APRIL 26. China today evinced interest in expanding cooperative military ties with India.

The idea of concerted bilateral action in the fight against terrorism also came into focus as the two countries explored the scope for a "new process of engagement". The new prospects on the Sino-Indian front were discussed when the Defence Minister, George Fernandes, called on the Chairman of China's Central Military Commission, Jiang Zemin, in Shanghai today.

The meeting, which took place during the last lap of the Defence Minister's week-long visit to China, acquired enormous political importance on two counts. Mr. Jiang, China's President until recently, is also Chairman of the mirror-image Central Military Commission of the powerful Communist Party of China.

Mr. Fernandes, whose articulation of the strategic compulsions of India's nuclear testing in 1998 had annoyed the Chinese leadership, was received by Mr. Jiang on a warm and friendly note. Mr. Jiang said that he was looking forward to meeting the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, during his planned visit to China later this year.

According to the Chinese side, Mr. Jiang told Mr. Fernandes that the two countries should enhance cooperative exchanges so as to "upgrade" the bilateral ties to a "new level" in various spheres including the military domain.

The Chinese leader, whose political influence in his country is that of an elder-statesman after the recent changes in Gov-

ernment, noted that the ties with India had remained in a state of "good momentum" in recent years. He also recounted how India and China had, during his visit to New Delhi in 1996, decided to impart a 21st

century-orientation to the bilateral exchanges.

Besides briefing Mr. Fernandes on Beijing's current battle against the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), Mr. Jiang said that it would be in the fundamental interests of India and China, two of the world's largest developing economies, to foster cooperative links.

With the two sides looking beyond the notions of their "protracted contest" in the 20th century, which scholars like John Garver portrayed, Mr. Fernandes expressed his conviction that both India and China possessed the necessary political "sincerity" to take "forward steps" on the bilateral front now.

Mr. Fernandes pointed out the importance of national security issues in the current context, while Mr. Jiang noted that the threat of terrorism could be addressed jointly by India and China even as they might take steps as part of the global anti-terror coalition, according to informed sources in Shanghai.

While the scope for interaction between the armed forces of India and China was also discussed by the two leaders, considerable emphasis was laid on economic linkages as well.

Issues such as Pakistan in the Indian context or North Korea in the Chinese context did not figure in any specific detail during today's talks.

It is understood that no strategic scenarios involving the U.S. as a factor in the Sino-Indian equation were hinted at, either.



The Defence Minister, George Fernandes, being welcomed by the Chairman of the Chinese Central Military Commission, Jiang Zemin, in Shanghai on Saturday. — PTI

227 000 273

Sailing through Chinese waters

By discussing all the contentious issues with new Chinese leadership, Fernandes has prepared the stage for the forthcoming visit of the PM to Beijing, says **SHISHIR GUPTA**

IF Defence Minister George Fernandes's speech at National Defence University is any indication, then both India and China have candidly discussed impediments to improvement in bilateral ties. His Beijing speech conveys that India has raised its concern over China supplying "sensitive technology" to Pakistan and the latter must have expressed its concerns over New Delhi's moves in the Indian Ocean in the context of regional stability.

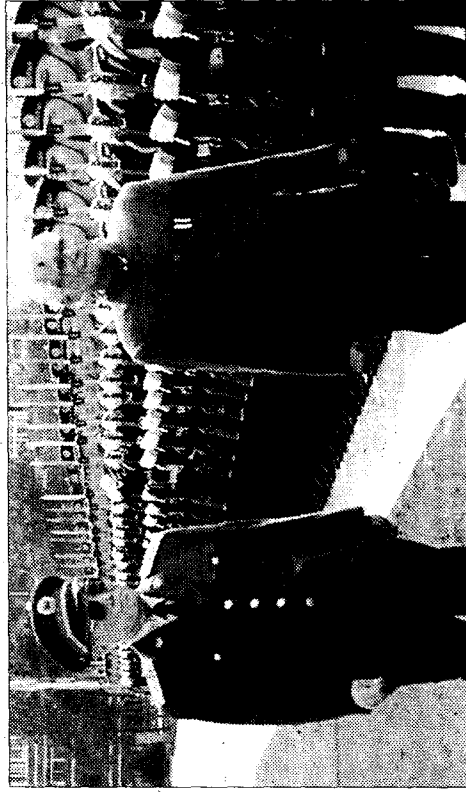
It is understood that Beijing is interested in forging ties with the Indian Navy in a bid to keep "extraneous" influences out of the Indian Ocean. With the People's Liberation Army's focus shifting from land to sea-based forces, China is concerned about the deepening naval cooperation between New Delhi and Washington. Even though India-US joint patrolling of the Malacca Straits is rather symbolic, Beijing has been concerned since US Pacific Fleet warships docked at Indian ports for "rest and replenishment" during the Afghan campaign.

Over the years, Beijing has been adding muscle to PLA Navy by purchasing state-of-the-art Sovremenny class-guided missile destroyers from Russia. China already has two such destroyers and has ordered two more from Russia, besides building an aircraft carrier. South Block sources said that the recent acquisitions by the PLA Navy show its desire to acquire a capa-

bility to project force in the Indian Ocean in the context of energy security. It is not without reason that China has invested heavily in building Gwadar port in Pakistan as well as upgrading

the new. It was rather alarmed at the Indian Navy's ambitious plans — made during the tenure of Admiral Sushil Kumar — to acquire the capability to send expeditionary forces by 2010. The

Beijing is interested in forging ties with the Indian Navy in a bid to keep "extraneous" influences out of Indian Ocean. With the People's Liberation Army's focus shifting from land to sea-based forces, China is concerned about the deepening naval cooperation between New Delhi and Washington



other sea ports such as Pasni and Omara.

Beijing has been keenly watching the Indian Navy's strategy through joint exercises with navies of Vietnam and South Korea in South China sea in

China Sea and North Asia.

However, rather than view India as a rival, Beijing is signalling cooperation in the naval field and is not averse to the idea of joint exercises with Indian Navy under the bi-annual Milan exercise series held off the East Coast. New Delhi's assessment is that Beijing is conveying that it could use its influence with Malaysia, Indonesia and Myanmar — which are concerned at Indo-US joint patrolling — to make things easier for the Indian Navy.

It is learnt that while India will discuss its naval presence in the Indian Ocean with Beijing but will not undertake any commitments given China's "all weather" relationship with Pakistan. This is also because New Delhi believes that its strategic interests stretch from Malacca Straits to the Gulf of Aden and wants to project its dominance in the Indian Ocean. Pursuing its interests, New Delhi has plans to upgrade its naval fleets, including the acquisition of nuclear submarines, in a bid to acquire blue water capability.

By discussing all the contentious issues with new Chinese leadership, Fernandes has prepared the stage for the forthcoming visit of Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee to Beijing. It seems that rather than focus on solving the contentious issues first, Vajpayee will use the growing bilateral trade as a driver to improve ties with Beijing.

Fernandes opposes 'selective interpretation' of terrorism

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By P. S. Suryanarayana

SINGAPORE, APRIL 22. The Defence Minister, George Fernandes, today suggested that India and China 'discuss (their) differences with candour and eliminate problems extraneous to (their) relationship'.

Delivering a speech at the National Defence University in Beijing, Mr. Fernandes, now on a week-long visit to China, said 'the scope for mutually-beneficial opportunities is immense' if India and China could adopt this approach within the framework of the existing bilateral 'political understanding' to maintain peace and tranquillity on the border about which there had been 'long standing differences'.

Noting that the differences over the border and 'certain territorial matters' were being pursued by the professionals on both sides, he did not, however, specify 'the problems extraneous to (the bilateral) relationship'. While Pakistan's suspected role in the terrorist activities in India could, in a technical sense, be seen

as a problem extraneous to the Sino-Indian relationship, Mr. Fernandes took care to underline the importance of terrorism as an issue in the diplomatic dialogue between New Delhi and Beijing.

He told the audience of Chinese military professionals that 'our shared interests encompass a range of anxieties that include the more recent scourge of terrorism stoked by religious radicalism and deviant state support for such activities'. With the implicit reference to the Pakistan-India context being quite transparent, he emphasised that 'there can be no selective interpretation of this cancer (of terrorism) and the damage it can do to the global body-politic'.

Without mentioning either Pakistan by name or the agenda of the terrorists with regard to Jammu and Kashmir, Mr. Fernandes said India had conveyed to its 'principal interlocutors' on the world stage about the untenability of any selective interpretation of terrorism.

'Your leadership is aware of this', he told the Chinese mil-

itary experts and turned the spotlight on another issue which had remained a talking point in the Sino-Indian dialogue. He said that 'in (the) like fashion' of keeping the international community, including China, informed, the Indian authorities 'have expressed our concerns about the transfer of sensitive technology and know-how pertaining to weapons of mass destruction and (about) the manner in which this (transfer) is being used to advance revisionist agendas'.

He left it to the Chinese professionals to de-code the 'revisionist agendas'. On India's own nuclear tests, a subject which he had in the past interpreted in a manner that irked the Chinese leaders, Mr. Fernandes said: 'India accepted the full responsibility that devolves upon a state with nuclear weapons with rectitude and restraint as the guiding doctrinal principles that underpin this capability. No-first-use is the operative feature ... though we will not be intimidated or threatened by any form of adventurism'.

Mr. Fernandes held talks with the Chinese Foreign Minister, Li Zhaoning, on a wide range of issues which did not, however, zero in on Pakistan in any specific detail. While China is understood to be generally supportive of the Prime Minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee's latest diplomatic offer to hold talks with Islamabad in specified circumstances, the Pakistan question has not at all defined or clouded the Defence Minister's talks in Beijing.

The key participants in the delegation-level talks were Ambassador, Shiv Shankar Menon, as also the Defence Secretary, Subir Datta, and the Vice-Chief of Army Staff, Shanbhag Choudhary, from the Indian side, and top Chinese military officials, Yao Xingyuan and Li Yongde besides Liu Fengjun.

On a separate front, the Japanese Foreign Ministry said in Tokyo today that the Kozumi administration was still 'making realistic efforts to call on ... India and ... Pakistan to join the CTBT.'

23 APR 2003

THE HINDU

Fernandes cautions against interpretation of terrorism

Beijing: India on Tuesday voiced concern over transfer of sensitive technology and know-how pertaining to weapons of mass destruction that is used to advance "revisionist agendas" and cautioned against selective interpretation of terrorism which could damage the global body politic.

"There can be no selective interpretation of this cancer and the damage it can do to the global body-politic," defence minister George Fernandes said referring to the immediate need for the international community's commitment to combat terrorism in any form be it Al Qaida, Cheche or Uighur. He was addressing "scholar-warriors" at China's prestigious National Defence University on the outskirts of Beijing.

"In like fashion, we have expressed our concerns about the transfer of sensitive technology and know-how pertaining to weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and the manner in which this is being used to advance revisionist

- Concern over transfer of technology pertaining to weapons of mass destruction
- India still stands for global disarmament
- China hails PM's move to restart talks with Pakistan

agendas," said Mr Fernandes, on the second day of his week-long visit to China.

Commenting on his first-ever visit to China, Mr Fernandes, who had angered the Chinese prior to and after the Indian nuclear tests of May 1998, said he has come here as a friend and to step up bilateral ties for mutual benefit.

Referring to India's nuclear tests in 1998, he said when the Vajpayee government assumed office in 1998, India had decided to go nuclear to redress the asymmetry. "It was not an impulsive decision, nor was it intended to be provocative. It was a reluctant but inevitable decision intended to ensure that national

sovereignty was neither impaired nor shrunk," he said.

Mr Fernandes said India is aware it has been "castigated" for going nuclear. But, he stressed New Delhi took this decision to "assure our core security interests and concerns," and went on to quote the famous Greek historian Thucydides who said that: "states, like men cannot be blamed for providing for their proper safety."

Meanwhile, China on Tuesday welcomed as "positive" Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's initiative to restart talks with Pakistan.

"This is a very positive step and a good gesture. I hope what he proposed will come true and this needs the efforts from both sides," Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Liu Jianchao said here. Asked to comment on Vajpayee's statement during his recent historic trip to Kashmir, Mr Liu said China's position is that tensions between India and Pakistan should be settled through peaceful negotiations. PTI

India, China to sustain bilateral cooperation

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By P.S. Suryanarayana

SINGAPORE, APRIL 21. China and India today agreed to sustain the ongoing bilateral process of clarifying the Line of Actual Control. The two countries reaffirmed their commitment to formulate additional confidence-building measures with a military focus and expressed their determination to enhance bilateral cooperation to combat terrorism.

An attempt to impart such strategic dynamism was made during the talks that the Defence Minister, George Fernandes, held with the new Chinese leadership in Beijing today. He called on the Chinese Prime Minister, Wen Jiabao, and held talks with the Defence Minister, Cao Gangchuan. A senior military officer, Guo Boxiong, Vice-Chairman of the Chinese Central Military Commission, also met Mr. Fernandes.

The "forward-looking and positive talks" took place in a "constructive atmosphere", according to official sources in Beijing. The Chinese side struck a definitive note of upbeat sentiments and underlined how the military forces of the two countries had "enhanced mutual trust and understanding" and "maintained stability in the border area".

The 1993 and 1996 Sino-Indi-



The Defence Minister, George Fernandes, takes the salute along with his Chinese counterpart, Cao Gangchuan, at the headquarters of China's Central Military Commission in Beijing on Monday. — PTI

an agreements in this connection were recalled with approval. The Chinese Defence Minister told Mr. Fernandes that Beijing "is willing to work with India for regional peace and stability".

Mr. Wen said he was looking forward to hosting his Indian counterpart, Atal Behari Vajpayee, later in the year and mentioned, in particular, that both China and India faced similar challenges of economic de-

velopment.

Today's dialogue was almost entirely free of the gravitational pull of the so-called Pakistan factor in the strategic equivalence between China and India, according to informed sources. This feat of looking beyond the Islamabad angle can be considered significant in a context in which "Pakistan is China's Israel", as summed up by Alastair Iain Johnston, a U.S. Sinologist, in Singapore today.

Defence minister in Beijing to open new China chapter

SAIKAT DATTA

NEW DELHI, APRIL 20

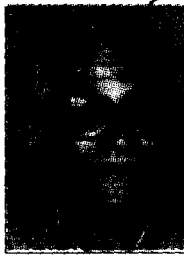
IN the coming week, the corridors of the Ministry of Defence will wear an empty look as Defence Minister George Fernandes today reached Beijing, heading a 16-member high-level delegation. The week-long trip is being seen as a gesture to mend fences between the two countries. It's high on symbolism but low on substance.

Fernandes, who has been scheduled to visit China earlier, proved third time lucky as he brushed aside a SARS-scare and landed in Beijing, on a day when the Chinese health minister and Beijing's mayor lost their jobs over the spiralling SARS threat.

Travelling with Fernandes are defence secretary Subir Dutta, secretary for defence production N S Sisodia, additional secretary Pratyush Sinha and joint secretaries Arvind Joshi and Gautam Mukhopadhyaya.

The 16-member delegation also includes vice chief of army staff Lt Gen Shantonu Chowdhury, deputy air chief

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



INDIAN EXPRESS

21 APR 2003

Fernandes opens new China chapter

Air Marshal Raghu Rajan, who is in charge of acquisitions, assistant naval chief Rear Admiral Ajit Tiwari and joint secretary (China) in the ministry of external affairs Nalin Surie.

On the agenda are rounds of discussions for reviewing the New Delhi-Beijing relationship in the aftermath of the Iraq war. It is understood that the two sides will discuss the US-UK intervention in light of the once-proposed tri-lateral axis — a strategic tie-up between India, China

and Russia.

While both sides have decided to steer clear of the border issue, leaving it to the joint working group, Pakistan will be discussed. At least Fernandes will raise India's concerns in this regard and Pakistan's support to cross-border terrorism with the Chinese leadership. Though China is a major Pakistan ally, the exercise will be an effort to gauge the Chinese strategic interests in the region.

Experts on both sides will also be keeping tabs when the

Indian defence minister addresses the Chinese National Defence University — the alma mater of the higher echelons of the People's Liberation Army. The accompanying senior Indian military officials will hold discussions with their Chinese counterparts in a bid to raise military-to-military liaison or explore the possibility of small tactical level joint exercises. While Fernandes will be laying the grounds for a possible visit by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to Beijing later this year, he will

also be keen to brush away his image as a "China-baiter". An image that he has battled ever since he was quoted citing the Chinese as India's greatest worry in the aftermath of Pokhran-II.

Fernandes will hold talks with his counterpart and host Cao Gangchuan and visit military installations around Beijing and Shanghai during his week-long trip. The defence minister will also call upon former President Jiang Zemin, Premier Wen Jiabao and other senior Chinese leaders.

APR 2003

THE HINDU

China upbeat on ties with India

By P. S. Suryanarayana

SINGAPORE, APRIL 8. China has envisioned the possibility of working in concert with India in the specific context of the present global complexities. Making an upbeat assessment of the country's equation with New Delhi at this moment, a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman said in Beijing today that the two countries "should further their coordination and cooperation to contribute to regional and world peace and stability".

Responding to a question at a regular press conference, Mr. Liu Jianchao said China and its "important neighbouring nations" of India should coordinate their efforts for peace and stability in their compatible capacities as the world's two largest developing countries.

Expressing the hope that the two states would "enhance coordination and cooperation", Mr. Liu said the friendly tone in bilateral relations had continued to develop in recent years on the basis of the five principles of peaceful coexistence. He appreciated the positive remarks reported to have been made recently by the External Affairs Minister, Yashwant Sinha, on the Sino-Indian relationship.

On the current surge in India-Pakistan tensions, Mr. Liu underlined that the "two important countries in South Asia" bore "great responsibility" to maintain regional peace and stability. China, he said, would

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hope that India and Pakistan could resolve their disputes properly through dialogue.

Answering a question, in the current context of threats and counter-threats from India and Pakistan about the importance of pre-emptive strikes on the defence capabilities of one or the other side, Mr. Liu said the conflicts between any two neighbouring countries "should be resolved through peaceful channels" and through "dialogue". By emphasising that China was opposed to the use of military force or the threat to use such force as strategic choices in international relations, he indicated Beijing's position on the notion of pre-emptive attacks in the immediate vicinity of China.

CHINESE CHECK-OUT

سینہ کی بات
Sinha strikes a balance ۵۱-۸

ARTICULATING China-policy has, traditionally, caused most Indian political leaders genuine difficulty and their offerings have ranged from spineless silence to avoidable provocation — such as George Fernandes' nodding of the head when queried if that country constituted India's "number one threat". Against that background there is cause to appreciate Yashwant Sinha's analyses at a recent China-specific meeting of the strategic community. Unlike so many of his predecessors he was forthright in projecting India's worries over reports of "China's nuclear and missile proliferation to Pakistan", its position on Sikkim, the boundary question and spoke of "doubts" as well the wounds inflicted by the conflict of 1962. Those are ground realities and even if it no longer poses a direct military "threat" there can be no lowering of the guard along that disputed border. Sinha had the guts to make that known.

Yet he did so without giving cause for complicating a tricky situation, and projected the continuing dialogue. He also debunked theoretical apprehensions of a coming battle for Asian supremacy between the two nations, or them ganging up against other economic and military blocs. It was from a position of some strength that he stressed the inevitability of both China and India becoming major players in the international arena. This was an uncommon display of pragmatism, and proof that diplomacy is not confined to mouthing sweet-nothings. This is not to suggest that a major upswing in Sino-Indian relations is imminent, only to feel somewhat reassured that the prevailing tranquillity will persist. Alas, effecting a similar ambience to relations with our western neighbour is impossible until the floodgates of hysteria are comprehensively sealed.

3 Feb 2003

THE STATESMAN

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2003

A NEW AND POSITIVE ORIENTATION

A NASCENT, YET very encouraging effort has been mounted to give a new orientation — marked by a spirit of realism and positivism — to India's relations with the People's Republic of China. The Minister for External Affairs, Yashwant Sinha, and the Defence Minister, George Fernandes, have in recent days articulated views that have sufficient commonality to suggest that New Delhi has given deep and serious thought to the kind of relationship that must be established with Beijing over the long term. A healthy development, discernible in the presentations made separately by the two senior members of the Union Cabinet to a conference on Asian Security and China 2003-2010, is that New Delhi has finally discarded a conceptual framework in which China was seen always as a rival, oftentimes as an enemy. Mr. Sinha's specific declaration that India did not perceive a conflict with China to be inevitable was a conscious effort to break ranks with those inside the country, with a mindset shaped by the unfortunate events of 1962, and those outside, who have sought to exploit this attitude to use India an instrumentality to promote their objective of containing the other Asian giant. The Foreign Minister has sought to set the tone for the future interaction by stating that the policy would neither be based on fear of China's power nor envy of its economic achievements but would be forward looking and infused with a sense of optimism. If the new attitude is persisted with, there could be a definitive turn-away from the lows to which the relations between the two countries had sunk after the Pokhran-II tests when New Delhi sought to justify its actions by pointing to the concern over an intrinsically inimical China. It is to be hoped that New Delhi has finally decided that the engagement with China should develop on its own merits rather than as an offshoot of the interaction between India and Pakistan or between India and the U.S.

While the policy of bifurcating the dispute

over territory from the other issues of importance in the interaction between India and China has been in place for a while, Mr. Sinha has claimed that a substantial measure of success had been achieved in the endeavours to establish mutual understanding. Functional delegations from each country have been criss-crossing the territories of the other to learn from its experiences and the overall purpose of these efforts is to direct the relations between the two towards greater economic integration. In Mr. Sinha's presentation, the over-arching paradigm that will shape economic exchanges between India and China will be the conviction that a prosperous India is as inevitable as a prosperous China. Mr. Fernandes' warning that India could not continue to entertain the notion that its better democratic credentials somehow balanced out China's far more impressive economic record also made for a very timely intervention. New Delhi would be well advised to persist with this new readiness to treat economic cooperation as the thrust area of diplomatic efforts directed at China and to steadily move away from the once excessive focus on the ways and means of achieving strategic parity.

Ind. china
New Delhi must guard against a frequently displayed tendency to be hugely disappointed if its foreign policy initiatives do not produce dividend in the very near term. Since India has taken a long time to get over some of its national sensitivities it cannot expect China to move at a rapid pace in the immediate future. China would like to test the policy parameters that India is setting out before the interaction between the two countries gathers momentum. It has, of course, to be noted that the articulation of a new orientation towards China has been made so far at the political level. While an enunciation from the political echelons is of utmost significance, what is equally important is that the positive attitudes towards China be imbibed by those working at the operational levels of India's diplomatic establishment.

THE HINDU

1 FEB 2003

Vast potential to recast Sino-Indian ties: Fernandes

By Sandeep Dikshit

HD-1 30/1
NEW DELHI, JAN. 29. The Defence Minister, George Fernandes, today said there was vast potential to rearrange the Sino-Indian relations. Both countries could not become 'brothers' as in the fifties but they would definitely not be a threat to each other "and this has been reiterated at the highest levels," he said while delivering the valedictory address at a conference on 'Asian Security and China in 2003-2010' organised by IDSA.

He said the Indian Government had taken certain consistent positions on matters that concern China and these included both Tibet and Taiwan. These had been conveyed to "our Chinese counterparts" at the appropriate level.

"I am happy to add that we are working on this in a mature manner. China and India have acquired a certain degree of consensual mutuality on the

border issue. We have out differences but we are working on them — though the pace is glacial."

Speaking prior to several high-level visits planned to Beijing, Mr. Fernandes pointed out that both nations had lived in harmony for thousands of years and it was only in the latter half of the 20th century that one noted the chequered nature of the relationship. Even if the reason was systemic of the Cold War, the September 11 tragedy had altered the nature of the discourse about security and how it was to be prioritised in consonance with the Indian experience of dealing with a similar situation for the last two decades. "The Sino-Indian relationship is to be rearranged in this altered context," he said.

Pointing out the immense economic progress made by China in the last two decades, Mr. Fernandes felt there was a lesson for India on the importance

of the national will, determination and collective discipline though the radically different political framework needed to be factored. However, the deification of the democratic ethos could not be an excuse for the inadequacy in India.

Rather uncharacteristically but understandably in view of the closer ties being fostered by both nations, Mr. Fernandes made a "personal digression" and pointed out that he had been rather "erroneously" described as a China baiter. "Many of my observations about China have been reflective of the democratic process that we have in India. I would urge our Chinese friends to note this trait of the Indian animal. As a parliamentarian, I am elected by the people and when I have been invited to join the Cabinet, my views and positions are derived from this democratic and parliamentary framework.

"If I have drawn attention to

the anxieties generated due to some actions or words of China, it is a reflection of the perceptions of the polity. And as the Defence Minister, if I have referred to the asymmetry between India and China on the military front, it is to ensure that we in India acquire what we deem appropriate to assuage our security concerns. On certain issues, I have a personal conviction, and like some members of the Long March, I am 70 plus in age and we may be too old to radically change!"

He also referred to a perception in India that some actions ascribed to China are not in conformity with the degree of responsibility and rectitude that is associated with a major power. It appears that China has perhaps encouraged or endorsed a revisionist agenda on the Indian periphery and this causes anxiety more so when it heightens State-sponsored terrorism.

30 JAN 2003

'TIES WITH BEIJING NOT BOGGED DOWN'

China-Pak. nuclear links cause concern: Sinha

By Amit Baruah

NEW DELHI, JAN. 27. The External Affairs Minister, Yashwant Sinha, said today that "reliable and widespread reports of Chinese nuclear and missile proliferation cause deep concern" to India. Inaugurating a conference on 'Asian Security and China in 2000-2010', Mr. Sinha, in a gentle criticism of China, said that some of the "wounds inflicted" by the 1962 conflict had been slow to heal. "The Chinese position on issues such as Sikkim and India's candidature to a permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council sows doubts. There is also a sense of disappointment over the pace of improvement in the relationship."

Mr. Sinha's direct comments on the Chinese-Pakistan nuclear proliferation link will be of some interest given the fact that New Delhi has rarely expressed public concern on such issues that impinge on India's national security. China has repeatedly denied its Pakistan "link".

Mr. Sinha has pointedly expressed concern that the pace of improving bilateral ties had been slow. He, however, debunked the theory that conflict between India and China was inevitable. India neither pursued nor made policy towards China with the view that a conflict was inevitable. India's approach to relations with China would remain forward-looking

and infused with optimism. "India's policies will not be based on fear of Chinese power nor envy of China's economic achievements. They will be based on the conviction that a prosperous India is inevitable. So is a strong and prosperous China." Mr. Sinha said that India and China were too large and too strong to be "contained or cowed down by any country, including each other". India sought to develop relations with China on the basis of the principles of Panchsheel, mutual sensitivity to each other's concerns and equality.

"Despite the fact that the India-China border spans thousands of kilometres of territory and there exist material differences in perception, the two countries have been successful in maintaining relative peace and tranquillity for over 25 years."

India-China relations had diversified and a series of dialogue mechanisms were in place, including on subjects such as counter-terrorism, security issues, policy planning and the boundary question. Also, bilateral trade had grown from \$264.8 million in 1991 to 4.3 billion during January-November 2002.

Referring to the fear of being swamped by Chinese goods in 2001 when India lifted the last of its quantitative restrictions, he said, "Far from being swamped by imports, India-China trade

figures reflect in India's exports and imports."

India and China, he claimed, had shown wisdom in advancing their bilateral relations even as contentious issues such as the border dispute were taken up separately.

"Economic integration and an overall improvement in relations has not been held hostage to differences over specific issues, however important these issues are. The wisdom of adopting such an approach to India-Pakistan relations is self-evident. I hope our neighbour will not keep its eyes forever shut to this truth."

The Minister said the rise of China engaged the attention of scholars the world over.

"There have been negative scenarios as well as positive scenarios outlined... Often, the conclusions drawn reflect personal convictions of the scholars concerned. In general, academics of the realist school tend to see China as a potential hegemon in Asia — a country which seeks to throw the United States out of the region... Liberal scholars, on the other hand, see China as a positive force within Asia..."

"The rise of India is similarly an issue which has attracted academic debate. There are many who see the emergence of India on the world stage as part of an inevitable and inexorable process of history," Mr. Sinha said.

Fernandes warning: Page 11

HINDU

28 JAN 2003

India, China and Asian security

By C. Raja Mohan 10.11

As the External Affairs Minister, Yashwant Sinha, and the Defence Minister, George Fernandes, prepare to address an international gathering in the capital this week on China and Asian security, they have an opportunity to lay out the essence of India's China policy.

The Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee's visit to China, planned for May or June, will be one of the most important diplomatic missions undertaken by the present Government. It will be the first trip to China by an Indian Prime Minister in nearly a decade. Mr. Fernandes too will soon undertake one of those rare visits by an Indian Defence Minister to Beijing.

For far too long, India has tended to be less than transparent about its internal thinking on China. While it nursed deep resentments about the northern neighbour, it was hesitant to take them up directly with Beijing.

India has avoided addressing the many difficulties in its ties with China, including the vexatious boundary dispute. Instead of tackling the lingering boundary dispute head on, New Delhi has preferred to postpone serious negotiations that would involve potential compromises.

On the larger question of Asian security, New Delhi has swung wildly between two extreme positions. New Delhi has often resorted to proclaiming fictitious consensus with Beijing on jointly fighting the hegemony of the United States and pretending that other great powers can be kept out of Asia.

Even as it declares the intention to pro-

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mote a multipolar world along with Beijing, New Delhi has had influential schools of thought, which insist that China is the real threat to India's national security.

Whatever might have been the past compulsions for this duality, the time has come for India to say what it means on China. For the first time in decades, India is in a position to outline a China policy that does not either underestimate the problems in the relationship or the potential for their reasonable resolution.

NEWS ANALYSIS

A number of factors have transformed the context of Sino-Indian relations in recent years. India's economic reforms and reasonable growth rates of the last decade have allowed New Delhi to arrest its relative economic decline vis-a-vis Beijing that had begun in the late 1970s.

India has gained psychological nuclear parity with China with the nuclear tests of May 1998 and is on the way to acquiring a credible deterrent capability against Beijing. India's relations with the United States, Japan, South Korea, Australia and South East Asia have improved substantially in the last decade. India is no longer marginal in the security calculus in Asia as it was in the 1970s and 1980s.

As a result India today is in a position to engage China with self-assurance. Unlike in the past New Delhi neither needs to romanticise the relationship with Beijing nor resort to demonising China.

Mr. Sinha and Mr. Fernandes can begin

to articulate an approach on China that emphasises four elements. First, India is prepared to intensify the economic relationship with China that has begun to blossom in recent years.

Second, India is ready to solve its many problems with China on the basis of pragmatism. India should signal while it has no intention to rush towards solutions, it is also prepared to consider creative compromises.

Third, India has no reason to be apologetic about its fast improving security relationships with the U.S., Japan and other powers in the region. China had worked with the West in the final years of the Cold War, and despite uncertainties in its current ties with the U.S., Beijing's engagement with Washington remains at a high level. Just as China seeks a prominent place in the Asian balance of power, India too believes it is an indispensable element in the management of peace and security in the region. Neither Beijing nor New Delhi can wish away the other.

Fourth, while it will continue to improve ties with the U.S., India needs to affirm that it has no desire to join a containment ring against Beijing. At the same time, New Delhi must make it clear it will not accept China's to contain India in the subcontinent and undermine its security by propping up Pakistan.

Such a clear message from India to China, that is consistent in its articulation and shorn of impractical slogans could prepare the ground for a productive and sustainable interaction in the coming years between the two Asian giants.

INDIA

27 JAN 2003

India to study China's water diversion project

Beijing: India, which plans to launch a Rs 5,60,000-crore project to link rivers to transfer surplus water to deficit areas, will study China's massive water diversion project, chairman of the task force on the inter-linking of rivers, Suresh Prabhu, said.



S. Prabhu

"We will study closely China's major water diversion project which is also an ambitious one," Mr Prabhu, the former power minister, said.

He said he plans to visit China again in March/April to exchange views with Chinese experts and to know more about the Chinese water diversion project which was launched in December last year.

Mr Prabhu, who was here heading an Indian Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO) study group on China's foreign trade policies, said India's water diversion project, when completed in 2016, would be more massive in scale, costs and benefits accrued.

The Chinese project, currently touted as the world's largest water diversion venture, will divert water from the mighty Yangtze river in the south to the country's thirsty north, including the Chinese capital Beijing.

Involving an investment of \$59 billion, the project will be the biggest of its kind in the world and the biggest engineering programme in China. It actually consists of three canals running about 1,300 km through the country's eastern, middle and western parts.

By 2050, it is expected to be capable of shifting 44.8 billion cubic meters of water an-

nually.

According to the Chinese ministry of water resources, the project is a strategic infrastructure undertaking for China's sustainable development and a huge environmental endeavour. Mr Prabhu said the task force has been set up to suggest modalities for arriving at consensus amongst the states and transfer of surplus water to deficit areas besides identifying major links which could be implemented on a priority basis.

Official sources said it would be necessary to increase India's irrigation potential to 395.36 million acres for all crops by 2050 while the maximum irrigation potential that could be created through conventional sources has been estimated at 345.94 million acres.

Inter-linking of rivers will provide requisite solution to attain an irrigation potential of 395.36 million acres. The National Water Development Agency, entrusted with task of studying feasibility of inter-basin water transport proposals, has identified 30 inter basin water transfer links.

While the feasibility reports of six links under peninsular component have been completed, survey was in progress for another 18 links in the peninsular and the Himalayan region, official sources said.

The tentative cost of implementation of proposed identified links of national perspective plan is estimated at Rs 5,60,000 crore.

Sources said the inter-linking proposals when completed would give additional irrigation benefit of 86.49 million acres over and above ultimate irrigation potential of 345.94 million acres from conventional irrigation projects. PTI

China, India will step up bilateral exchanges on the basis of Panchsheel

Beijing: Lok Sabha speaker Manohar Joshi has concluded his good-will visit to China, with the two sides recognising the importance of stepping up bilateral exchanges at all levels to enhance mutual trust and understanding.



Mr Joshi held meetings with Chinese President

Jiang Zemin, chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress Li Peng and Premier Zhu Rongji during the five-day visit that ended on Saturday.

During their talks, the two sides stressed on the importance of contribution of regular high-level exchanges, including parliamentary exchanges, in speeding up the momentum of relationship, at the same time expressing satisfaction with the steady improvement in bilateral relations with India after the two

in all areas, Mr Joshi said. "We stressed that the two countries conduct their relations on the basis of the principles of Panchsheel, mutual sensitivity to each other's concerns and equality," the Lok Sabha speaker, who led a parliamentary delegation, said.

During his meeting with Mr Joshi, Mr Jiang is reported to have said, China greatly valued its relations with India and that it was satisfied with the development of bilateral relations with India after the two

strove to reach the targets set at the Congress.

"We will always unswervingly uphold a peaceful foreign policy of independence, and work hard to maintain world peace and promote common development," Mr Jiang said.

After briefing Mr Joshi on the 16th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC), Mr Jiang said China needed a favourable and peaceful environment as it

developed.

China ready to foster ties with India

By P.S. Suryanarayana

SINGAPORE, JAN. 8. Suggesting that China and India "could develop" a "constructive partnership of cooperation", the Chinese Prime Minister, Zhu Rongji, has proposed that "historical problems should never hamper (such) cooperation". Mr. Zhu made this observation when the visiting Speaker of the Lok Sabha, Manohar Joshi, called on him in Beijing on Tuesday.

According to an official Chinese version, Mr. Zhu underlined this imperative in bilateral diplomacy while drawing attention to the common characteristics of China and India as ancient civilisations and two developing countries that faced the challenges of raising the living standards of their people.

Expressing China's readiness to work with India to foster "friendly cooperation", he made a reference to "the five principles of peaceful co-exist-



The Lok Sabha Speaker and leader of the Parliamentary delegation, Manohar Joshi, with Li Peng, Chairman of the Standing Committee of the Chinese National People's Congress in Beijing on Wednesday. — PTI

ence" as the ideological "basis" for such cooperative endeavours.

Mr. Zhu noted that the two countries possessed "complementary" economies. The bilat-

eral trade volume surged by 30 per cent last year, he pointed out, to emphasise the existence of "bright prospects" in this domain.

Mr. Zhu's overall presentation, especially his suggestion that "historical problems" should never be allowed to impede any cooperative bilateral engagement, fully reflects the dynamics of China's foreign policy, according to diplomatic observers.

Li Peng, Chairman of the Standing Committee of China's National People's Congress (NPC), told Mr. Joshi that Beijing and New Delhi "should play a constructive role in the process of (ensuring) multi-polarisation (in world politics) and (also) economic globalisation".

Such a task was within the grasp of "the world's two largest developing countries", Mr. Li indicated, even as Mr. Joshi echoed similar sentiments in a very broad perspective.

THE HINDU

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