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India's Strategic Outlook Towards Its Neighbourhood States

Gautam Sen

Abstract

The purpose of the paper is to examine the problematics that the neighbourhood states face, their fault lines and how they affect the peace and stability in South Asia in general and towards India in particular. The analysis of the same would lead us to define India's strategic outlook and decision making. It would hence be necessary to cast India's Strategic outlook in relation to the conceptualisation of the term National Interest, the emerging global order and the fault lines in the new Global Order and a brief understanding of the phenomenon of nuclear proliferation, collapse of Communism and keeping in mind Huntington's postulation of the clash of civilisation and its aftereffects as we see in the 21st century.

Introduction

Globally no other nation-state is surrounded by neighbourhood states which can be termed as "illiberal states".¹ According to Zakaria, illiberal democracies are increasing around the world and are increasingly limiting the freedoms of the people they represent. India's immediate

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neighbourhood thus comprises of Afghanistan, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, and Myanmar covering the West to the East on its northern side having an international boundary along with China with whom India shares over 3000 km of international border. Down South is the island state of Sri Lanka which is separated by the sea. It is to be noted that all the neighbourhood states listed above are illiberal states in one form or the other.

Definition of National Interest²

What exactly is national interest? Napoleon had said that he was acting in the interest of France when he initiated his campaign against Russia, and later when he launched his desperate battle at Waterloo. Adolf Hitler justified his expansionist policies, including annexation of Austria and breakup of Czechoslovakia, in the name of Germany's national interest. "Friendly socialist" governments were installed in Poland and other East European countries by Stalin in the name of the Soviet Union's national interest. President Bush was acting in America's national interest when he led the war against Iraq on the question of Kuwait's annexation by Iraq. Benazir Bhutto thought that it was in Pakistan's national interest to destabilise the Indian State of Jammu and Kashmir.

Thus, all actions, howsoever, wrong are taken in the name of national interest. We must now try to find an acceptable definition of national interest. The idea of national interest is singularly vague. It assumes a variety of meanings in different contexts. The concept of national interest has not been objectively or scientifically defined. However, Padleford and Lincoln observe: "*Concepts of national interests are centered on the core values of the society, which include the welfare of the nation, the security of its political beliefs, national way of life, territorial integrity and its self-preservation.*" According to Robert Osgood, national interest is "*state of affairs valued solely for its benefit to the nations.*" Morgenthau maintains that the main requirements of a nation-state are to protect its

physical, political and cultural identity against threat from other states. But, Joseph Frankel writes about aspirational and operational aspects of national interest. Aspirational (what one expects) aspects include the state's vision of good life and an ideal set of goals to be realised. Put into operation, national interest refers to the sum total of its interests and policies actually pursued.

Therefore, the governments try to narrow the definition of "National Interest" to Defence, National Security, economy, Interstate and Foreign Commerce, Foreign relations and the state of general national affairs.

The Global Order

The Contemporary Paradigm

With more than two hundred nation-states on the roster of the United Nations, loss of bi-polarity due to the demise of the former Soviet Union, proliferation of nuclear technology and weaponisation of nuclear technology creating multi-node nuclear weapon state actors, plus the complexities of globalisation whose darker side is the evolution of international terrorism, has made study of security far more complex than what we have known or postulated even in the cold war period. The armed forces as an organisation will become even more significant for the nation-states to be used to contain internal security problems apart from maintaining the integrity of the nation-state from external aggression or projecting power beyond territorial limits. This entails the nation-states to rationalise the purpose of their national power of which one component is the organisation called the Armed Forces. Hence we observe that since 1630s, the role of national interest and defining of national interest becomes important to conduct the business of the present nation-state militarily, socially, politically, economically and diplomatically.

It is hence necessary to place ourselves on the track of thinking about the concepts of theory used in conjunction with methods and

methodologies in the complex mosaic of the use of force, international relations, diplomacy and internal compulsions of nation-states which have to grip with crisis of identity, centre-state relationship, religion, political ideologies and diverse range of ethnic as well as multi-racial problems. All the answers to the above dilemma confronting the political elites and the managers of government lie in how each nation-state rationalises her “national interest”. Secondly, national interest does not and cannot change with every change of Government be it a nation-state, which is developed, developing or underdeveloped.

Emerging New Global Order?

There are two questions that need to be addressed. First, if there has emerged a specific pattern of global order in the post-cold war period and if so what are its principle constituents. The second, is whether this order is to be defined in terms of globalisation.

There is obviously a pattern in the new international politics in the post-cold war stage as compared to the one that existed prior to the end of the cold war. The second question leads us to understand whether this contemporary order can be ensconced within globalisation. There is a major debate raging on this to understand the exact meaning and the process of globalisation. However, what is beyond doubt is that some kind of transformation is already underway. It is hence to be fathomed out as to what way it is to be discerned and what this will mean in practice.

A serious study to determine the overall character of the post-cold war world order is still in its infancy. We do not know how it will culminate. It is still not an ‘enclosed’ period with a determinate ending like in the case of the period between the two world wars. This makes it difficult to assign particular characteristics. While there have been individual aspects of the present order (ethnicity, identity, peacekeeping, humanitarian

intervention, globalisation, integration, financial instability, terrorism and the war against it, weapons of mass destruction, regime change, etc.), there still exists the lack of making any general evaluation of its essential nature. In the earlier period, the interest in the international order was largely 'negative' and lay on ensuring that no threats emerged from it. Today there is a high level of integration and interdependence and hence the interest is 'positive' which makes the international order act as a great provider of a large number of social goods. The international order today can deliver information, access to global social movements, economic resources, human rights, interventions, and action through non-governmental organisations at national and international levels and sharing of cultural artefacts.

It will be important to state that the new order which is unfolding is being pulled in a number of different directions. At one end of the spectrum, it continues to be largely state centric, concerned with structure of the balance of power, the polarity of the international system and the current form of collective security. At the other end is a widening agenda of order, which encompasses relationship between economic and political dimensions, new thinking about human security, examining the consequences of globalisation, human rights, and environmental security. In an address to the Congress on 11 September 1990, President George Bush spoke about his vision of the New World order as follows:

“A new era—freer from the threat of terror, stronger in pursuit of justice and more secure in quest for peace, an era in which the nations of the world ... can prosper—a world where the rule of the law supplants the rule of the jungle, a world in which nations recognize the shared responsibilities for freedom and justice, a world where the strong respect the rights of the weak.”

Hence it is difficult as yet to make out the characteristics of the contemporary world order because we live in the midst of it thus making it hard to get a historical perspective.

Fault Lines of New Global Order

Conceptually one can identify two main theories, which explain the post-cold war world. Liberalism and proponents of liberal persuasion like Francis Fukuyama, wrote one of the most effective articles entitled “End of History” in 1989, where he put across a set of assertions. First, history since the end of the French Revolution has been driven by the core dynamic conflict between the forces supporting collectivism and those endorsing ‘bourgeois’ individualism, second with the Russian revolution in 1917, the balance began to tilt toward ‘collectivism’ and third by the late 1970s the tilt began to go towards ‘individualism’ as the various efforts at economic planning in the Third World started to “show signs of fatigue”. Thus the cold war ended in terms favourable to the West where Liberal economic values would prevail globally. Hence there was no alternative to ‘bourgeois democracy’ to take over globally which in essence stated that while authoritarianism breeds war, democracies ushered in peace. Hence more the number of democracies, more were the possibility of a peaceful world. While the Liberals painted a more peaceful world, the Realists painted a bleaker picture of the world. They saw much more of chaos and conflict occurring because the international system continues to remain competitive and anarchic and past history showed the failures of building new world orders or the assessment of the world as it became after 1989, with all the barbaric wars, failed states and collapsing regions. The inference was hence that there was nothing to be too optimistic about. The three main political thinkers of the realist school to challenge the liberals were John Mearsheimer, Professor of political science at the University of Chicago, Robert D Kaplan, and Samuel Huntington of Harvard

University. Mearsheimer concentrated on the analysis of structure of the international system during the cold war in line with Kenneth Waltz's thesis on bipolarity which produced stability in the post-second world war and therefore its collapse could generate new problems, especially it would further nuclear proliferation as the most dangerous one. Mearsheimer also postulated that the division of Europe and Germany after 1946, had created new continental order and hence the unification of both would usher in uncertainty. He argued that with the collapse of Communism in the East, old ethnic hatred would resurface to thrust the continent back to chaos and bloodshed.

Kaplan in his study of the cold war worked on the assumption that economics and human collapse in parts of Africa were as relevant to our understanding of the future character of world politics. Kaplan felt that in his real world, old structures and traditional certainties were fast disappearings producing chaos and misery. Samuel Huntington, the third scholar from Harvard placed realism at the forefront of the post-cold war debate. He warned about the world after 1989. He refuted the Liberal argument by stating that the world now faced the cold war clash of secular economic ideologies, which meant no end to conflict as such. He postulated that conflict would assume a new form defined as a 'clash of civilizations' as evolution of conflict in the modern world. He argued that this conflict would be between the West and those other countries of the world and regions of the world that did not adhere to such values as respect for the individual, human rights, democracy and secularism. Identity and culture were thus the core issues to create antagonism and that they would form the new fault line in the post-cold war world, pitting those nations in Western Europe and the USA which embodied one form of 'civilization' against those in the Middle East, China and Asia, post-communist Russia, where the value system was profoundly different. He even has warned the West that unless the West recognised this reality, it will be unable to deal with it wisely.

To sum up, Ken Waltz's prediction about nuclear proliferation in post-Cold War, collapse of the Communism in the East resulting in ethnic hatred, Sam Huntington's postulation that conflict will assume new form due to the possibility of the clash of civilisations in which identity and culture would be the core issues to create antagonism to form the fault lines in the post-Cold War world between the Western Europe with the USA against those in the Middle East, China and Asia have come out to be true. Today, nation-states small or large, powerful or otherwise, democratic or non-democratic have to formulate their national security strategy individually by linking up with their own national interest by factoring in the evolution of the new world order emerging in the post-Cold War period. Therefore, every nation-state around the world will be affected by these happenings and India will be no exception. Hence the theoretical moorings of India's National Security Strategy and its linkage to her National Interest will lie in her policies to securitise her own strategic outlook towards her neighbourhood states juxtaposed against her own national security, national interest and national security perspectives.

India's Neighbourhood

In the following pages, we are going to undertake a composite overview of India's Neighbourhood States comprising of Afghanistan, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, and China in the North and Sri Lanka in the South to arrive at the Indian strategic outlook. This article will give a telescopic viewpoint for each of the neighbourhood states and draw the conclusion.

A few factors may be considered for evaluating the strategic outlooks as listed below:

1. Fault lines
2. Political Structure
3. Civil Society
4. Institutions

5. Judiciary
6. Military
7. Education
8. Industrial Capability
9. Financial Status
10. Trade and Commerce
11. Standing in the global comity of nations.

Afghanistan

Afghanistan is a land-locked and mountainous country, bordered by Pakistan in the south and east, Iran in the west, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan in the north, and China in the north and east. It sits at an important geostrategic location, at the crossroads of Central Asia.



Source: Britannica.com

Afghanistan is an Islamic country, with a turbulent history & a diverse population. The 2004 Constitution of Afghanistan recognises the following ethnicities: Pashtun, Tajik, Hazara, Uzbek and Turkman, Aymaq, Nuristani, Pachai, Qizilbash, Baluch, Arab, and Kirghiz. Afghanistan is a youthful country, with an estimated median age of 18 years for both men and women. Having acted as a buffer between the British and Russian Empires in centuries past, and following a brief period of democracy in the twentieth century, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in 1979. This led to other countries, including the United States, becoming involved, and a long and destructive war began. Following the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, the US and its coalition allies launched a military campaign in Afghanistan in October 2001, which led to the fall of the Taliban later that year. However, situation remained fragile, and unstable despite the efforts of the international forces led by the US and 2010 marked the deadliest year and the Taleban led insurgency group started showing their capabilities to overrun the US-led coalition forces. As the Taliban surged and the US found it impossible to continue its operations, President Joe Biden on 14 April 2021, ended the longest war in United States history, announcing that the last remaining American troops in Afghanistan would leave by 11 September.

In the following weeks, the Taliban conquered dozens of rural districts and closed in on major cities. When the last of the US forces left Afghanistan, it left behind more than \$6 billion of arms including aircraft, helicopters, and allied military hardware which naturally fell in the hands of the Taliban who did not have a single pilot trained to fly any aircraft. It is estimated that US intervention in Afghanistan had cost the US more than \$1 trillion. The Taliban government has yet to be recognised by the UN. Thus on 30 August 2021, at 3:29 pm East Coast time Gen. Kenneth F. McKenzie Jr., commander of US Central Command reported that the last manned aircraft had cleared the airspace above Afghanistan. Hence by the time, the last military plane departed in the early hours of August 31

Kabul time the airlift had flown out more than 116,700 people on more than 720 military and chartered flights in just 15 days, according to daily passenger and flight data released by the White House. An additional 40,000 escaped on commercial, private or allied planes with US military supervision. But thousands more Afghans were still seeking refuge when the airlift ended, and at least 100 American citizens hoping to be rescued were left behind.³

Pakistan



Source: Worldatlas.com

The Islamic Republic of Pakistan is the world's fifth-largest population of almost 242 million, and the world's second-largest Muslim population. Pakistan today is a middle power nation, has the sixth largest Army in the

world and declared nuclear weapons state Pakistan's political history since independence has been characterised by periods of significant economic and military growth as well as those of political and economic instability. In April 2022, Shehbaz Sharif was elected as Pakistan's new prime minister, after Imran Khan lost a no-confidence vote in the parliament. SIPRI evaluated that Pakistan was the 9th-largest recipient and importer of arms between 2012 and 2016. Pakistan had warm relations with Bangladesh, despite some initial strains in their relationship. Pakistan was one of the closest allies of the United States. Relations between Pakistan and Russia have greatly improved since 1999, and cooperation in various sectors has increased. Pakistan has had an "on-and-off" relationship with the United States. A close ally of the United States during the Cold War, Pakistan's relationship with the US soured in the 1990s when the latter imposed sanctions because of Pakistan's secretive nuclear development. Initially, the US-led war on terrorism led to an improvement in the relationship, but it was strained by a divergence of interests and resulted in mistrust during the war in Afghanistan.

Since the time Pakistan established formal diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China, continues to be a dominant factor at all times. China is Pakistan's largest trading partner, and economic cooperation has flourished, with substantial Chinese investment in Pakistan's infrastructural expansion such as the Pakistani deep-water port at Gwadar. Both countries have signed 51 agreements and Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) in 2015 for cooperation in different areas and Free Trade Agreement in 2000 and to crown the relationship. In December 2018, Pakistan's government defended China's re-education camps of more than a million Uyghur Muslims. Pakistan's latest debacle has been the unbridled corruption during the Imran Khan regime leading to mismanagement of finances and almost a state of bankruptcy. Pakistan faces an uphill task to rejuvenate the

economy and presently any conflict or war with India makes it an impossible preposition.

China, Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh

These four neighbourhood states have been clubbed together. China has geographical congruous international border with Nepal and Bhutan and is separated from Bangladesh by a very small Indian territory which almost represents like a chicken neck. A small narrative first on India's relationship with Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh will be followed by a narrative on China.

Nepal is an important neighbour of India and occupies a special significance in its foreign policy because of the geographic, historical, cultural and economic linkages/ties that span centuries. The two countries shared a very strong relationship for a long time which has been impacted by some recent events and issues.

India-Nepal ties have declined due to **border issues**, and **internal security issues**: Open border between India and Nepal leads to illegal migration and human trafficking threatening Indian security. **Big Brother attitude**: There is a widespread perception in Nepal that India does not respect the country's sovereignty. **Peace and friendship treaty**: The India-Nepal treaty of 1950 has been criticised by the Nepali political elite as an unequal one. Treaty obliged Nepal to inform India and seek its consent for the purchases of military hardware from third countries. Nepal wants to change this provision. **Nepal's growing proximity to China**: In recent times China's presence has increased in Nepal which has heightened India's security concerns. China plans to extend the Tibet railway to Kathmandu across the border in the next few years. Nepal signed the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) framework agreement with China. **Demonetisation**: Demonetisation has badly affected Nepali nationals because those notes were legal tender in Nepal too. India thus has to extend areas of cooperation in Trade and Commerce, Water

Resources and Energy cooperation: Defence Cooperation, Infrastructure and connectivity.

Bhutan: India and Bhutan have been sharing ties since 1910 when Bhutan became a protectorate of British India, allowing the British to “guide” its foreign affairs and defence. Bhutan also has a historically tense relationship with China. Bhutan shares a 699 km border with India and shares border with four Indian states: Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, West Bengal and Sikkim. The basis for bilateral relations between India and Bhutan was formed by the Indo-Bhutan Treaty of Peace and Friendship of 1949. However, Article 2 of the treaty critically gave India a role in guiding Bhutan’s foreign policy. Hence, some changes in the treaty were made in 2007. Security of Bhutan’s present borders especially its western border is very important for India. A politically stable Bhutan is important to India. About 60,000 Indian nationals living in Bhutan, employed mostly in the hydroelectric power construction and road industry. In addition, around 8000-10,000 daily workers enter and exit Bhutan every day in border towns.

Bangladesh: The friendship between India and Bangladesh is historic, evolving over the last 50 years. India’s political, diplomatic, military and humanitarian support during Bangladesh’s Liberation War played an important role in Bangladesh’s independence. Post-Independence, the India-Bangladesh relationship has oscillated as Bangladesh passed through different regimes. In the last decade, India-Bangladesh relations have warmed up, entering a new era of cooperation, and moving beyond historical and cultural ties to become more assimilated in the areas of trade, connectivity, energy, and defence. Bangladesh and India have achieved the rare feat of solving their border issues peacefully by ratifying the historic Land Boundary Agreement in 2015, where enclaves were swapped allowing inhabitants to choose their country of residence and become citizens of either India or Bangladesh. Bangladesh is India’s biggest trading partner in South Asia with exports to Bangladesh in

FY 2018-19 at \$9.21 billion and imports at \$1.04 billion. Bangladesh accounts for more than 35 per cent of India's international medical patients and contributes more than 50 per cent of India's revenue from medical tourism. Having said that it is important to note China is the biggest trading partner of Bangladesh too and is the foremost source of imports. In 2019, the trade between the two countries was \$18 billion and the trade is heavily in favour of China," Recently, China declared zero duty on 97 per cent of imports from Bangladesh. The concession flowed from China's duty-free, quota-free programme for the Least Developed Countries. India has provided developmental assistance worth \$10 billion, but China has promised around \$30 billion worth of financial assistance to Bangladesh to overcome India's assistance. Bangladesh's strong defence ties with China make the situation complicated and China today is the biggest arms supplier to Bangladesh. Bangladesh forces are equipped with Chinese arms including tanks, missile launchers, fighter aircraft and several weapons systems, including two Ming class submarines.

China: What is worrisome is China-Nepal strategic relationship with inking nine agreements in the month of March 2022. The Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi on 27 March 2022 held talks with Narayan Khadka Nepal's top leadership, and discussed bilateral relations and mutual cooperation, including one on the technical assistance scheme for the China-aided feasibility study of Cross border railway which is an important component of the Trans-Himalayan Multi-dimensional connectivity network between Nepal and China. The cross-border railway was incorporated into China's ambitious Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) at the second Belt and Road Forum for international cooperation in April 2019. Khadka reiterated Nepal's commitment to 'One China' policy and not to allow any activity against China in Nepali territory. Both sides reaffirmed their support for sovereignty, territorial integrity, and national independence of each other. "They underscored the importance of the

exchange of high-level visits on a regular basis in order to strengthen mutual trust and confidence and to further consolidate Nepal-China relations”.⁴

Myanmar and Sri Lanka

The developments in Myanmar have been disquieting ever since the Coup. In September 2021, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) invited a representative from Myanmar’s National League for Democracy (NLD), the party of detained former leader Aung San Suu Kyi, to its virtual summit for political parties in South and Southeast Asia. The overture came shortly after Beijing’s special envoy for Asian affairs, Sun Guoxiang, paid a low-key visit to Myanmar, where he asked to meet Aung San Suu Kyi and was denied access by the authorities. Sun made another unannounced visit this month. A September editorial from the *Global Times*, a CCP-owned newspaper, called the NLD the “legitimate party in Myanmar”. But Beijing sees a fine line between supporting the NLD and supporting the underground National Unity Government (NUG), which seeks to overthrow the junta and upend the pre-coup status quo. Although the NUG is stacked with NLD members and former ministers, to China it appears a force of instability. Increasingly, China is now operating under the assumption that the junta will eventually establish effective control of Myanmar and so has moved toward de facto recognition of its authority. While maintaining a line of communication with the NLD, Beijing now seeks to sit out the deepening crisis and push ahead with its own interests in Myanmar with the group that holds power. China has called for dialogue between the junta and those fighting against it, but it has cited non-interference as justification for not putting more pressure on the generals—a position that puts it at odds with Japan, South Korea, and the West and in strategic terms important for India to take note of.

Sri Lanka

Unlike all other Neighbourhood states of India, Sri Lanka poses the maximum instability to the region of South Asia because of its economic meltdown. Sri Lanka's economic outlook is highly uncertain due to fiscal and external imbalances. Urgent policy measures are needed to address the high levels of debt and debt service, reduce the fiscal deficit, restore external stability, and mitigate the adverse impacts on the poor and vulnerable. The World Bank in its twice-a-year regional update on 13 April 2022, in the **South Asia Economic Focus**, released the report *Reshaping Norms: A New Way Forward*. It projects the latest projects in the region grow by 6.6 per cent in 2022 and by 6.3 per cent in 2023. The 2022 forecast has been revised downward by 1.0 percentage point compared to the January projection, mostly due to the impacts of the war in Ukraine. To quote the World Bank will be appropriate:

*“The World Bank is deeply concerned about the uncertain economic outlook in Sri Lanka and the impact on people,” said Faris Hadad-Zervos, World Bank Country Director for Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. “We are working on providing emergency support for poor and vulnerable households to help them weather the economic crisis and we remain committed to the wellbeing of the people of Sri Lanka, and to a narrative of sustainable and inclusive growth that will require concerted and collective action”.*⁵

India's Strategic Objectives Towards her Neighbourhood States

1. India should counter Chinese hard power by projecting soft power. In contrast to China's efforts to muscle its way into Nepal, India should emphasise on its historically close cultural, religious, and people-to-people relations with Nepal. India should provide an

alternative narrative for India-Nepal ties, one that takes into account longstanding people-to-people ties and cultural connect. Thus, India should maintain the policy of keeping away from internal affairs of Nepal. Meanwhile, in the spirit of friendship, India should guide the nation toward more inclusive rhetoric. With its immense strategic relevance in the Indian context as an Indian security concern, a stable and secure Nepal is one requisite which India “*can’t afford to overlook.*”

2. India should intellectually neutralise the Chinese notion of “invincibility” from their (Chinese) mindset. This will ensure that China does not embark on further adventurism as she did in Eastern Ladakh.
3. Diplomatic efforts should be launched to offset any Chinese attempt to recognise Afghanistan under the Taliban internationally till the regime in Afghanistan undertakes to usher in democratic norms of human rights, gender equality, constitutional reforms, establishment of a Judicial System, and Rights to Education to all, Freedom of the Press, Religious freedom and the freedom of speech.
4. Vis-à-vis Bhutan, India should try as much as possible to remain out of Bhutan’s internal matters, though it can act as a mentor only if Bhutan desires. Safety of Border from China is a concern for both nations. Therefore, both sides need to work together on this issue.
5. Chinese inroad in Bangladesh’s trade and defence requirements is alarming and it is virtually arming Bangladesh to become a very modern force with Chinese dependency. It can be a hostage to Chinese mechanisation against India when Bangladesh’s regime may or could become unfriendly towards India.
6. India has to have a strategic outlook to mitigate Sri Lanka’s instability with immense amount of aids and grants to ensure it does not fall further in a debt trap in the absence of strong leadership or from

becoming a Chinese satellite state never to recover as a sovereign nation.

7. Chinese attempt to cosy up with Myanmar and having an aspiration to recognise its present military regime, in the long run, is strategically important for India to take note of. Indo-Myanmar international border is quite porous and needs to be addressed so that China does not take advantage of the same.
8. India's strategic objectives toward Pakistan must factor in the "Resilience" that Pakistan is displaying post-Imran Khan regime and her growing relationship both with China and Russia too. Pakistan though referred to as a "failed state, or a rentier state, or a deep state⁶ or even a soliciting state" has been displayed in various forms of academic writings. It has created warm relations with Bangladesh but more than that Pakistan's display of resilience to take on all adversarial situations is a continuum.

Notes

1. Refer and see Wikipedia on "Illiberal Democracy" In a 2014 speech, after winning re-election for the first time, Viktor Orbán, Prime Minister of Hungary described his views about the future of Hungary as an "illiberal state". In his interpretation the "illiberal state" does not reject the values of the liberal democracy, but does not adopt it as a central element of state organization. Orbán listed Singapore, Russia, Turkey, and China as examples of "successful" nations, "none of which is liberal and some of which aren't even democracies." See "Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's Speech at the 25th Bálványos Summer Free University and Student Camp". 30 July 2014. And so in this sense the new state that we are constructing in Hungary is an illiberal state, a non-liberal state. It does not reject the fundamental principles of liberalism such as freedom, and I could list a few more, but it does not make this ideology the central element of state organization, but instead includes a different, special, national approach and also "Orban Says He Seeks to End Liberal Democracy in Hungary". Bloomberg.com. 28 July 2014. Retrieved on 22 October 2017.

I have serious reasons to disagree what Fareed Zakaria analysed and described India as the largest illiberal democracy in the world, in his book *The Future of Freedom: Illiberal Democracy at Home and Abroad*. An example of an illiberal democracy can be said to also define Singapore, especially during the leadership of its first Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew See Mutalib, H (2000). "Illiberal democracy and the future of opposition in Singapore". *Third World Quarterly* 21(2): 313-42.

2. I have purposely quoted in original from my own writings related to Definition of National Interest, The Global Order, The Contemporary Paradigm, Emerging New Global Order, Fault Lines of New Global Order. See Gurmeet Kanwal (ed.) *The New Arthashastra: A Security Strategy For India*, (HarperCollins Publishers, New Delhi, 2016), pp. 4-9.
3. See Tara Copp Report Senior Pentagon Reporter, Defense One, 30 August 2021, 4:36 PM ET.
4. <https://www.deccanherald.com/international/china-nepal-ink-nine-agreements-for-bilateral-cooperation-1095028.html>
5. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2022/04/13/sri-lanka-faces-unsustainable-debt-and-balance-of-payment-challenges>
6. Jyoti M. Pathania, *Deep State Continuum in Pakistan & Implications for India*, KW Publishers, New Delhi, 2022.

