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Redrawing India's Geostrategic Maps with China and the United States

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[*This comprehensive survey of India's growing military strength and geostrategic relationships involving China, the United States and Russia reveals the interplay between economic and military-nuclear power in a region that is doubly volatile, as the scene of recent nuclear breakthroughs and rapid changes in military and economy might. Noting the predominantly military character of the U.S.-Indian relationship, and the predominantly economic and resource-driven character of the unfolding China-Indian relationship, Lora Saalman raises important issues of regional development in an era of military insecurity. Japan Focus.*]

India has been revising its strategic maps with China and the United States, both literally and figuratively. During early spring of 2005, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao handed Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh a map reformatted to reflect the long-contested region of Sikkim as part of India. By summer, the United States handed India defense, nuclear, and space technology proposals, promising to transform more than just physical territory. Articles in India-based Bharat Rakshak Monitor attribute the warming of Sino-Indian ties as a means to counter the U.S. presence in Asia.[1] China's Party organ People's Daily (Renmin Ribao) asserts that strengthened Indo-U.S. relations are targeted at containing China's rise.[2] In these analyses, China and the United States are portrayed as focusing their strategic concerns squarely upon each other, while India maneuvers to secure political, economic and military benefits.

Yet, there remains a crucial and often missed difference between the Chinese and the U.S. approaches toward engaging India. China's current inducements for India primarily focus on economic integration and energy development. By contrast, the U.S. has made dual-use technology transfer the centerpiece of its engagement strategy. At India's level of technological sophistication, however, U.S. dual-use nuclear, space, and military cooperation promises to enhance India's political weight and military footprint in ways that are more likely to conflict with long-term U.S. strategic goals than with those of China. Rather than encircling China as the People's Daily foresees, the United States may instead be containing its own long-term interests.

China and the United States Engage India

On April 1, 2005, China and India took a symbolic step toward strategic cooperation as Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh issued the India-China Strategic and Cooperative Partnership for Peace and Prosperity.[3] This joint statement lauded the "global and strategic character" of Sino-Indian relations. It offered economic incentives for expanded cooperation, with the objective of nearly doubling bilateral trade to $20 billion by 2008. The two parties also announced the formation of a China-India Steering Committee on Scientific and Technical Cooperation in education, science, healthcare, tourism, cultural exchange, and agriculture. India and China provisionally resolved the long standing dispute over Sikkim and agreed to cooperate in developing foreign petroleum and natural gas resources.[4]

Only a few months later, on June 28th, India's Defense Minister Pranab Mukherjee met with U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld to sign the New Framework for the U.S.-India Defense Relationship.[5] This agreement set forth detailed measures involving joint military exercises, defense and technology trade, missile defense, and exchanges on defense strategy, and intelligence. On July 18th India's Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and U.S. President George W. Bush issued a joint statement, further expanding the scope of the existing India-U.S. Next Steps in Strategic Partnership (NSSP) and High Technology Cooperation Group (HTCG). The United States committed to signing a Science and Technology Framework Agreement, to building closer ties in space exploration, satellite navigation and launch, facilitating a U.S.-India Working Group on Civil Space Cooperation, and to removing certain Indian organizations from the Department of Commerce's Entity List. Most notably, the United States agreed to seek adjustment of U.S. laws for full civil nuclear cooperation and trade with India, including reactor fuel supplies, and to consult with its partners on India's participation in the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) and in the Generation IV International Forum.[6] These proposals are under debate in the U.S. Congress and will require amendment of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 and the Nuclear Nonproliferation Act of 1978, as well as the acquiescence of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) before full cooperation begins.[7] This time lag offers an opportunity to reflect on the impact of dual-use cooperation on India, China, and ultimately the United States.

U.S. Assistance, Indian Indigenization, and the Impact on China

In spite of emphasizing self-reliance in the wake of sanctions following its 1998 atomic tests, India is not new to foreign assistance.[8] Nor is India a novice in creating linkages between its civilian nuclear and space advances and its nuclear weapon and missile programs. India's initial nuclear test in 1974 utilized plutonium from its Canadian and ostensibly civilian Cirus nuclear reactor, while its 1989 launch of the first Agni ballistic missile comprised technology gained from the U.S. Scout satellite launcher. Similarly, the dual-use technology mentioned under the Indo-U.S. defense framework and joint statement may assist India in its ongoing pursuit of advances in nuclear weapons technology, longer range ballistic missiles, and submarine-launched ballistic missiles.

Indigenization and Nuclear Assistance

The most significant shift in U.S. policy brought on by the July 18th U.S.-Indian joint statement relates to dual-use nuclear cooperation. India has already managed to parlay decades of Russian, U.S., German, and French assistance into what is now a robust indigenous civilian and military nuclear program. While nuclear power only occupies an estimated 3.3 to 5 percent of India's energy production, India is actively pursuing nuclear power development with important civilian as well as military implications.[9] In October 2004, India launched the commercial phase of its 500 MWe Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor (PFBR) at Kalpakkam.[10] Four more such fast reactors have been announced for construction by 2020. During April 2005, the Bhabha Atomic Research Center (BARC) also commissioned an Integral Test Loop (ITL) to simulate the main heat transport system and safety system of the thorium-based Advanced Heavy Water Reactor (AHWR).[11]

For uranium-poor and thorium-rich India,[12] the development of thorium-fed fast breeder reactors makes it even less susceptible to the vagaries of international fuel supply and sanctioning. Fast breeder reactors produce more than they consume, offering India a steady and renewable future supply of weapons grade fuel. AHWRs in particular burn thorium/U-233 oxide producing spent fuel that can be reprocessed.[13] India's PFBR at Kalpakkam and its Kamini 40 MWt Fast Breeder Test Reactor (FBTR) both breed U-233.[14] While less of a proliferation risk due to its high radioactivity, U-233 has fissile properties comparable to U-235 used for nuclear weapons production.[15] India's recent technical developments suggest that it has made significant strides towards mastering, indigenizing, and expanding the scope of its nuclear fuel cycle.

However, not all components of India's nuclear program are moving forward. David Albright, executive director of the Institute of Science and International Security (ISIS), and Henry Sokolski, executive director of the Nonproliferation Policy Education Center, have pointed to India's less than proven track record in successfully operating its fast breeder reactors and reprocessing plants.[16] This is where U.S. technological assistance to India's civilian nuclear program can offer a degree of streamlining for both India's civilian and, by extension, military nuclear programs. Fusion technology, whether garnered through the ITER project or under the U.S.-India Energy Dialogue, could help overcome some of India's civilian and military technological gaps.[17] India's alleged failed detonation of a thermonuclear weapon during its multiple 1998 tests is just one such lacuna.[18] Fusion technology not only has applications in thermonuclear weapons, but also could assist in nuclear warhead miniaturization to extend missile launch range and payload capacity. This will enable India to produce a higher nuclear yield and to successfully mount its nuclear weapons on missiles to fly greater distances.

Beyond hypothetical assistance and rhetoric, as of August 30, 2005, the United States has already removed Tarapur (TAPS 1 and 2), Rajasthan (RAPS 1 and 2), and Kudankulam (1 and 2) from the U.S. Entity List, mitigating export licensing requirements.[19] For these particular reactors, assistance will be monitored under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards. However, for other reactors and facilities demarcating the dividing line between civilian and military use will be a tedious, and many Indian and U.S. analysts suggest impossible, process. Although management of the AHWR unveiled in August 2005 has been ostensibly transferred to the civilian Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB), the unit has the ability to produce U-233 that can be reprocessed for nuclear weapons. Furthermore, it was designed by BARC, a known contributor to India's nuclear weapons program.[20] Due to the overlap between India's civilian and military programs, there remains the potential for diversion of technology, equipment, and potentially even materials to nuclear weapons programs.

Nuclear Impact on China

Whether U.S.-assisted or indigenous, India's nuclear advances carry strategic weight for Sino-Indian relations. Both countries espouse a nuclear doctrine based on minimum deterrence. Yet, India continues to engage in fissile material production to augment its stockpile. The 2005 edition of the book Deadly Arsenals has already expanded its Indian weapons estimates to 75-110 nuclear devices.[21] ISIS further provides an indication of India's capabilities for future nuclear arsenal expansion, estimating in August 2005 that India possesses a total of between 13.9 and 14.9 metric tons of civilian and military highly enriched uranium (HEU) and plutonium (Pu).[22]

In comparison, China has stopped fissile material production, but is believed to have a sufficient stockpile, estimated at 31.1 civilian and military metric tons of HEU and Pu[23] to double or triple its current arsenal of approximately 400 nuclear weapons.[24] Despite the current differential, there is nothing in the U.S.-India joint statement that suggests India will be constrained in its current fissile material build-up. Any future commitments to a contentious Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty aside, India has repeatedly stated that it will continue to build up its plutonium stockpile until it reaches a level that provides a strategic comfort zone vis-à-vis China and Pakistan. If India continues to expand its fissile material stockpile and receives U.S. technological and material transfers, China's willingness and incentive to maintain a freeze on its own fissile material production may erode. This could lead to intensified efforts by China to assist Pakistan's weapons programs, to expand its own arsenal, or both.

In the meantime, China's current nuclear capabilities, stockpile, and arsenal gives it the edge over India. If India maintains its stance of minimum deterrence, it is unlikely to attempt to surpass China's nuclear strength. Instead, U.S. nuclear assistance to India has a greater potential for proliferation ricochet to other countries. Among suppliers, Britain quickly followed the U.S.-India joint statement in July by announcing its decision to modify its own sanctions against India in August.[25] Russia voiced its own approval in September with its sights set on legitimizing its nuclear trade with India and, by extension, Iran.[26] After winning a deal to supply India with 6 submarines and 43 Airbus planes, France also acknowledged and pledged to work within the NSG for "full international cooperation with India in the civilian nuclear

field."[27] Pakistan also staked its own claim in September with its ambassador to the United States, a former Army chief, stating that the U.S. deal with India "should leave the door open for other countries that meet the same criteria."[28] As Iran, North Korea, and countless others witness acceptance of and the benefits accrued by a country that has rejected the NPT and tested nuclear weapons, voluntary nuclear freezes on incipient nuclear weapons programs or fissile material production may vanish for more parties than just China.

Indigenization and Ballistic Missile Assistance

Dual-use space technology cooperation under the India-U.S. joint statement will also help India upgrade systems with military potential that were originally established using U.S. and Russian transfers as a base. As early as December 2001, the U.S. National Intelligence Council (NIC) issued a report that India could convert its Polar Space Launch Vehicle (PSLV) into an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) within a year or two.[29] In May 2003, India launched its second Geostationary Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV), hoisting a 1,800 kg payload, the "heaviest payload ever launched from Indian soil."[30]

India has demonstrated the technical ability in its space program to domestically manufacture cryogenic engines, develop solid-propelled missiles for more rapid deployment, deliver significant payloads, and create staged missiles for longer-range ballistic missile launches. These advances do not make future U.S. assistance obsolete, rather they indicate a much faster rate of absorption, reverse engineering, and improvements if such technology is transferred. U.S. supercomputer technology, which can be used in nuclear weapon and missile design, is just one of the types of transfers that promises to assist India's burgeoning supercomputer industry.[31]

Under Phase I of the NSSP, by the end of 2004, the United States has already agreed to provide India's Saha Institute of Nuclear Physics with a Cray XD1 supercomputer, equipped with 96 computer processors capable of over 422 billion calculations per second.[32] In April 2005, India's Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR) also announced a partnership with U.S. company Hewlett Packard to implement High Performance Computing (HPC) solutions at its Computational Mathematics Laboratory (CML).[33] In any number of technologies relating to space and nuclear programs, the United States can offer India technology relating to computer simulations, as well as missile launch, staging, guidance, and range.

Beyond hypothetical developments and rhetoric, in September 2004, the United States removed India's Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) from the Department of Commerce Entity List.[34] By August 2005, the United States also removed several key ISRO subsidiaries, including ISRO Telemetry, Tracking and Command Network (ISTRAC), ISRO Inertial Systems Unit (IISU), and Space Applications Center (SAC).[35] ISRO as the parent organization is responsible for the gamut of India's space launch vehicles that possess the same technology as applied in ballistic missile launch, guidance, and tracking. The three ISRO subsidiaries focus on satellite technology, such as high-resolution commercial imaging that can be used in missile targeting accuracy and digital inertial navigation systems that can be used in Post Boost Vehicles (PBVs) to enhance ballistic missile accuracy on reentry. U.S. fusion technology may also be applied to super-conductive magnets employed in strategic military developments in outer space and ballistic missile defense. U.S. technology will contribute to a space program that has tremendous military potential not only in missile development, but also in the weaponization of space.[36]

Ballistic Missile Impact on China

India is highly motivated to expand its missile program, not only to counter threats from its neighbors but also to strengthen its regional competitiveness and boost its scientific and international prestige. China poses a distant strategic threat to India, while Pakistan's barrage of tactical and strategic missile improvements keeps India occupied in an immediate contest. Pakistan's test of its nuclear-capable Babur cruise missile less than a month after India announced mass production of the Brahmos cruise missile is a recent example.[37] Predictably, an Indian Defense Ministry official stated that the Babur looks like a repainted Chinese missile.[38] Prasun K. Sengupta has further alleged in the magazine New Delhi Force that China's state-owned China National Precision Machinery Import and Export Corp (CPMIEC) transferred this technology to Pakistan's state-owned National Development Complex (NDC).[39] Bilateral Indo-Pakistani competition, which India continues to view as fueled by China, has led the two countries to advance their ballistic missile ranges well beyond each others borders.[40]

One significant measure of India's missile program is its ability to target Chinese cities. In April 1999, India first test-fired its Agni-II, whose range of more than 2,000 km[41] enables it to reach China's ancient capital of Xi'an. With a test launch of the 3,000-3,500 km-range Agni-III anticipated by the end of 2005, India is rapidly approaching the range necessary to reach China's capital Beijing with a nuclear payload.[42] In spite of delays and concerns over the speed of its missile development, such as postponement of a test in 2003,[43] India appears ready to make the next leap towards an Agni-III on the basis of indigenous resources. And regardless of pronouncements on Indian PSLV capabilities, the ICBM dubbed Surya remains a source of mere speculation at this stage.[44] U.S. assistance to India's space program, especially in guidance and staging, could play a critical role in enabling it to achieve the next level of accuracy and range, and in acquiring ICBM capabilities that would effectively start to bring not only China but also the U.S. and its allies into range.

3. India's Agni-II missile

Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missile Indigenization and Assistance

U.S.-Indian cooperation in the transfer of conventional military hardware and dual-use technology also promises a boost to India's military modernization. The Soviet Union traditionally dominated this trade, providing India with Foxtrot Class submarines in 1968 and a Charlie Class nuclear powered submarine in 1988.[45] Russia continued this trend throughout the 1990s and by April 2004, concluded a lease agreement

to supply India two Akula-II class nuclear submarines.[46] Yet there have been increasing reports of Russian submarine mishaps and the quality of Russian naval vessels sold to India has been less than optimal, with the aircraft carrier Admiral Gorshkov requiring significant retrofitting.[47] While still central, the Russian Navy is rapidly becoming an outmoded supplier for India's naval modernization.[48]

Currently, India has a total of approximately 15 submarines, 10 of them diesel-powered, known as the EKM or Sindhu class. Among the missile systems, India has sought to launch the short-range Sagarika or Prithvi-III from a submarine base. Indian analysts boast that the system will offer India a second strike capability against Pakistan while serving as a long-range nuclear deterrent. These analyses suggest an expansion of missile range to 2,500 kilometers.[49] A modest 300 km test in October 2004 suggests, however, that the Sagarika has a long way to go before developing into a long-range strategic nuclear deterrent.[50] Since its inception in 1992, the Sagarika missile program, like India's submarine program, has suffered numerous delays.[51]

India's Sagarika and submarine programs could benefit from U.S. conventional military equipment transfers and space-related technology transfers, invigorating India's pursuit of the final leg of its nuclear triad.[52] However, aside from anticipated naval drills and potential transfer of the outdated USS Trenton,[53] there is little current indication of U.S. support for India's naval programs. In naval terms not much has changed from the Cold War. Although a joint naval exercise is scheduled for late September 2005, U.S. naval sales continue to show a greater inclination toward Pakistan, which is destined, according to a September 2005 media report, to receive two U.S. frigate warships and eight P-3C Orion Patrol aircraft.[54] India remains dependent on Russian assistance as with the Akula-II. The relative lack of U.S. focus on India's naval development may demonstrate that China is not the only country leery of India's ability to dominate the Indian Ocean.

Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missile Impact on China

Of all the potential theaters for conflict, the Indian Ocean is the most likely locus of Chinese, Indian and U.S. contention.[55] India's Ministry of Defense report of 2003-2004 pinpointed Chinese development of a blue water navy, enhanced ties with India's neighbors, and growing presence in the South China Sea and Indian Ocean as emerging challenges.[56] Access to sea lanes will grow in importance as competition accelerates for oil and military and trade routes. Deployment of a submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM), especially an intermediate range one, would assist India in gaining depth, flexibility, and second-strike capability in its targeting of Pakistani and Chinese territory. An SLBM could also play a tactical role if short in range and conventional in payload. Yet, India's nuclear submarine and Sagarika program, which both began in the early 1990s, have been slow in meeting the advancing demands of regional development and security. The Sagarika has yet to prove itself as a strategic deterrent with the range to strike within China's borders.

Like India, China has been struggling with building its own submarine fleet with reports of fire, leakage, and accidents. China's submarine force currently consists of four Kilo attack submarines from Russia, an indigenous diesel Song attack submarine, five Han nuclear attack submarines, and one nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine known as the Xia.[57] The U.S. Department of Defense in its Annual Report on the Military Power of the People's Republic of China suggests that China's next-generation nuclear submarine programs are likely to receive a "significant amount" of Russian assistance.[58] By contrast, India will have access to not only Russian technology and equipment but also U.S., European, and Middle Eastern sources. The delayed but much-anticipated arrival of the Scorpene submarine from France is just one example.[59] Even if the European Arms Embargo on China were to be lifted, China would continue to face U.S.-initiated obstacles to suppliers.

4. Chinese submarine

Despite increased naval competition, India and China are not necessarily on a collision course for resources and access to shipping lanes in the Indian Ocean. Chinese and Indian companies are already partners in Sudan's Greater Nile Oil Project.[60] They also plan to cooperate in a joint $4 billion oil pipeline project with Iran following establishment in April 2005 of a Joint Working Group for joint projects in oil exploration and notification.[61] India and China are also actively cooperating in regional energy transport links. India's petroleum minister, Mani Shankar Aiyar, following India's recent loss of a bid to China for Kazakhstan's third-largest oil producer PetroKazakhstan Inc. stressed the "need for China and India to adopt a collaborative approach in bidding."[62] China also has the incentive to cooperate with India to avoid a "Malacca Dilemma," through which India or another country blocks China's access to oil imports from the Middle East and Africa.[63] Indeed, India and China are expected to sign memorandums of understanding in November 2005 focusing on oil exploration and development in the Caspian Sea region, Central Asia, Africa and Latin America on behalf of India's Oil and Natural Gas Commission (ONGC) and the Indian Oil Corporation and China's Sinopec, China National Petroleum Corporation, and China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC).[64] The agreements not only promise to solidify their economic and resource cooperation but indicate the expanded geographic reach of both nations.

Sino-Indian Realities Versus Perceptions

United States conventional military cooperation, combined with missile assistance in the guise of space technology, has the potential to strengthen India's quest for parity with China. In the near-term, however, China is likely to dominate militarily. This assessment is based on qualitative improvements and a defense expenditure that is twice to four times that of India's, depending on whether Chinese or U.S. estimates are used.[65] Despite U.S. efforts to hinder its military growth, China remains engaged in extensive military modernization, with a declared military budget of $29.9 billion for 2004.[66] China has announced increases in military spending nearly every year for more than a decade, with U.S. estimates for China's modernization even higher. These advances, in line with China's rapid economic growth, highlight the difficulties that India will face should it seek to "catch-up" to China.

Depending on which Chinese defense figure is used for comparison, India's own growth in military spending, while a strong 27 percent increase reaching approximately $17.6 billion for the period from 2004 to 2005, is at best a little over half that of China.[67] However, there is one area in which India is rapidly gaining speed: procurement. According to an August 2005 U.S. Congressional Research Service report, India ranked first in the world in the value of arms transfer agreements from all countries by $500 million between 1997 and 2004.[68] In 2004 alone, India ranked first in this area among all developing nations weapons purchasers, with $5.7 billion in such agreements.[69] The U.S. is the world leader in arms sales to developing nations with deliveries estimated at $9.7 billion in 2004.[70] Even if India does not buy U.S. wares, it enjoys the long-term negotiation and planning leverage that China lacks. India's nuclear and missile program quest for indigenization has

been supplemented by pursuit of supplier diversification.

In spite of incitements to react, the Chinese government response to the U.S.-Indian joint statement and defense agreement of 2005 has been relatively muted. China has focused more on threats posed by the United States than those created by a well-armed or technologically-advanced India. In fact, Chinese popular and official media portray India as a developing nation that has been duped by the United States. The People's Daily cloaks its views behind unnamed "analysts" (fenxizhe) to say that the U.S.-Indian defense framework and joint statement have expanded U.S. efforts to encircle and contain China.[71] It also lambastes U.S. hypocritical assistance to India, in light of U.S. tandem efforts to convince Iran and North Korea to abandon their nuclear programs and to pressure Europe to maintain its arms embargo against China.[72]

China adds India to a long list of countries or territories, including Taiwan, Japan, South Korea, Kazakhstan, and Afghanistan, that have been incorporated into expansive U.S. strategic, military and economic frameworks directed toward containing China. China's own policies of establishing regional cooperative groups like the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and its growing cooperative relationships with ASEAN and Indian Ocean nations may be understood in part as efforts to create patterns of regional solidarity to forestall this perceived U.S. encirclement. India's observer status in the SCO combined with its attendance at August 2005 Sino-Russian military exercises, euphemistically dubbed "Peace Mission 2005," are indicative of Chinese efforts at inclusive diplomacy, keeping its partners close and potential adversaries even closer: economically, politically, and increasingly militarily.[73]

In 2003, China and India engaged in unprecedented naval exercises as a major step toward military confidence building measures at a time when they were beginning to undertake joint energy programs.[74] Articles on future Indian participation with China and Russia in SCO military exercises also fuel speculation of counterbalancing U.S. hegemony.[75] There is abundant evidence that China seeks to strengthen its economic, political, cultural, and even military ties with India to pre-empt U.S. incorporation of yet another state at its borders. Yet, India and China also share concerns ranging from energy development to trade in the Indian Ocean and elsewhere, suggesting that the United States is significant but not the only driving force in their desire to cultivate cooperation over competition.

India has made a major strategic shift in its perceptions of China, from the time when officials such as former Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee and former Defense Minister George Fernandes cited China as the primary impetus behind India's nuclear tests and Agni missile program.[76] Recognizing the potentially adverse effects on Sino-Indian economic and political relations, Indian authors and politicians alike have been extremely careful to emphasize that cooperation with the United States does not target China. India's Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has repeatedly stated variations of the following: "We see new horizons in our relations with China. What we have done with the United States is not at the cost of China or any other country."[77]

At the same time, Indian authors are cautious not to exaggerate the warming trend in Sino-Indian relations. While Chinese articles tend to discount the threat posed by India, for Indian strategic analysts China remains a source of concern for perceived designs on regional hegemony. The 1962 India-China conflict still looms in the writings of many Indian analysts. The litany of Indian articles on China's contributions to Pakistan's Babur missile illustrates ongoing perceptions of China using a regional proxy to threaten India. India maintains a complex combination of emulation and distrust when it comes to China.[78] Emulation for China's rate of growth and ability as a developing country to place itself on the geopolitical map. Distrust over China's growing economic and military strength, and expansive diplomacy, focused on discussion of its "real intentions".[79] In addition to the anticipated technological benefits gained from cooperating with the United States, India seeks a counterweight even as it pursues cooperative relations with China.

China also serves as an asset for India in its efforts to cultivate stronger relations and inducements from the United States. U.S. relations with Pakistan and historical assistance to its military programs during the Cold War mark Indian perceptions of questionable U.S. loyalties and unreliability. Even with the economic and technological gains contained in the joint statement with the United States, numerous Indian articles lament that India's defense and arms relationship with the United States is tantamount to selling off the Indian Ocean, relinquishing its nuclear autonomy, and constraining its future fissile material production. India prides itself on preserving its position as an independent actor and continues to be acutely sensitive to discrimination or power politics.[80] Continued Indian efforts to promote multilateralism with China and Russia, while courting the United States, suggests Indian wariness not only towards China but also towards the United States.

Conclusion

For both China and the United States, cooperation with India is emblematic of India's growing political, economic and military strength. Among the many goals of issuing a joint statement with India, the United States may have designs on bolstering India vis-à-vis China.[81] If this is the case, however, the effect may prove to be the reverse. China has been pushed to accelerate and expand its own incentives, in part, to avoid United States entrenchment in another country on its borders. Similarly, the United States is compelled by China's actions to stifle any move toward a Sino-Indian alliance or Sino-Indian-Russian triangle.[82] In the midst of this array of partnerships, India has been able to diversify its political partners, just as it has diversified its suppliers of technology.

China is but one factor in U.S. technological and military engagement with India. Also present is the realization that many of India's nuclear and missile developments are already indigenous and increasingly beyond U.S. control and sanctions. Concurrently, while a technological innovator, India has also become one of the largest recipients of foreign arms agreements and transfers. The United States is faced with a choice of participating as a supplier or running interference as Russia, Israel, France and other countries attempt to benefit from India's procurement frenzy. Profit motive may be guiding the United States as much if not more than the strategic considerations involving China and regional hegemony.

Regardless of motive, the United States is systematically removing licensing requirements on many firms that contributed to India's nuclear weapons and missile programs. Lifting of these sanctions combined with the joint statement on dual-use technology can only strengthen efforts by other countries defying U.S. and international nonproliferation norms. U.S. dual-use technology is also likely to contribute to assisting India in realizing advanced fusion technology for its nuclear weapons and advances in targeting and staging for its missiles, placing the United States and its allies in nuclear-capable ballistic missile range. Even U.S. anticipation of garnering enhanced Indian support for its agenda abroad is diminished by India's long-standing cooperation with Chinese and Russian multilateral initiatives, most recently on Iran.

China and the United States have long engaged India's adversaries, while demonstrating reluctance to form strategic partnerships with India. Despite similar early trajectories and lingering ties to Pakistan for both countries, current Chinese and U.S. cooperation with India is distinctly different. China has worked to reduce tension with India by establishing a relationship based on stronger cooperation in the realms of trade, cultural exchange, and energy exploration. Politically and economically, the United States has also created inducements for closer Sino-Indian cooperation. Yet, by making dual-use transfers in nuclear and space technology the core of the United States' other economic, political and strategic inducements to India, the long-term strategic price may be greater than the dollars or short-term political leverage earned. The

technology and military hardware provided by the United States promises to expand India's political, strategic and military footprint even beyond China. U.S. interference further strengthens China's incentives to cooperate with India. Rather than pitting India against China, the United States may be setting up India to instead serve as a future strategic counterweight to U.S. interests in Asia and abroad.

Notes:

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