

Q&A: America's Impact on India's Policy to Confront China

Question:

On 07/04/2014 the general election in India was launched, which will continue until 12/05/2014 and the results will be declared on 16/05/2014. The elections are contested by two large political blocs; the American-linked Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) with its alliance, and the pro-British, the Congress Party, which since its return to power through winning the 2004 election, showed a sluggish relationship with the United States because of its association with Britain, and showed fear in confronting China... The question is what is the impact of America on India's policy in confronting China? And what is the relationship of that with the American Asia-Pacific Strategy and its motivation to Australia and Japan to enter into this confrontation? Will this policy be greatly affected by the type of the ruling party in India, whether the BJP or the Congress Party wins? Does India have the ability to deal with China? How is the balance of power between China and India?

Answer:

The answer to these questions will be clarified by reviewing the following points:

1. The United States is working to curb China by the surrounding countries in the Pacific region, particularly in the Eastern and Southern China Seas. So it builds various forms of alliances and partnerships and it strengthens relations with countries in the region for this purpose. This began more than a decade ago and with earnest when America realized that the policy of containment of China reached the end or the saturation level; that is, it cannot contain China more than it had. It drew closer to it by allowing it to join the WTO, it increased trade relations with it, and a U.S.-China Strategic Dialogue became no longer sensitive as it was before... However, China did not come into the orbit of America, not even an ally according to this policy, and it has been unable to limit its ambitions to find its dominance on the East and South China Seas which is an important and vital area, rather a fateful one to it. China remained a state that maintains its integrity, coherence and independence as a major regional country working to strengthen its power, militarily and economically. Therefore, it began to exploit its economic power in some areas for political influence, and not just for profit, and is working to strengthen its influence in the region, which is contrary to the American policy or puts the American influence at risk. China has regional ambitions to dominate the region it deemed fateful, and is not sufficed by the landmass territory that its land stretches to remain confined in this territory as an economically large country only... America as well considers China's maritime area vital to it. And out of its arrogance, America is not content to be a regional state within the Americas, but it considers the whole world as its region! Therefore it rivals China in its region in order to expand the American international dominance... Thus, the policy of containment by drawing closer to China in trade relations and strategic dialogues; this policy did not make China to spin in the orbit of America, not even to become an ally in the known sense, but its regional policy became worrying to America. Thus the policy of containment became no longer effective alone, and America began to put its new plan that relates to the Asia-Pacific region, which requires the mobilization of about 60% of its naval force in the region. This is in addition to the policy of encirclement that America followed on China by occupying it with its regional issues... America has focused its efforts to mobilize countries of the region towards this policy of encirclement; the most prominent of these countries that can effectively influence in this cordon are three: India, Japan, and Australia...

2. As for India, it has a border with China of 3488 km long, and there are unresolved problems between them relating to this border. For a quarter of a century, rounds of talks have been held; the latest was the fourteenth round of border demarcation between the two countries. Then they stopped, and the fifteenth round was not hold due to what happened on the 15/4/2013 when Chinese soldiers stormed the border with India and entered the Indian territory of the Ladakh region. They erected their tents, but then they withdrew after three weeks. This was a display operation by China, which wanted to send a message to India that China is ready to cross the border and enter a war with it as happened in October 1962, where the Chinese army launched an attack on the Arunachal Pradesh area and expelled Indian troops. After a month of this operation, Chinese forces launched a second attack on Indian lands, killing about

2,000 Indians. This issue remains unsolved and is called the "The Line of Actual Control". It is a hotly contested issue between the two countries, creating a constant tension. This is in addition to the tension caused by the problem of the Tibet region, occupied by China in 1950, which is adjacent to the Indian border. Thus, India cooperates with America in raising this problem by embracing the Buddhists of this region and their leader Dalai Lama where India has established the Central Tibetan Administration for him as a government in-exile. All these factors hardly make the tension between India and China remain calm...

3. America tried to exploit these tensions between China and India by driving India to confront China or stir up trouble between them in order to occupy China with this issue. Nonetheless, India fears facing China overland and the Chinese offensive messages on the outskirts of India reiterates this. Hence, America needed to find temptations for India to encourage it to continue aggravating China and occupying it with the border conflicts... So America held a strategic partnership with India as well as it held a nuclear cooperation agreement between them... In addition, the United States signed several economic and security agreements with India. So it concluded a defence pact in 2005 and a civil nuclear cooperation agreement in 2008. All this expands the horizon of security cooperation between them. As a result, the two countries are currently engaged in several unprecedented joint military exercises, as well as the large sales of U.S. arms to India continues to grow... So when the Chief of Staff of the Indian Army General Deepak Kapoor stated at the end of December 2009, that, "The Indian army is preparing to fight a two-front war" (The Economic, 15/2/2010), America went on pressing Pakistan to reduce its forces on the Eastern front with India, and to focus its forces on the Western front to fight the Mujahideen who are fighting against America in Afghanistan and in the tribal areas. All this is so that India can focus on the northern front with China... America has also worked to increase trade with India, as the volume of U.S. exports to India has quickly increased in the past five compared to any other country. According to estimates by the Confederation of Indian Industry, the bilateral trade in services is likely to rise from 60 billion dollars to more than \$150 billion in the next six years... However, India fears too much land conflict with China, in addition to that, the rulers of India from the Congress Party are loyal to Britain more than their loyalty to America they are unwilling to venture into a losing confrontation with China for the interests of America...!

4. Then America saw to detract the attention of India towards the East Pacific, specifically in the South China Sea and lured it by the presence of energy sources of oil and gas in this region to compete with China, and to confront within its Asia-Pacific Strategy. And so it was; India has agreed with Vietnam to off-shore drilling for oil and gas in the ocean off the disputed Spratly Islands with China. The Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Liu Weimin stated after that: "We do not hope to see outside forces involved in the South China Sea dispute, and do not want to see foreign companies engaging in activities that will undermine China's sovereignty, rights and interests". (The Middle East 28/11/2011). Earlier, the People's Daily Newspaper that speaks on behalf of the Communist Party, accused both India and Vietnam for their irresponsible confrontation attempts with China. America continued its attempts to encourage India towards direction into that area. Thus, on 22/07/2013, the U.S. Vice President Joseph Biden visited India and made remarks in Washington before his visit; paving and tempting India to go to the east in the Pacific. He said, "...that India is increasingly looking east as a force for security and growth in Southeast Asia and beyond. To us that's welcome news." He also said, "We welcome India's engagement in the region and its efforts to develop new trade and transport links by land and by sea in the area." (IIP Digital 23/07/2013). A month earlier, i.e. on 24/06/2013, Kerry met with his Indian counterpart Shri Salman Khurshid in New Delhi where they jointly chaired the fourth round of the US-India Strategic Dialogue. They reaffirmed their shared vision on peace and stability in Asia and the Indian and Pacific Oceans, as well as they emphasized the continued support to strengthen regional communication and reaffirmed the importance of maritime security..." (IIP Digital 24/06/2013). All of this clearly demonstrates the interest of America to push India to the East in the Pacific Ocean, specifically to the South China Sea... Nevertheless, India did not respond with the response America required during the past two years after America laid out its new plan regarding the Asia-Pacific region and pushed it towards the East. This is due to reasons related to the policy of the ruling Congress Party loyal to Britain, as well as to India's fear to confront China...

5. As for Australia, the United States began working on activating the role of Australia, which spins in its orbit, and promoting cooperation with it in the fields of economic and security to face China within the US Strategy in the Asia-Pacific region. For this purpose, U.S. officials at the highest levels, and in particular Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Defence Secretary Leon Panetta, and former Chief of Staff Martin Dempsey have travelled to the city of Perth, Australia, for a meeting with their Australian counterparts. Clinton said on the day during the launch of the Asian American Centre at the University of Western Australia in Perth, "Australia is a gateway to the vibrant trade and energy routes that connect the Indian Ocean to the Pacific, energy resources produced in Australia are flowing through those routes to the entire world." And she said, "It is not surprising that foreign investment is soaring in Australia, including more than 100 billion dollars from the United States, because these increasingly waters are at the heart of the global economy and a key focus U.S. expanding engagement in the region, what we sometimes call our pivot to Asia". She also said, "The United States never actually left Asia, the United States is still a Pacific power, which is here to stay." She added, "The way of thinking of the United States about the Asia-Pacific and the Indo-Pacific region will be crucial to the future of the United States as well as to Australia." (IIP Digital 11/15/2012). At this Centre, Clinton also mentioned America's view of India and what it wants from it, she said, "One of the United States strategic priorities is to support India's look East policy and to encourage New Delhi to play a greater role in Asian institutions and affairs." Furthermore she said, "The United States welcomes the joint Australia-India naval vessel exercises in the future, and is eager to work together the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation which Australia will chair in 2013, and which the United States has now joined as a dialogue partner". (ibid.) These ideas demonstrate the American way of thinking concerning the region; it wants to harness Australia as an active player in addressing China's moves in the region. It also shows that it did not achieve its objectives through India, the country neighbouring to China by land, and it wants Australia's engagement with India in the waters of the South China Sea. As Australia is closer to implement the U.S. policy than India, since it is considered a Western country that adopts capitalism, and is eager to colonize like any other Western capitalist country. Therefore it works and cooperates with America in the colonial invasions as it worked with Britain, and continues to work with them both because it spins in the orbit of these two countries...

6. As for Japan, America is working to boost its strength in Japan and give it a greater role in defending the region against China. America announced on 6/4/2014 its sending of additional missile defense ships to Japan in a statement by the US Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel, "the United States is planning to forward-deploy two additional AEGIS ballistic missile defense ships to Japan by 2017 and this step is a response to provocations from North Korea that threatened to carry out a new form of nuclear tests." He also warned China from abusing its great strength saying, "Great nations must not use coercion and intimidation, because this leads to conflict." He also said that he "wants to hold talks with China about its use of military power and to encourage transparency" (Reuters 6/4/2014). He pointed to what Russia did in Crimea to warn China of its similar actions in the contested islands with Japan saying:

"You cannot go around the world and redefine boundaries and violate territorial integrity and the sovereignty of nations by force, coercion or intimidation, whether it's in small islands in the Pacific, or in large nations in Europe." He also said, "Something else... that I will be talking with the Chinese about is respect for their neighbors. Coercion, intimidation is a very deadly thing that leads only to conflict." The American Secretary of Defense met last week with Defense Ministers of the South-East Asia states where he warned of the increased American concern over the South China Sea. (The same source) Japan's Kyodo News mentioned on 5/4/2014, "It is likely that the US Secretary of Defense and the Japanese Defense Minister Itsunori Onodera will discuss the issue of allowing Japan to exercise the right of self-defense by modifying the Japanese constitution. In addition Onodera will discuss the issue of transferring arms and defense equipment in his meeting with the US Secretary of Defense, and the two sides could reach an agreement to strengthen their cooperation in the area of defense equipment." This means that America wants to give Japan a role in defending the region against China to ease the burden on it and to arouse the nationalistic emotions of the Japanese who aspire to have self-power in their name and protect themselves independent of America.

7. As for the influence of American policy in the victory of the Congress Party or the Janata Party pertaining to its plan dealing with Asia – The Pacific Ocean, it no doubt has an effect, because the Congress Party is a party that has long been loyal to the English, and it has political wit that is somewhat taken from its old lady Britain. Therefore, it is troubling to America, and at the same time it is elusive to it as Britain is. Hence it carries out some military agreements and trade relations but it disrupts some political relationships and strategic issues. For example, the Congress Party issued a statement in its election campaign, in which it won power in 2004, clarifying its stance on America, and criticizing the policy of the Janata Party that was previously in power. This is what came in the statement: "It is sad that a great country like India has declined to the level of having a relationship of adherence to the United States of America, where the government of the United States of America considers the adherence of India a given. This has led to the BJP government being prepared to adapt to the priorities and policies of the United States of America without due consideration to India's vital foreign policy and national security interests." It is clear from this statement just how troubling it is to America. Nevertheless, it did not cut off strategic dialogue and returned to it in June 2010, which had begun in the era of President Bush in 2004. It described the Secretary of State Clinton, the head of the United States delegation at the India dialogue forum, as "an indispensable partner and a trusted friend." Therefore, since the Congress Party's rise to power after the defeat of the Janata Party that is loyal to America, it has become difficult to keep India in line with the implementation of America's plan to confront China except if America puts forth great temptations as we previously mentioned. However, India's reluctance to contend with circumstances is nothing new, it happened in the time of the Janata Party, and nevertheless the Party did not raise the issue while implementing American policy. It should be known that Britain had made the Congress Party completely loyal to them, and handed power over to it when it departed, and had not budged from it, not even partly, except for a short time from 1998 to 2004 when the Janata Party loyal to America won, and then the Congress Party won in the elections of 2004-2009.

As for the current elections, which began on 07/04/2014, the results are to be announced on 16/05/2014. It was reported by various pollsters that their results indicate that the BJP and its allies are expected to win in this election, if the expectations of public opinion are true, and the electoral opinion monitoring institutions in India, and Janata wins, whether by a majority to form a government alone. And that is unlikely to some extent, or the results were significant for it to impose conditions on any government formed, if so, the policy of America to harass China through India will be possible more than the time of the Congress party rule, but it also makes it easier to implement the policy as was the case during the reign of the Janata Party, loyal to America, it breathed a sigh of relief at the time after the Congress Party ruled for decades before that. When the Congress Party came to power in 2004 they began a policy to distort the American policy in India, but the Congress Party was dodging America to achieve advantageous agreements with it before took steps to help America in its policy.

8. When comparing between China and India, China is advantaged in many ways:

China although it does not carry its ideology and waives it in its foreign, economic and financial policy, as well as waiving it in many areas of life. Except it maintains it in its ruling by the Communist Party name only to maintain the interests of the party and that of its followers and for the cohesion of the state and its independence. All of this enabled it to move independently and developed resistance from becoming a subordinate state or an orbit state that revolves in the orbit of a major country. It became a state that aspires to become a major power in the world. Liu Mengo, a Chinese colonel, professor at the National Defence University, who trains young officers, expressed it in his book, which he called "the Chinese dream". He called his country China to develop the strongest armies in the world, and to move quickly to overthrow the hero of the world, America. He invited them to give up humility with respect to the global objectives and to jump, in order to become number one in the world. He said if China is incapable of being number one in the world in the twenty-first century and being a super power in the world, it will inevitably become marginalized... China possesses a sense of strength and challenge, and if China's objective is not limited only to maintain its territory, and accept to confront America only as a response to the movements of America towards its territory, China does not venture out to challenge America in their respective areas of influence... and if it did not

begin to adopt capitalism in many areas, particularly in economy... it would have had a loud voice internationally, and its impact on the interests of America's would be most powerful. China in any case has a strong sense of force, and is working to maintain its region's self-sovereignty, even if in its own territory.

As for India, it holds no ideology and does not have ideas emanating from an ideology even though capitalism is implemented to ensure their subordination to the West, especially Britain and not for its revival and making it an independent state. It is like the other countries in the region that have capitalism imposed on it through the force of colonial power, and is still imposed by force. That is why they are not rushing to become independent and have no motivation to work strongly, swiftly, and self-consciously and self-direction. It remains a subordinate state; its policy is not independent, and it is noted that it is moving slowly in the political arena which is always under the influence and neither influential nor initiative and it is under the influence of either Britain or its first master America, which wraps its arms around it and there it established a strong political force for it. That is why it is different from China in this regard, intellectually backward, and are undisciplined by any specific intellectual basis, and those working in the political field are not disciplined by any basis therefore financial and political corruption is rife and moves to include all the politicians. It is difficult to become a major international or even a regional power, and the most it can become in the future is an orbit state orbiting other major country, whether America or Britain or both.

This is in political terms, but in economic terms, China's economy is four times India's economy. While China has been able to reduce the level of poverty in the country, the 66% of the world's poor are from India. India cannot compete with China economically. China has developed a large industrial sector, which led to the possession of large cash reserves that allowed it to affect the global economy. Manufacturing in India is still far from the level of China in terms of the production, processing, and in particular, heavy machinery and modern technology, this does not mean that India is free of these things, but they are lagging behind the level of China...

As for the military aspect, China's official military budget amounts to \$119 billion representing more than three times the defence budget in India which amounts to 38 billion dollars. China has made significant progress in modernizing its armed forces, they are now creating their own storage (massive warehouses for military equipment industry such as ships, tanks and fighter planes) and the expansion of its fleet, as its active steps to control the region. However, India has recently begun to develop their capacity to finance military modernization program which still suffers from many problems. As India is still one of the largest importers of military equipment in the world. Despite two decades of efforts to develop its internal military capability, it failed to develop the shelves of value. Said Peter D. Wiseman, a senior researcher at the Institute for International Peace Research in Stockholm said, "I do not think that there are other countries in the world tried seriously to manufacture weapons and failed entirely, such as India." ("The biggest importer of weapons in the world, India would like to buy local", The New York Times, March 2014).

Thus, the comparison between China and India sees China outweighs India several times over...

9. In conclusion, the United States has worked to direct India towards the northern front of the conflict with China after it secured its western front with Pakistan; which pro-American rulers there offered major concessions to India in the reign of the BJP's pro-American party. When the Congress Party returned to power, there was a decline in the work on this front, also called the Actual Line of Control because of India's fears of confrontation with China with the recent one threading it. Also because this party which is loyal to the British which does not encourage it to follow in the American outline. America directed India to what it calls the trend towards East or towards the Pacific region and specifically towards the South China Sea and tempted it with the presence of energy sources of oil and gas there and convinced it that it has the right from its share, and made it cooperate with Vietnam that claim it is also entitled to take a share and it has the dispute with China over the Spratly Islands there... The United States has also encouraged Australia towards it in an attempt to form a conglomerate of several countries to counter China... America worked to give a more active role for Japan to ease the burden off its defence. If the BJP is successful in the elections, which are currently underway and it reaches power once again, it is likely to see an increase in the activity of India with America in the East, the area of the South China Sea. As for the comparison between the strength of China and

India, there is a major difference in the advantage of China that is exponential to India... and if China's objective is not limited only to maintain its territory, and accept to confront America only as a response to the movements of America towards its territory, China does not venture out to challenge America in their respective areas of influence... and if it did not begin to adopt capitalism in many areas, particularly in economy... it would have had a loud voice internationally, and its impact on the interests of America's would be most powerful.

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