Volume : 3 | Issue : 1 | Jan 2014 • ISSN No 2277 - 8160



Research Paper | Political Science

Rise of China: Challenge to India and Others

Vinti Rani Assistant Professor S.D. (P.G.) College Panipat

ABSTRACT

Indian foreign policy already faces many challenges. The international scene has changed a great deal in the last two decades or so India has needed to adjust its foreign policy accordingly. The rapidity of china's rise at the pace at which it has occurred and its impact on global affairs was not predicted with assurance. Many alarm bells are being rung that Chinese policies are unsustainable and that china is heading for a crisis. Many may wish that to happen so that muscle-flexing china is cut down to size its neighbours feel more comfortable. But no one can predict with certainty what lies ahead. We have to carefully weigh the china factor in seeking redistribution of power at the global level. The gap between India and china has grown so big that in any re-ordering of the world order china gain more with china's world view, its sense of itself, its historical grievances and its territorially expansionist policies, India, which has serious differences with china, cannot be comfortable with a more powerful china within the international system.

KEYWORDS : China, India, Foreign Policy, Challenge, Rise etc.

INTRODUCTION:

The study of international relations inevitably involves the study of power relations among major states. China is a nation with a grand vision and has a mission to fulfil. Conceptualising China's worldview and perspective in the modern age no doubt may be a daunting task but a close look at its history and culture as a civilisation of the past and the present political, economic, military and culture scenario reveals that its grand design and mission would be one of its power, influence, dominance and hegemony wherever and whenever possible. The rapidity of China's rise at the pace at which it has occurred and its impact on global affairs was not predicted with assurance.

RISE OF CHINA:

The phenomenon of the 'rise of China' must be understood first in economic terms. It is universally acknowledged as the fastest growing economy in the world, which has demonstrated its ability to sustain historically unprecedented high rates of growth – almost ten percent per annum - for over a quarter of a century. This has catapulted it to the rank of the world's fourth largest economy, with real per capita output having increased nearly nine times since 1978.[1] The rise of china presents a mix of opportunities and perils. One of the dangers is stress on the structures and arrangement that have kept most of the cold war. Currently peace is robust, but within a decade or two powerful forces within China may defy restraint increase the risk of conflicts, especially in the geographic area close to China's borders. In the longer term, maintaining peace will require Beijing and Washington to reconcile competing vision of the regional order.[2] India is keeping a wary eye on China's rapid global ascent. Unresolved border issues that resulted in the Sino–Indian War of 1962 have been heating up again in recent years. U.S. must keep a watchful eye on the trend lines in Sino–Indian relations and factor these into its overall strategies in the broader Asia region. A strong India able to hold its own against China is in America's interest.[3]

China is consciously strengthening ties to its traditional ally Pakistan and slowly gaining more influence with other South Asian states. In addition to developing a port facility in Sittwe, Burma, China has invested in the development of ports in Hambantota, Sri Lanka, and Gwadar, Pakistan, and has offered assistance to Bangladesh in developing its deep-sea port in Chittagong.[4] Because China imports about 70 percent of its energy requirements, its interest in developing these ports is primarily to help ensure uninterrupted access to crucial energy supplies. China has already invested about $200 million in the Gwadar Port facility in the southwest part of Baluchistan Province in Pakistan off the coast of the Arabian Sea. Pakistan's defence minister recently claimed that Pakistan had invited China to start building a naval base at Gwadar; Chinese officials publicly dismissed the notion.[5] It is of course true that what has happened in the past may not foretell the future. China's rise to eminence will be different from that of other powers. Despite its dependence on international trade and foreign direct investment, Beijing has not yet adopted democratic principles. The regime does considerable polling to determine sentiment in the provinces and has a good grasp of popular needs and demands, but it has not yet submitted itself to the electoral judgment of the whole population.[6] Chinese growth then will no longer largely depend upon exports but on local demand and consumption patterns. Foreign technology will still be critical for Chinese development, and best practice standards achieved elsewhere will continue to be relevant to Chinese industrial progress. Textiles will migrate to China, information services to India. The auto industry will no longer be centred in the northern hemisphere. Civilian aircraft producers will migrate. Computer-assisted manufacturing will allow new states to combine technology with low costs, and jobs will leave previous locations in Europe, the United States, and even Japan. Even finance could theoretically become a third-world specialty.[7]

China's rise over the past quarter of a century has been remarkable. But the historic trait of chauvinism and the dynamics of socio-economic transformation are inevitably having an impact on China's behaviour. The contradictions between an increasingly open economy in an era of expanding global communications on the one hand, and corruption and venality that characterise the behaviour of dictatorial elites on the other, are producing social and economic tensions.[8] The tensions can get out of hand if not addressed deftly. Like all other dictatorship facing such challenges, China's leadership is increasingly resorting to jingoism to divert the attention of its people. The message to the people of China is that with its growing military might and economic power, China is set to share global pre-eminence with the US and will overtake the US soon in economic power. This has been coupled with bullying and coercion of neighbours in order to enforce claims for territorial expansion on China's land and maritime boundaries.[9]

CHALLENGES FROM CHINA:

Many alarm bells are being rung that Chinese policies are unsustainable and that China is heading for a crisis. Many may wish that to happen so that muscle-flexing China is cut down to size and its neighbours feel more comfortable. But no one can predict with certainly what lies ahead. A big challenge for India is to maintain coherence and balance in its foreign policy. It is axiomatic that protecting and advancing the country's national interest is the goal of foreign policy. This is all right as an enunciation of a general principal; the problem lies in the practical implementations of such principles.[10] We have to carefully weigh the China factor in seeking redistribution of power at the global level. The gap between India and China has grown so big that in any re-ordering of the world order China can gain more. With China's world view, its sense of itself, its historical grievances and its territorially expansionist policies, India, which has serious differences with China, cannot be comfortable with a more powerful China within the international system.[11] China has become too powerful economically and financially and too integrated with the global economy to be contained in the way the Soviet Union was and the way Russia is still pressured by the west. US pivot towards Asia is not intended to actively confront China; it is to caution it against any adventurism. US-China relationship is much more intensive than the US-India relationship.[12] We should not pay much attention to the democracy rhetoric. China becoming more democratic is no guarantee against a more muscled Chinese foreign policy. Unfortunately, China has made it clear that it does not intend to

solve the border issue with India; it says it wants it to remain dormant and leave it to the next generation to resolve it. But then, as we have seen in the latest maps on Chinese passports, China is establishing its claims in insidious ways. The actions reveal the longer-term strategy China has in mind.[13]

It is clear Tibet is not reconciled to China rule. Dalai Lama's succession can revive tensions between India and China. India has to make sure Bhutan does not yield to China's blandishments. China rising profile in Sri Lanka and Nepal is cause of concern. The China-Pakistan axis remains a grave problem. India has to develop its economic and military muscle to counter the China threat. There is no other way. This is a big challenge for us ahead, even as engage China as others do. India cannot risk a confrontation with China; its strategy should be to dissuade China from taking the risk of confronting India with visible and independent strategic strength. India has to find the right balance between engaging China and hedging it.[14]

Our improved relations with US have excluded one external factor that in the past complicated our relation with our neighbours. China, however, remains a problem in this regard. On the other hand, a broken up Pakistan loses value for the Chinese. Even a chronically unstable Pakistan loses value.[15] It is unlikely that the Chinese will want to rescue Pakistan with economic largesse. In that context, disarray in Pakistan is not unhelpful to us. India's Look East policy is now facing new challenges with the erstwhile equation between China and East and Southeast Asia disturbed by China's muscle-flexing in the South China Sea.[16] India has concerns about the freedom of passage through international waters, but otherwise India's priorities concerns are in the Indian Ocean area. However, for geo-political reasons, India would need to come closer to those countries targeted by Chinese claims, though without getting directly embroiled in the territorial disputes.[17] In the Indian Ocean area, India should try to maintain its dominant status as a littoral state as much as possible, knowing however that at some stage Chinese presence in these waters will increase, as is portended by China's active search for port facilities in this area. India's declared openness to cooperation with China on maritime issues should be based on the legitimacy of not only China's presence in the Indian Ocean but also India's maritime presence close to China's shore.[18] The above analysis brings out the fact that the Indian policy makers will need to keep a close watch on China's military modernisation and pursue cooperation in a pragmatic framework. While cooperation is undoubtedly preferable to conflict, it should also be kept in mind that the security dilemma in Sino-Indian relations has neither disappeared entirely nor is likely to. China's policy towards India for next decade or more is likely to be a mix of reasonableness, hard bargaining, no concession on relations with Pakistan or on border dispute, and occasional assertion of power. India's policy will also have to be nuanced.[19]

Given the turbulence in global economy and politics which is likely to continue for the foreseeable future, China's economic growth may also be affected which could lead to political and socio-economic instability over the next two decades. This may introduce some sense of uncertainty into Sino-Indian relations for which India will have to be prepared. Such uncertainty will accentuate if India's economic growth rate overtakes China's, giving rise to a sense of insecurity in the latter.[20] India should advance its military infrastructure building without indulging in rhetoric because, going forward; this is likely to figure as an issue between the two countries. The Chinese have started arguing, albeit erroneously, that the military balance in the border regions of India is tilting in the latter's favour.[21]

The challenge for India's foreign policy in the years ahead is to be courted by all and to succumb to no one. Even if India cannot, it must not be led.

Some observers believe that the American era is coming to an end, as the Western-oriented world order is replaced by one increasingly dominated by the East. The historian Niall Ferguson has written that the bloody twentieth century witnessed "the descent of the West" and "a reorientation of the world" toward the East. Realists go on to note that as China gets more powerful and the United States' position erodes, two things are likely to happen: China will try to use its growing influence to reshape the rules and institutions of the international system to better serve its interests, and other states in the system -- especially the declining hegemony -- will start to see China as a growing security threat. The result of these developments, they predict, will be tension, distrust, and conflict, the typical features of a power transition. In this view, the drama of China's rise will feature an increasingly powerful China and a declining United States locked in an epic battle over the rules and leadership of the international system. And as the world's largest country emerges not from within but outside the established post-World War II international order, it is a drama that will end with the grand ascendance of China and the onset of an Asian-cantered world order.

China is well on its way to becoming a formidable global power. The size of its economy has quadrupled since the launch of market reforms in the late 1970s and, by some estimates, will double again over the next decade. It has become one of the world's major manufacturing centres and consumes roughly a third of the global supply of iron, steel, and coal. It has accumulated massive foreign reserves, worth more than $1 trillion at the end of 2006. China's military spending has increased at an inflation-adjusted rate of over 18 percent a year, and its diplomacy has extended its reach not just in Asia but also in Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East. Indeed, whereas the Soviet Union rivalled the United States as a military competitor only, China is emerging as both a military and an economic rival -- heralding a profound shift in the distribution of global power. The leadership in Beijing understands the link between economic strength and geopolitical weight. It realizes that, if China can continue to sustain near–double digit growth rates in the early decades of this century, it will surpass the United States as the world's largest economy (measured by gross domestic product). Because of this astonishing economic growth, China is, as journalist James Kynge has put it (with a nod to Napoleon), truly shaking the world both economically *and* geopolitically. Studies by the US Central Intelligence Agency and others have projected that China will be a first-rate military power and will rival America in global power by 2020.

REFERENCES

1. Prashant Kumar Singh and Rumel Dahiya, "Managing India-China Relation," Rumel Dahiya (ed.), India's Neighbourhood, Pentagon Security International, New Delhi, 2012, p. 56. | 2. Denny Roy, "More Security for Rising China, Less for Others," Asia Pacific, Vol. 106, January 2013, p. 2. | 3. Lisa Curtis and Dean Cheng, "The China Challenge: A Strategic Vision for U.S.-India Relations," Backgrounder, No. 2583, July 2011, p. 3. | 4. Ibid. p. 5. | 5. Ibid. p. 7. | 6. Rechard Rosegrance, "Power and International Relations: The Rise of China and Its Effects," International Studies Perspectives, Vol. 7, July 2006, p. 34. | 7. Ibid. p. 35. | 8. The Tribune, 7 November, 2013. | 9. Ibid. | 10. Rup Narayan Das, India-China Relations, IDSA, No. 19, May 2013, p. 88. | 11. http://www.oecd.org/china. | 12. Rup Narayan Das, Opcit.10, p. 89. | 13. Rup Narayan Das, Opcit.10, p. 95. | 14. Prashant Kumar Singh and Rumel Dahiya, Opcit. 1, p. 58. | 15. Rechard Rosegrance, Opcit. 6, p. 36. | 16. The Tribune, 16 July, 2013. | 17. Prashant Kumar Singh and Rumel Dahiya, Opcit, 1, p. 60. | 18. Prashant Kumar Singh and Rumel Dahiya, Opcit, 1, p. 61. | 19. R.S. Yadav, India's Foreign Policy, Pearson, New Delhi, 2013, p. 191. | 20. Ibid. p. 192. | 21. Rup Narayan Das, Opcit.10, p. 98. |