CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY
The US interest in South Asia has been a by-product of the rivalry between the US and the erstwhile Soviet Union. South Asian region was given low priority in US foreign policy. However, India and Pakistan figured prominently in the US foreign policy. The US, in the beginning, wanted India's cooperation to counter the expansion of communism. It felt that the threat from communist bloc could be countered by the united action of the US and the non-communist Asian Nations such as India and Pakistan. With such motive the US essayed and persuaded India to be part of a military alliance. However, India refused to oblige. Consequently US began to support Pakistan which entered into the military alliance, viz-South East Asian Treaty Organisation in 1954 and Central Treaty Organisation in 1955. The main thrust of the US was to fight against communism, whereas India's concern was to confront colonialism and imperialism. The US security perspective in South Asia was to bolster the Pakistani armed forces to contain India.

The US perspective vis a vis South Asia, tends to be global whereas India's perception is regional. They have divergent views on strategic issues, viz regards the US presence in the Indian Ocean, the US military aid to Pakistan and the nuclear issue.

A BACKGROUND TO THE US FOREIGN POLICY

Since its independence in 1783, the US adhered to the policy of isolationism in international affairs. The policy of isolationism was essentially a doctrine of self preservation, promoting one's self interest. The US opted for this policy in order to keep itself away from the endless conflicts of Europe. Americans felt that the policy was a cluster of ideas and emotions related to nationalism.

Foreign policy approaches: Realist-Idealist Dichotomy

US foreign policy predominates, with the two approaches of idealism and realism. However, in the post World War II era, it became difficult for the US to remain in isolation as it had to confront the expansionism of the Soviet Union.
After World War II, the US foreign policy makers concentrated on making the US a Super Power in international affairs. The US had to struggle for power at the international level and to confront the expansion of communism. It wanted to act as the controller of world politics and play the role of a "world policeman".

The US felt that the national interest could not be compromised for upholding moral principles in pursuit of its foreign policy. Thus, the policy of realism occupies an important place in US foreign policy.

Continuity/Change in US Foreign Policy—guiding principles of various doctrines

In 1823, the US President James Monroe stated that his intention was to keep US away from European matters. This was one of the doctrinal roots of isolationism. This approach enabled the US to keep out of Europe because the former was weak both in terms of economic and military capability.

The policy of isolationism was not considered to be a stable and constant force to influence US foreign policy. This was felt when the US involved itself in World War I.

Since World War II, the Monroe doctrine was reinterpreted in many ways. Every administration enunciated its own variant of the Monroe doctrine viz, Truman, Eisenhower, Johnson, Nixon, Carter, and Reagan, were all against communist expansionism.

These doctrines were geared to contain communism and make the US the most powerful State in the world. After 1945, the evolution of the doctrine was related to curbing communism. The US containment policy had become an extension of the ideas embodied in the Monroe doctrine and this was accepted by Americans. The following three strategies have been applied by every administration since post World War II:
1. The United States rejection of isolationism permanently and its replacement by an active role in international affairs;
2. Reckoning communism as the principle danger in the world, and using US power to combat this menace;
3. The Soviet Union being the spearhead of the communist challenge, US foreign policy was centered on the containment of Soviet expansionism and influence.

From Monroe's doctrine in 1823 to Reagan's in 1986, the national interest was the main objective. Its foreign policy was directed to preserve US security, peace and stability. Monroe on his part believed that the peace of the Western Hemisphere would be promoted by keeping the Holy Alliance out of Latin America. The same view can be found in the post World War II doctrines of American Foreign Policy. President Eisenhower believed that his doctrine would avert conflict in the Middle East and his predecessors also enunciated their doctrines in different regions to contain communism.

The Monroe doctrine (1823) envisaged the concept of self-rule in Latin America; the Truman doctrine (1947) in Greece and Turkey and the Carter doctrine in Afghanistan. The Monroe doctrine expressed the belief in the "superiorities of American Institutions and ideals." Till Johnson, all doctrines never sought help from friends or allies and went alone. However Nixon, Carter and Reagan with the experience of Vietnam (where the US went alone into South-East Asia) sought contributions from other countries. But they failed to get support from others.

The National interest was rooted in each doctrine. From Truman to Reagan US foreign policies were an extension of the Monroe doctrine.

US AND SOUTH ASIA - POLICY APPROACH FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF MILITARY ALLIANCES

South Asia had remained an area of peripheral and derivative interest to US. For the South Asian states, US regional policy was more important than its global pursuits. The US did not rely on South Asia for its resources and its investment or trade with the region was very marginal. It also had no deep cultural and historic ties with the region. Its interest in South Asia stemmed from the global pursuits and to contain communism in the area. Till the 1960s, the thrust was to contain international communism but after the Sino-American rapprochement in 1971, the emphasis was on Soviet expansionism. South Asia had become important to the US because the former provided access to the strategically important gulf region. The oil embargo in 1973, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, and the revolution in Iran (1979), led its
presence in the region. In the light of these developments, the US decided to take a more active role in this region and at the same time maintain regional stability, preventing the spread of nuclear proliferation, and to seek support for military alliances i.e., South East Asian Treaty Organisation (SEATO) in 1954 and Central Treaty Organisation (CENTO) in 1955.

However, the US has always been a major factor in the defense and security policies of the South Asian countries. For instance, in the 1950's the US had an agreement with Pakistan which was both bilateral and (mutual) security related. Its support to India in Sino-Indian conflict in 1962, its decision of a military embargo on both India and Pakistan in 1965 when both the countries were involved in a war and its support to Pakistan during Indo-Pakistan war in 1971 are examples of US military involvement in the region.

The US did not seriously attempt to solve the intra-state conflicts in the region but its design was always aimed to foreclose the influence of USSR or China spreading in the region. The US concern about possible Soviet penetration in the two neighbouring regions i.e., South-East Asia and South-West Asia and the Indian Ocean led the US to give importance to South Asia also.

The marginal States of the South Asian region, Sri Lanka and Maldives, did not merit much attention from the US because these countries were not important in terms of geo-politics, or economy.

Nepal was one of the autocratic countries in the world which was opposing personal freedom in the late 1940s and the early 1950s. The US wanted to develop its contacts with Nepal to foster democracy as opposed to the stance of the erstwhile totalitarian Soviet Union. It felt that the widening of Soviet and Chinese interest in the Himalayan periphery would attract Nepal to the communist world and thereby pitch it against its interests vis-a-vis the Soviet Union /Communist countries.

India and Pakistan prominently figured in the US foreign policy. Thus in its formative years, both India and Pakistan merited the attention of
the US, as it tried hard to settle their differences amicably, so that the two together could counter the possible spread of communism in Asia. However, this did not materialise, as the two countries failed to sort out their differences.

US and Regional Security in South Asia:

After World War II, the US believed that the threat from the Communist block could be monitored by the united action of the US and the non-communist countries. With this in mind, it tried to persuade India to enter into a military alliance. However, India wanted to keep at bay the influence of great powers in the region. With its involvement in World War I and II, the US rejected the concept of neutrality. The US was unhappy with India’s decision to remain non-aligned. India’s refusal to join the alliance, projected Pakistan as the only alternative available to the US through which it could secure its objectives in the region. The military alliances with US enabled Pakistan to strengthen its capability Vis-à-vis India.

US involvement in South Asia

The US supported India in the 1962 Sino-Indian conflict and extended its military aid to it. Its intention of supporting India was to uphold democracy and to contain communism in South Asia.

In the 1965 Indo-Pakistan war the US did try to stop the war but could not succeed. Because its intention was to contain communism and not confrontation between India and Pakistan. However, this equation changed in 1970s. It had rapprochement with China in 1971 with the help of Pakistan. In this connection the US supported west Pakistan government in the Bangladesh crisis. It also sent the US Seventh Fleet to the Bay of Bengal to show that it supported the Pakistan military regime and sought to minimise India’s activities. This was the first time that the US directly supported Pakistan in a war with India.

The US, further, involved in South Asia when the USSR invaded Afghanistan in 1979. On 27 December 1979, about 25,000 to 30,000 Soviet forces entered Afghanistan which brought about a shift in the US military assistance programme to Pakistan. The US extended its military aid to Pakistan to
contain the activities of the Soviet Union. Thus it got involved in the affairs of South Asia.

The US policy towards the region was shaped by cold war calculations. Pakistan's importance to the US was in the context of the Middle East and China, and of India in the context of USSR.

The relationship between the South Asian states (India and Pakistan) and the external powers (China, US and USSR) have been changing. When India was closer to China, Pakistan did not show interest in developing cordial relationship with China. When the US supplied arms to India in 1962 war, Pakistan cultivated China, which became one of its main arms supplier. When India refused to be a part of a military alliances offered by the US, Pakistan agreed to the US proposal and became part of SEATO and CENTO. Thus Pakistan cultivated relationship with the US, and the latter became its main arms supplier. Similarly India cultivated relationship with the USSR, and the latter became its major arms supplier and provided economic aid to industries in the public sector for which no support was available from the West. The Soviets also supported India on political issues viz Kashmir and Goa since 1952 and 1955 respectively.

South Asia is a region which has inter state conflicts and intra state problems that create instability in the region. However, the US involvement in the region could not create stability in the region and it created more problems than it resolved.

Congress attitude towards South Asia

The role of Congress in the pursuit of US foreign policy towards South Asia is significant. Majority of the Congressmen have an interest in Pakistan than India. They did not have interest in India because it did not become part of US military proposed alliances. However, some of the Congressmen recognised the importance and showed interest toward India. Senators like William Bart (Republican), Staurt Symington (Democrat), Charles Harting Percy (Republican), Edward Kennedy (Democrat), Mark Hatfield (Republican), Alan Cranston (Democrat), John Glenn (Democrat), and Peter Galbraith (Democrat); and Representatives like Stephen Solarz (Democrat) and Dante Fascell (Democrat) opposed the US supply of arms to Pakistan.
India tested a nuclear device in 1974. Majority of the Congressmen opposed India's test and sought to stop the supply of fuel to India's Atomic Power Plant at Tarapur in western part of India. However, there were few men like Chief administration spokesman on military non proliferation, Joseph Nye and Senators like Charles H. Percy who supported fuel supply to India's Power Plant.

US Presidents view on India

American Presidents visualised India as the emergent regional power and as an alternative to China but no one reckoned India as an alternative to Pakistan as long as the latter remained a front line State. It was difficult to conclude that the Republican Presidents favoured Pakistan and Democrats favoured India. It was the President Harry S.Truman's (Democrat) administration that laid the ground work for the security relationship with Pakistan and the Dwight D. Eisenhower's (Republican) administration which recognised India's regional role. Gerald Ford's (Republican) administration did not wish to have strained relations with India. Though Jimmy Carter's (Democrat) administration was inclined towards India, it placed restrictions on India regarding nuclear matters. The US Presidents adopted policies towards South Asia depending on the events that took place all over the world. For instance, the US helped India in Sino-Indian conflict in 1962, because US thrust was to contain international communism. Its rapprochement with China in 1971 made India no longer important to the US to contain China. The US and China targeted the USSR and India. It is in this context the US supported west Pakistan government in 1971.

US and India :political and military issues

The US and India are the two largest democracies in the world. However, their political and military relations have been strained and remained at a low key. Both the countries had differences and misconception about each other.

a: Political dimension

Since its independence in 1947, India became involved in two issues i.e. Kashmir and Goa. The US did oppose India in these issues due its attachment
with Pakistan and Portugal. However, the Goan issue was resolved but the Kashmir issue remains unresolved.

**US Involvement in Kashmir Issue**

The US became involved in the Kashmir problem since the issue was brought to the UN Security Council on 1 January 1948. In the beginning, the US wanted to settle the problem peacefully because its interest necessitated it to maintain friendly relations with both India and Pakistan. To this end, it called upon both the parties to solve the issue amicably. It also felt that a solution could be brought about only through self determination and plebiscite. The US considered Kashmir as a disputed territory and did not justify the accession of Kashmir to India.

India rejected the plebiscite proposal by the US because:

1. Pakistan was an aggressor and it would mean a surrender to aggression to allow it to take part in the plebiscite. For the same reason and because of the danger involved, Pakistan's troops could never be allowed to enter the plebiscite area.
2. The provision relating to the UN administration would mean that the government of the State would be superseded, it went beyond what was necessary for the purpose in view.
3. People belonging to the State of Jammu and Kashmir alone has to be ensured participation in the "campaign" over the plebiscite. There could be no equality of any right between India and Pakistan in this or other relevant respects.
4. The security of the State would be endangered. India rejected it outright and claimed that the Council was partial towards Pakistan.

The unresolved Kashmir issue in the UN Security Council turned into a war in 1965 and further intensified the strains in Indo-Pakistan ties. Since then the Kashmir issue has remained unresolved. The US, over the years has accorded support to Pakistan on the Kashmir question essentially because of their strategic linkages. On this score, India's stance did not get the support of the US, more so due to its non-aligned stance, its refusal to join the military alliance led the US to support Pakistan on the Kashmir issue.
Goa Issue

Goa, Daman and Diu became a Portuguese possession in 1510 and it remained a colony of Portugal until its liberation in 1961. Goa was accorded the status of a 'province' by the Portuguese in 1912. After Independence, the Indian government wanted to bring the Portuguese and French colonies existent in the Indian territory under its control. However, the Portuguese authorities refused to consider India's plea. In January 1955, a group of unarmed people from the Indian mainland tried to cross the Goan border, but were not allowed to do so and were fired at by the police. The police firing resulted in the death of fifteen people. The government of India in retaliation for this act of the Portuguese police broke its diplomatic relations with Portugal on 19 August 1955 and this compelled India to resort to military action. Indian army operations began on 18 December 1961 and it lasted for 24 hours. The next day at 6 pm the Portuguese military surrendered to the Indian army.

US Involvement - a case of double standards

The US, under the Eisenhower administration, considered Goa as a Portuguese province instead of mentioning it as a colony. On 19 December 1961, discussing the matter in the UN Security Council, the US stated that India could not lawfully use force against Goa because it was under Portuguese authority, specially when the peaceful means in the UN Charter had not been exhausted. In response to this statement of the US, India stated that there could be no question of aggression against Indian people, who were for freedom. The US, instead of adopting an anti Indian stance, should have supported the end of colonialism in India. Why did the US not regard the Portuguese occupation as illegal and as a violation of the UN charter? The US termed India's action in Goa as invasion and not an act of liberation. There was no logic in the US argument. How could India's action in Goa lead towards the disintegration of the UN? During the crisis, the US did not support India's military action against the Portuguese rule in Goa, because of its close linkages with Portugal.
b. Military Issues

Sino-Indian war (1962)

The Chinese attack on India started on 20 October 1962. 30,000 Chinese troops entered NEFA (North East Frontier Agency) and captured the post at Dboa and Klinzemane and entered further South. On 26 October, 10,000 Chinese further moved from Tawang in NEFA towards Tezpur in Assam. Till 19 November they continued to seize the main posts of India. At the same time, on 4 November asked India to respond to its proposal for peaceful negotiations. Meanwhile, China announced a unilateral cease fire on 21 November. According to India, there was a difference of some 8500 sq. miles between the line of actual control which existed on 7 November 1959 and that which China claimed as the line of actual control on 7 November 1959. The Chinese perhaps decided to launch this attack due to the following reasons:
1. Being a large country, China, could not tolerate India as the largest democracy not only in South Asia but in the whole of Asian region;
2. Its desire to assert its supremacy in Asia;
3. Its desire to stifle the democratic experiment in South Asia;
4. The weak Indian defense was an opportunity to be seized upon; and
5. India’s mild response to the Chinese invasion/occupation of Tibet.

US Involvement in the war

The US started supplying arms to India on 3 November 1962 and continued it till 10 November 1962. India sought transport planes from the US and the latter agreed to give assistance. Nehru requested the US to send arms to India. China declared a cease fire on 21 November 1962.

One of the reasons for Chinese cease fire was the US help sent to beef up the Indian army to stand up to the Chinese menace. The commitment to help India, was a part of the US foreign policy objective to contain communism.

Indo-Pak War 1965 and US:

In early April 1965, Pakistan claimed that since the Rann of Kutch into India (consisting 8,400 sq. miles of land) remains under water for about half of the year, the boundary line between India and Pakistan must be drawn through the middle of the Rann. India refused Pakistan’s demand and claimed the whole Rann under its control. Consequently, a war started between them in
August 1965, Pakistan first attacked the Rann. Consequently India opened a
diversary move in Kashmir. The 1965 war between India and Pakistan became an
irritant to the US which had a vital interest in the region. It's assistance
to both countries had become counter productive when both were pitted against
each other, all the time.

The US wanted to settle the issue amicably. On 8 September 1965, the US
announced the suspension of military aid to both countries. This was a big
jolt to Pakistan. This embargo did not affect India much, as it was relying
less on the US for arms.

On 20 September 1965, the Security Council called both the parties to
stop fighting within 48 hours. Pakistan and India accepted the call on 21 and
22 September 1965 respectively. It was estimated that nearly 3,000 people
were killed on each side. It was also learnt that Pakistan used US weapons
against Indian soldiers. Most of the Indians who fought war, either died or
injured by the US weapons. Thus Dwight D.Eisenhower's promise of the US arms
to Pakistan not being used against India was negated by Pakistan.

If the US wanted to contain Soviet and Chinese influence in the region,
it could have given equipment for fighting in the mountainous terrain. The
nature of military equipment supplied to Pakistan viz. tanks, motorized
artillery etc. could be used only on the plains of North India. Interestingly
Pakistan made it clear that it did not have any quarrel with either the
Soviets or China. In other words, its primary target was India. Thus, the
people of India concluded that the US was against India.

Indo-US view of crisis in East Pakistan (1971)

India and the US viewed the 1971 crisis in East Pakistan from different
perspectives. While India supported the Mukti Bahini, the US sided with the
government of West Pakistan, which was continuing brutal genocide in the East
in early November 1971. India requested the US to pressurise Pakistan to agree
to a political settlement which would allow the refugees to return home, as
their continued presence would hinder its economy, stability and security.
However, the US treated the problem as an internal affair of Pakistan. India
stressed the need for a political settlement of the crisis. It refused to
comment on the crisis till 26 March 1971. Soon after East Pakistan declared its independence, India announced its support to the freedom fighters of East Pakistan and military support.

On 4 December 1971, the US in the Security Council accused India of its involvement in the East Pakistan issue. It introduced a draft resolution for a cease-fire. The USSR vetoed the resolution.

Richard Nixon, after the failure in his efforts to end the Indo-Pak conflict ordered Seventh Fleet on 10 December 1971 to enter into the Bay of Bengal to threaten Indian activities. In response, a list of Soviet Ships dispatched, moved from Vladivostok towards the Bay of Bengal. Sending of the US Fleet to the Bay of Bengal had no effect upon India. Thus it became a mere political and not an effective military measure adopted by the US. Indian armed forces continued their march towards Dacca. On 16 December 1971, 80,000 Pakistani soldiers surrendered to the Indian army. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on the same day ordered a unilateral cease fire. Thus the war ended on 17 December 1971 and East Pakistan was liberated from the military rulers leading to the formation of Bangladesh.

The US recognised Bangladesh in April 1972 and commenced diplomatic relations with it by 18 May 1972.

**Indo-US relations-inconsistencies and misconceptions**

When India opted to be non aligned, the US began to treat India as an adversary. The US could not comprehend that India was equally unwilling to join the Soviet camp. India felt that by entering into an alliance, it would not be allowed to pursue an independent foreign policy. It's concern was to struggle against colonialism and imperialism and not to contain communism.

India regarded the US as the exponent of imperialism in Asia, as the US in several ways supported its European allies to perpetuate their rule in their respective colonies for a long time. Though India's economy and military power were not of much relevance to it, the US sought its friendship because of its vast population and moral leadership among the Asian countries. However, India preferred to pursue non alignment. The US was dissatisfied with India's stance.
The US did not reckon the concept of non alignment as a credible policy. Equating it with neutrality it reckoned it as immoral. India, however, rejected the Western views on non alignment.

When India was attacked by China in 1962, the US expected India to give up the idea of peaceful coexistence and neutralism. It expected India to follow realistic doctrines consequent upon the Chinese aggression. India refused to give up non-alignment and it even did not go along with the idea of permitting foreign troops on its soil to counter the Chinese troops.

When the US decided to give military aid to Pakistan in 1954, it led to the build up of anti American sentiment in India. To the US the aid given to Pakistan seemed to be logical, because Pakistan was its military ally as a result of its membership of CENTO and the other military linkages between the two. This was in direct contrast to India's policy of non alignment.

India wanted to follow an independent line of action in its foreign policy. The US which sought to become a global power could not tolerate India's independent stance and its efforts to be autonomous in its foreign policy.

US AND THE POLITICS OF MILITARIZATION OF THE INDIAN OCEAN

After the British left the region the US justified its involvement to maintain the power balance of the region. In December 1966, it signed an agreement with the US and accorded it the BIOT on a 50 year lease. The US felt that Diego Garcia island in the Indian Ocean was strategically ideal for a base more than any other.

The US decided to upgrade Diego Garcia on the following grounds:

a. the US had no land connection with countries located in the Indian Ocean with which it has linkages;
b. the US deployment in the region were consistent with the long standing pursuit of US national interest;
c. its military presence was not a threat to any nation in the area; and
d. it had no intention to involve itself in the arms race of the region.
Rapid deployment force

The US President Jimmy Carter announced in early October 1979 the formation of Rapid Deployment Force (RDF). The RDF was established in 1980 to increase its capacity to send the US Forces to other areas where it did not have bases, particularly in the Persian Gulf. The establishment of RDF was to control the middle eastern oil fields or to intervene to protect the pro-western allies in the region. It enhanced the intervention capability of the US because its force level and equipment characteristic have been mainly designed for this region. The major objective of this new US stance in the middle east was not to confront the Soviets but a consequence of the oil shocks.

On 4 January 1980, the US stated that the government had decided to maintain a permanent naval presence in the Indian Ocean as a result of the Afghanistan and Iranian crisis. Thus the RDF came into existence on 1 March 1980. In 1982, the RDF was beset with problems. In early 1982, significant changes were made in the RDF and it was changed into the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force (RDJTF). The purpose of establishment of a Joint Task Force was to plan, train, and exercise as well as prepare selected units of the RDJTF for deployment. As a result, by the end of 1982, the Pentagon deployed seven preposition ships around Diego Garcia, in the Indian Ocean which increased the US carrier battle group presence in the Arabian sea from one to two. It also made available 300 jet transports and 500 turbo prop transports for airlift.

The RDJTF was expected to intervene within a matter of days to protect a regime faced with an external threat or internal anti regime challenge. On 1 January 1983, the US created its new US central command (USCENTCOM) to protect the US interests -from any threat- in the Indian Ocean. The objective of this command was to serve as a deterrent against Soviet action. One analyst stated that the US had already stationed the marines in the Indian Ocean and that they could send them to the scene of the crisis within 36 hours. In addition, it could deploy a 1200 man marine amphibious unit from the US fleet in the Mediterranean; a paratroop battalion from the 82nd Division of US army within 48 hours and a full brigade from the 82nd Airborne Division within 4 days either from Egypt, Sudan or Oman base. The intention of deployment of the
forces in the region was not only to counter Soviet activities but also to maintain an "intervention capability" to handle conflicts in the region.

The US had a naval task force based around Diego Garcia. The naval deployment in the Indian Ocean gave a preponderant and superior position to the US as compared to the Soviets. Without a base at Diego Garcia, the US Navy would have been constrained.

Super Power rivalry or co-existence

The competition between the US and USSR was motivated by ideological and political considerations. Both of them tried to establish political parity in the region than strategic. Both increased their presence in the region though they never had any rivalry amongst themselves in the Indian Ocean region.

The Super Powers involved themselves in the affairs of littoral States but there was no direct contact between them. Their presence was justified because they felt that as the regional States were unable to solve their problems, it was their duty, as Super Powers, to find a solution to the persistent regional problems. It is interesting to note that though these powers deployed their respective naval warships, neither of them was interested to suppress the other. Though each claimed that they had to increase their naval fleet to match the other, neither of them decreased their deployment in that area.

The US and the USSR had a common interest in the Indian Ocean. They wanted to solve the regional conflicts through intervention. They shared similar views with respect to the law of the sea, and did not want to allow a third power to emerge which would diminish their own influence in the region.

Demilitarization

The Soviet Union first came forward in August 1976 and favored the proposal to eliminate foreign bases of Western countries, particularly, the US. The base that the Soviet leaders had in mind, was the US base at Diego Garcia. This became an irritant to the US, and the Carter administration diluted the urge to declare the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace (IOZP) by the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean, to demilitarization. It

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was argued that demilitarization was more preventive than IOZP implementation. Thus, the Naval Arms Limitations Talks (NALT) between the US and the Soviet Union began in June 1977. The only difference between the IOZP and the NALT proposals was that the former advocated total liquidation of military presence of foreign countries where as the latter was to limit the naval capabilities of the Super Powers. This was a game indulged by the US to subdue the voices of dissent against its presence in the Indian Ocean.

Around this time (1977), the USSR was actively involved in the conflict between Somalia and Ethiopia in the Horn of Africa. The US rejected the NALT proposal stating that the Soviet Union had involved itself in the Somalia and Ethiopia and in Afghanistan’s internal affairs. They placed the NALT on the back burner of international relations. Thus, the entire exercise of a purported demilitarization was put to an end without either of the countries taking any step towards limiting their presence in the Indian Ocean.

The US reasons to militarize the Indian Ocean were:

a. Soviet Union's enormous size and population;
b. Soviet military strength; and
c. Soviet totalitarian regime.

Another justification given by the US was that it wanted to protect its oil interest. It emphasised that it was its responsibility to protect not only its interest but also the interests of its allies. The US was aware of this fact when the oil exporters decided not to export oil to the western countries in 1973. The US maintained that it was essential for it to retain forces in the region to avoid a crisis in future. Besides oil, the US also depends on materials (Columbium, Strontium, Industrial diamonds, Manganese, Tantalum, Bauxite, Cobalt, Chromium, Platinum group, Asbestos, Tin, Nickel, Cadmium, Zinc, Mercury, Tungsten, Selenium and etc.), as they are necessary for industry and defense and these were available in this region.

However, the littoral States have their own differences over the external presence in the region.
THE REGIONAL STATES RESPONSE TO US MILITARISATION OF THE INDIAN OCEAN

With the entry of external powers in the Indian Ocean region, the littoral and hinterland States faced problems, which compromised their sovereignty. The Indian Ocean possesses forty five littoral and hinterland states. The region was under the control of the British till the 1950s. In 1960s when the British naval supremacy declined, a 'power vacuum' came into being in the region. The Super Powers wanted to fill the vacuum but the majority of the littoral states opposed the presence of external powers in the region. However, the fact remains that though no State of the region is in a position to dominate the Indian Ocean, they tried to pressurise the international fora to foreclose the Super Powers from being involved in the region. They urged the United Nations community to declare Indian Ocean as a zone of peace. But some of the littoral States changed their stance on the presence of external powers in the region.

Littoral States and Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace

The Indian Ocean region has never had a single strategic stance, due its vast size, tri-continental dimensions and diversity, not only ethnic but also cultural. Most of the countries in the region have conflicts with neighbours viz. India and Pakistan, Pakistan and Afghanistan, Iran and Iraq, Iraq and Kuwait, Indonesia and Malaysia. Further, there is a difference of opinion amongst them regarding the presence of the great powers. Sri Lanka and Pakistan have serious misgivings about India; Iraq about Iran; and Singapore about Indonesia. They prefer the presence of the great powers to check the dominance of the regional powers. The idea of IOZIP first came from Sri Lanka, a littoral State in the Indian Ocean region. Sri Lanka later did not show much interest in implementing the peace zone in the Indian Ocean because of its apprehensions about India.

Sri Lanka emphasized that it was better to depend on some kind of a balance being established between the great powers to ensure that there was no hegemony of any one power. Sri Lanka with Singapore and Australia, called for a "balanced presence" of external powers in the region. Thus, the country which initiated the concept of IOZIP itself changed its stand because of its Indophobia. Sri Lanka, however, has consistently emphasized the need for denuclearisation of the entire Indian Ocean region as a prerequisite for making the region a zone of peace.
Pakistan entered into a military alliance with US in the 1950s, and has been supporting the US presence in the Indian Ocean. It maintained that in order to counter the USSR’s influence in the region, the US must remain in the region. It argues that by allowing US ships to ply in the region it would not become the monopoly of any external power. In 1974, the Pakistani Prime Minister, Z.A. Bhutto said that Pakistan had no objection to Diego Garcia being converted into an American base. Pakistan’s attitude towards Indian Ocean was governed by its suspicion of India. It was not happy calling the Ocean as "Indian Ocean" and wanted to call it "Afro Asian Ocean" or "Eastern Ocean".

Singapore justified the big powers presence in the region by saying that the presence of external powers' does not constitute a threat unless they are in a combat situation. Singapore felt that there was no logic in seeking the withdrawal of the great powers from the region. It said that there was no time in history that prevented the involvement of the States in international politics.

Australia is one of the important countries of the region. It did not oppose the US presence on Diego Garcia. It is important to note that Australia provided facilities for the US forces. The ANZUS (Australia, New Zealand and the US) treaty of 1951 which was to establish a programme of collective security among the three countries for mutual defence against aggression, further provided a strong link between Australia and the US. Australia did not treat the external powers involvement as a threat in the region. It argued that the maintenance of peace and security in the region depended on the cooperation among the countries of the region.

The four island States of the Western Indian Ocean region, Mauritius, Madagascar, the Comoros and Seychelles, supported the proposal of IOZP. Mauritius opposed the militarization of the Indian Ocean. It criticized the US military presence in Diego Garcia. It began to demand the return of the island of Diego Garcia. The US never agreed to give back the island to it. Mauritius claimed that France should give back Tromelin to it, as it was attached to its since 1826. France argued that Tromelin was never dependent
on Mauritius and so it could not be considered as an integral part of it. Madagascar criticized the French presence in the region. It claimed that the French should give back the Indian Ocean islands of Glorious, Juan de Nova, Europa, and Bassa da India, to it. The French, however, ignored the claim. Comoros had a dispute with France on Mayotte but France responded in similar vein as with Mauritius and Madagascar.

Middle East States supported the IOZP. They opposed the foreign domination in the region in 1970s. The Iranian domination in the region consequent to the Iran-Iraq war made the other countries to strengthen their defence to save their shipping, oil and military facilities. The Iranian-backed coup attempt in Bahrain and terrorist attacks in Kuwait demonstrated their concern regarding Iran and its intentions in the region. The Persian gulf States and Saudi Arabia moved closer to the US and started obtaining sophisticated equipment. The Persian gulf States felt the need of the Western countries presence in the region to curtail the dominance of Iran in the region. Thus, despite their support to the IOZP in the UN General Assembly, they were developing security relations with the foreign countries.

India’s response

India’s policy towards the presence of the external powers in the Indian Ocean was not consistent. At times India ignored the USSR’s activities in the region. In the beginning of 1950s India was not aware of the extra regional powers’s activities in the region because of its deep concern with domestic problems. When the US Seventh Fleet entered the Indian Ocean, in 1963, India did not criticize. In the beginning India did not protest against the US-British agreement of 1966 which facilitated the US to have control on Diego Garcia. Indira Gandhi, who became the Prime Minister of India in 1969, started opposing the US involvement only after the 1971 crisis in the sub Continent. The US Fleet entry into the Bay of Bengal in 1971 shocked India and it acted as a catalyst for this stance of India vis-a-vis the US.

India did not want to allow any external power involvement in the region. However, it made it clear that it was not the concern of India alone but all littoral States needed to jointly resist the external military presence in the region. Probably India wanted to indicate that it did not have any hegemonic
Intentions in the region. The Indian government, under the Congress party (1969-1977 & 1980-1988) criticized the US presence and ignored the Soviet presence. The Soviet Union had planned to construct a naval base at Berbera in Somalia (1969). India’s reaction to the base at Berbera differed from its reaction to the one on Diego Garcia. It did not equate the Somali-Soviet agreement as an example of neo-colonialism as it did the US-British agreement on Diego Garcia. Its argument was that the former agreement was between two independent States and the latter, a diplomatic bargain between two external powers.

The external military presence in the Indian Ocean was a great threat to India’s security. The US maintained Rapid Deployment Force in the Indian Ocean which could threaten India at any time. Its access to other facilities such as Masirah island in Oman, the Egyptian air naval base at Ras Banas, and Mombasa in Kenya could also pose a threat to India.

India has to protect its 5,700 kms coastline. The external military presence in the region is not only a threat to India’s security but also poses a threat to its economic interest. It also constrains its legitimate role in the region. India imports two third of its crude oil from the gulf region and hence it has to protect its oil routes. It’s merchant marine possess 890 vessels of a total 6,516,780 tons traversing the Indian Ocean region and thus is dependent on the sea for its trade. India imports natural gas and sulphur from West Asia and it exports tea, tobacco, spices, vegetables, fruit, meat, jute, iron, ore, engineering goods, leather, medicines and defense equipment to West Asia.

India possesses the largest Exclusive Economic Zone (587,600 nautical miles) in the region and it has to protect its economic interests. India obtained the status of a pioneer nation in 1987 and acquired 150,000 sq kms of sea bed from the UN Sea bed authority for mining in the central Indian Ocean which is only 240 miles away from Diego Garcia. Thus it is necessary for India to strengthen its navy to defend its economic and strategic interests.

Before coming to power in 1977, the Janata Party set out its foreign policy and stated that it would maintain equi distance between the US and
USSR. The Janata government appealed to the Super Powers to foreclose their military presence in the region. It never mentioned Diego Garcia by name nor demanded the US to withdraw its presence in the region. Indian government opined that it did not consider Diego Garcia as a bilateral problem between India and the US and it maintained that the rivalry between the Super Powers must be solved at bilateral talks between them. It did not want to confront the US by opposing the latters’ military presence in the region. When the Congress party once again came to power under the leadership of Indira Gandhi in 1980, it reiterated its earlier stand i.e. its confrontation with the US presence in the region vis-a-vis the USSR.

India’s attitude towards the Soviet presence in the region under Indira Gandhi was different, because Indira Gandhi government had cordial relationship with the USSR. The Soviet Union helped India in Indo-Pakistan war of 1971, and supported Indira during emergency period. In the West, India was considered as a pro-Soviet State. India’s policy could be justified on the ground that India reckoned with the Soviet presence as a counter to the US presence in the Indian Ocean. The reasons for India’s opposition to the US presence in the region were:
a. India’s opposition to colonialism and imperialism, justified its opposition to external power presence in the region;
b. US presence was treated as a threat to its interests; c. US failure to recognize India as a major regional power, and India’s desire to project its power in the region; and
d. India’s feeling that the US was responsible for the arms race in the region, and the concomitant need for it to divert its resources to bolster its defence.

THE POLITICS OF US MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO PAKISTAN: INDIA’S RESPONSE

Pakistan, since its entry to the US sponsored military alliance, became dependent on the US for its security requirements. The US’ motive in giving aid was associated with the exigencies of the cold war and the ideological divide between it and the USSR.

The US’s induction of arms to the region in the 1950s and 60s was to counter the emergence of communism. In the 1962 war the US provided military
aid to India to counter Chinese attack. In 1965, both India and Pakistan were involved in a war. At this juncture, the US supplied arms to Pakistan to contain communism and not for use against India. However, Pakistan used military equipment, which it received from the US, against India.

During 1971 war, the US supplied arms to Pakistan and involved itself in sending US Seventh Fleet to the Bay of Bengal. This was the first time the US supported and got involved in the conflict. In 1975 the US lifted the embargo on both countries. However in 1979, the US failed to pressurise Pakistan to place all its reactors for international scrutiny. In April 1979, the US declared that it would not accord military aid to Pakistan, however the crisis in Afghanistan made the US to change its stance vis-a-vis Pakistan.

When the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in 1979, the Carter administration announced a $400 million ($200 million economic aid and $200 million military aid) to Pakistan. However, Pakistan refused to accept the offer because the aid was inadequate to fight against the Soviet forces. India's concern as regards the US military aid to Pakistan was low key as long as Carter was in power, since he, unlike Nixon, recognised India's pre-eminence in the region.

In 1981 Ronald Reagan assumed office in the US. He, unlike his democratic predecessor, and like Nixon was inclined to give both economic and military aid to Pakistan. He realized the importance of Pakistan not only to counter Soviet expansion but also to facilitate easy access of oil from the Middle East and to legitimize the US presence in the Indian Ocean. Pakistan being strategically close to the Gulf, was a key factor in facilitating cordial relations between the US and the Gulf State. Pakistan agreed to receive the $3.2 billion aid offered by the Reagan administration. Pakistan, finally, succeeded in getting more aid from the US, since 1981.

After the Soviet Union's intervention in Afghanistan on 27 December 1979, there was a shift in the US military aid policy to Pakistan. The Reagan administration unlike the earlier administration was willing to give any type of weapons demanded by Pakistan. The US agreed to sell 40 F-16 aircraft to Pakistan in 1982.
The F-16 aircraft had greater technological superiority and brought a number of Indian cities within its strike range. The deployment of F-16s could destroy India's airfields, oil and nuclear installation, military depots and some cities.

The US supply of F-16s disturbed India's position as the dominant power in the region. India reckoned that the US placement of such sophisticated weapons system in the hands of Pakistan was a threat to India's status. The 40 F-16 aircraft, which were delivered in two phases i.e. 6 aircraft in January 1983 and remaining by the end of 1984, could neither counter Soviet aggression nor domestic insurgency. India maintained that being confident in its military potential, it was not afraid of a threat from Pakistan but its worry was due to the irrational induction of sensitive and sophisticated equipment in the sub-Continent.

Reagan overlooked India's criticism regarding the supply of arms to Pakistan. Pakistan had become more important to the US - strategic interest due to its close proximity to the Persian Gulf and China. India opposed the US decision of supplying F-16 to Pakistan which was offensive. Since Pakistan had become a front line State against the Soviet Union, the US argued that it was its duty to supply arms to Pakistan. The US maintained that its military aid to Pakistan would not disturb India's superiority in the region. However, Indian government informed the US that such assessment was not true, since without the supply of arms to Pakistan, Indian and Pakistani forces on their common frontier were nearly at par in sophistication.

The tanks and 155 mm Howitzers which Pakistan obtained from the US could not be used in the mountains but could be used in the plains against India. India opposed the US interference in the region which disturbed the natural balance of power in South Asia. It's argument was that if Pakistan possessed highly sophisticated weapons, aircraft such as F-16, India would be compelled to increase its budget allocations for defense. The supply of arms to Pakistan by the US was seen as offensive rather than a defensive action because they were deployed on the Indian border rather than on the Afghanistan border.
Pakistan played along with the US's anti Soviet strategy to get US weapons for use against India. Pakistan never tried to impress upon India that the arms procured from the US would not be used against it. The US, however, tried to impress upon India that its commitment to Pakistan was limited to fight Soviet aggression. If the US was interested to solve the Afghanistan crisis, it should not have concentrated on enhancing arms aid to Pakistan. It was practically not possible for Pakistan to counter a Soviet attack. The US should have tried to solve the problem through negotiations.

India's procuring of arms had been to balance the Chinese and Pakistani arms build-up. Its purpose of arms acquisition was not to become a military power but to protect its territory, integrity and sovereignty. If its intention was to become a military power, it would have started its defence procurement since its independence in 1947.

US AND INDIA: THE POLITICS OF THE NUCLEAR ISSUE

The US advocates horizontal non-proliferation whereas India wants to halt both vertical and horizontal nuclear proliferation. India believes that real security can be possible only through global disarmament and not by disarming the have not nations. South Asia has become a major test case for the US nuclear non-proliferation policy. India considered the Nuclear non-Proliferation Treaty as discriminatory, that divided the nations into two categories, the 'nuclear haves' and the 'have nots'.

Tarapur issue

The US and India concluded an agreement in Washington on 8 August 1963 for cooperation concerning the civil uses of atomic energy. However, after India tested a nuclear device in 1974 the US contemplated stopping supply of fuel to India.

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act of 1978 imposed two restrictions according to which countries seeking nuclear supplies were a. to accept IAEA safeguards on all its nuclear facilities and b. refrain from manufacturing or acquiring any nuclear explosive devices. However, due to revolution in Iran and Afghanistan crisis in 1979, the US decided to supply two consignments for which request were submitted to the US in September 1978 and August 1979.
However, in 1981 the US decided to arrange a surrogate supplier to Tarapur i.e. France. As a result, on 26 November 1982, India and France signed an agreement for the supply of fuel to the Tarapur Atomic Plant. Under this deal France agreed to sell 200 tons of low enriched Uranium to Tarapur every year in lieu of the US supply within the framework of the 1963 agreement. Thus India was able to get fuel without placing all its nuclear reactors under the IAEA safeguards.

INDIA'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS NPT

The NPT was signed on 1 June 1968 and came into force on 5 March 1970. The treaty recognised a nuclear weapon State (NWS) as one which exploded a nuclear weapon or nuclear device prior to 1 January 1967. Under this clause US, USSR, UK, France and China are considered as NWSs. The rest of the countries have been branded as non-nuclear weapon States (NNWSs). The treaty restricts the NNWSs from developing nuclear weapons or nuclear bombs.

Its rejection of the treaty centered around the following:

a. the treaty was framed by two Super Powers and not by the Eighteen Nations Disarmament Committee, which was the real representative involved in international relations.

b. the treaty failed to provide equal treatment between the NWSs and NNWSs. The former only agreed to negotiate to reduce their nuclear arsenals where as the NNWSs were required not to develop nuclear weapons.

c. the treaty did not oppose the NWSs manufacturing arms but did not allow the NNWSs to pursue nuclear programme even for peaceful purposes.

d. the treaty violates Article I and II of the UN Charter, which envisage effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace in the World and the principle of the sovereign equality of all its members.

e. the NWSs violate the Article IV of the treaty which envisages that the NWSs shall not transfer or encourage the NNWSs to involve in nuclear programme.

India considers all States to be equal. It does not believe in dividing the States into 'nuclear haves' and 'nuclear have nots'. It maintained that the NNWSs must be given legal security against the use of nuclear weapons by
of the NWSs. Besides, the treaty being discriminatory, in nature, the Chinese threat to Indian security cannot be ruled out.

India’s Peaceful Nuclear Explosion

India was shocked when the US sent its US Seventh Fleet into the Bay of Bengal in 1971, during the Indo-Pak war. It realised the importance of developing a nuclear programme and conducted a nuclear test at Pokhran on 18 May 1974 to develop nuclear technology for the peaceful uses of atomic energy. It was a peaceful test which was conducted 107 meters below ground surface. There was no radiation in the atmosphere. The explosion was part of the research and development work. Though India maintained that the 1974 test was a peaceful nuclear explosion, with the test, India clearly proved to the world that it had the ability, like the NWS to test a nuclear device. Had it conducted the test before the NPT was signed in 1968 it could have got the status of NWS, or should have developed nuclear infrastructure before testing, so that it could have avoided its dependence on external supplies for Tarapur Plant.

Indira Gandhi was the main architect of keeping India’s nuclear options open for defence and security. She was more of a realist than an idealist. She understood the national problems i.e. strategic and defence, unlike Morarji Desai, the Janata government Prime Minister (1977), who made statements with moralistic overtones.

When Rajiv Gandhi became the Prime Minister on the death of Indira Gandhi in 1984, he too followed the policies of his predecessor i.e. opposing the NPT, and keeping India’s nuclear options open. He suggested a time bound Action Plan for global disarmament.

India’s view on NWFZ

India’s stand on NWFZ was inconsistent. It supported all proposals to establish the NWFZs in various parts of the world and rejected the NWFZ proposal in South Asia. It also errred by supporting the NWFZ proposal in other regions in 1960s, (Africa, Latin America), because this proposal prevented vertical and allowed horizontal proliferation which is very much against its nuclear policy.
The US has been trying to prevent India from obtaining nuclear status. India strongly advocates global disarmament where as the US wants to maintain supremacy over the non nuclear weapon states. The US views the nuclear issue from a global perspective where as India perceives its policy mostly at the regional level. Thus the US and India have differences in their approach as regards the nuclear policy.

OBSERVATIONS

The US basically could not withstand power dominance of the USSR at global level or India at the regional level. India as a middle power wanted to follow an independent foreign policy. The US which sought to become a global power could not tolerate India's independent stance. The US wanted to keep India weak because it did not want India to dominate the South Asian region to challenge American policies. Also it did not wish to see India trapped under the communist power bloc. Thus the billion dollars of economic aid provided by the US to India during the cold war period was simply a device to prevent India from following the foot prints of communist power bloc as the US afraid of the erstwhile USSR or China gaining dominance in South Asia.

Till 1950s and 60s the main target of the US was to contain international communism. This was the reason why the US supported and gave military aid to India in the 1962 Sino-Indian conflict and placed military embargo on both India and Pakistan in 1965 when both were involved in a war.

The US helped India in 1962 war only to make India its client or satellite and did not seek to help India to become an independent country. It also wanted to prevent India from coming under the influence of China or the USSR. During this time, the US forced India to have negotiations with Pakistan on the Kashmir issue, without reckoning India's problem with China. It revealed that even after the military embargo of 1965, there was a huge supply of arms to Pakistan by the US.

After 1971 crisis in East Pakistan, the US pronounced that it recongised India's pre-eminent position in South Asia. At the same time, the US warned India not to weaken Pakistan further. The US was concerned about Pakistan and
Nixon spell out the limits of India’s claim to become a regional power. Nixon said that it was his country’s responsibility to protect the interest of Pakistan because the US had security agreements with Pakistan. The US aim to contain India was not because the latter had relationship with the USSR but because of India’s pre-eminence as a powerful country in the region.

The US presence in the Indian Ocean was not to fight against the Soviet presence in the region but to protect its interests. The USSR did not compete with the US military presence in the region and there was no rivalry between them. The US’s main interest was to safeguard its oil interests and to have a strong hold in the region. In order to justify this, it linked up its presence with that of the Soviet Union presence.

The US military aid to Pakistan could be asserted in relation to its desire to contain India in the region. Pakistan never tried to contain either China or the USSR. The nature of military equipment supplied by the US to Pakistan was essentially to bring about parity between India and Pakistan and to contain the former’s power position in the region. The US maintained that it was its duty to protect Pakistan’s sovereignty and integrity. This was reiterated since 1954 when Pakistan had become a member of the SEATO.

In sharp contrast the US gave no assurance to India as regard its sovereignty and integrity even when the latter was vulnerable to Chinese threat. Though it assured India in 1950s and 1960s when it supplied arms to Pakistan, it could not prevent Pakistan from using this equipment supplied, against India in 1965 war. Here it was not ideology that predominated action but the real politik of supporting countries, willing to act as satellite. In the 1960s Pakistan came closer to China, which was against the interest of the US. But the US did not take any steps to control Pakistan. The US and Pakistan alliance could be seen as directed only against India.

The US signed an agreement to supply enriched uranium for thirty years for the Tarapur Atomic Power Plant in 1963. However, when India conducted its nuclear test (for peaceful use of atomic energy) at Pokhran in May 1974, the US criticised it and later refused to supply enriched uranium to India. There after the US explanation was that India’s proliferation would affect the

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environment adversely and also it would encourage other States to expand nuclear weapons. However, the reason was that US could not tolerate India’s nuclear capability.

To counter communism, the US should not have built up an alliance with Pakistan. Pakistan did not use its aid to contain communism in the region. The US should have contained communism in the region by maintaining cordial relationship with both India and Pakistan, instead of inducting arms into the region.

The US which lost its influence in Vietnam in 1975 should have realized the fact that the regional affairs should not be globalised by intervention. The US, however, did not seem to have learned anything since the Vietnam war and again involved itself in the Afghanistan crisis by supplying arms to Pakistan.

In the post cold war period, the differences between the US and India will continue. The following observations merit consideration:

a. the strategic importance of Pakistan, after the cold war, is relevant to the US. Though there was no threat to US interests in the Middle East, the US has new challenges to face from Iran and Iraq. The emergence of ethnic groups and rise of Muslim fundamentalism and opposition to the Western culture, pose threat to the US interest. Pakistan, which is adjacent to the gulf, could play a neutralising role in this regard.

b. As India pursues an independent foreign policy, the US will not tolerate India’s power in South Asia. The contending issues like NPT and Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty are controversial between them. India opposes signing both treaties because they are discriminatory.

c. US can maintain its dominance in the Third world more in military than economic terms. It spends a lot of money on arms during the cold war. The possession of nuclear weapons are no more useful in the post cold war era. In order to compete with emerging economic giants such as Germany and Japan, it has to sell its weapons to the Third world. Since Pakistan is largely depending on arms from the US, the latter will encourage the former to buy arms from it. It’s recent decision to abrogate the Pressler amendment (which denied foreign aid to Pakistan because it attempted illegally to obtain
material or technology to build a nuclear weapon) to supply F-16 aircraft to Pakistan, will augment tension in the region.

d. The scenario has further worsened today with the reported deployment of the Ghauri missile on 6 April 1998 by Pakistan on the Indo-Pakistan border. This missile purportedly acquired by Pakistan with Chinese assistance will further dampen the ties between the two countries. In contrast to the euphoria built up by talks of cooperation, the ground realities more so due to the recent nuclear tests conducted by India on 11 and 13 May 1998 at Pokhran do not seem to augur well for peace and stability in the region.