

# “THE NEW WORLD ORDER”

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## **ABSTRACT**

*The paper deals with the changing nature and manifestation of the ‘World Order’. The focus has been on the South Asian region. China has been undertaken the driver of this ‘New World Order’, and it is discussed that how it has become a challenge to the Indian Foreign Policy in the recent times – both regionally and globally. Chinese policies and India’s responses has been discussed. It further deals with the inherent weaknesses in the Chinese model and discusses that how the post-Cold war, globalized world is essentially a multi-polar world and no one country can establish itself as the superpower. The paper attempts to deal with the various facets – from hard to soft power – and explains the nuances of the recent developments in the region and its implications at the global level and vice versa.*

## **KEYWORDS**

*World Order, Multi-polarity, Sovereignty, Neighborhood, Foreign Policy*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Are we in an era of a new world order? What is the Chinese model of this? What is its impact on India’s foreign policy? What are the weaknesses of this model? Will it ultimately collapse? What prospects India holds? What can be its response to it?

The 1990s not only marked the fall of the Communist block and the effective end of the bipolar world order which was rich with bloc rivalry, security dilemma, strategic coalitions – both economic and military (with effectively no place for soft power), regional proxy wars, rise of MAD (mutually assured destructions) weapons. Its end symbolized the victory of the capitalist liberal democratic western block, and U.S was accepted as the only superpower with world economy, trade and infrastructure, military, hegemony of ideas etc., within its disposal through the various institutions it has established (with effective strong control in them).

It is here where the dominant literature of Huntington, Friedman, Fukuyama and the like liberals missed the rising Asian giant with the world’s largest population (human resources), growing economy (in double figures), an authoritarian one-party state system – pursuing state sponsored capitalism, one of the oldest civilization. This was the Peoples’ Republic of China – the country which was soon going to introduce its own ‘new world order’ which would effectively through economic, infrastructural, trade, security pressures would force the other countries to fall in line from East to West. However, in this process it has also been helped by an unstable middle east, failure of the U.S in fulfilling its commitments and even its withdrawal from then, economic stagnation of Russia, idealist governments at some places etc., which effectively created a power vacuum which China is all set to fill in with its own fluid and on its own conditions. “The sleeping dragon has finally awoken”<sup>1</sup>.

## **2. THE MANIFESTATION OF THE NEW WORLD OF CHINA**

### **2.1 THE ECONOMY AND INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT**

The institutions established under the Washington Consensus are fast receding in their impact and relevance thanks to lacking consensus, infighting, its effective control in the hands of few

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<sup>1</sup>Lourdus M. (2017), The New World Order, [Online: Web]  
Accessed 23 Mar. 2018 URL: <http://edition.cnn.com/interactive/2017/05/world/chinas-new-world-order/>

dominant powers, strict conditionalities on borrowers, failures in maintain its own principles (rising trade war between great powers) etc.

China unlike the western world takes a more focused/prioritized approach of economic development through building infrastructure<sup>2</sup> – a core component of its growth within and its influence over other countries. As against the present economic institutions it has given the world options in the Asian Infrastructural and Investment Bank, the SCO Bank, the BRICS Bank, the Asian Development Bank which even the countries from the West including the ones colonizer country – The Great Britain – is lured to join (here the AIIB) much against U.S diplomatic pressure on Western countries against joining it. The infrastructural supremacy which it is setting up across the globe be it through its bilateral initiatives (specially in African and South and South East Asian countries) or regional development initiatives for greater connectivity like the OBOR, Maritime Sea Route, inter country rail and road connectivity projects and other development projects in strategically important countries etc.

## **2.2 THE POWER VACUUM<sup>3</sup>**

For a power transition, a rising country requires a power vacuum or it should be able enough to get such vacuum formed by its superior impact/influence. China today is getting both, making its work far easier thanks to the U.S' new withdrawing attitude from its commitment be it from military, connectivity, trade, economic policy making, international institutions, loosing even its own liberal values, political influence etc., ;weakening of great powers like Britain (especially post Brexit which has made it confused within itself), Germany, Greece, Russia etc., ; a destabilized middle east; the rise of the far right politics; economic slowdown worldwide with rising skepticism over the U.S etc.

## **2.3 CULTURE<sup>4</sup>**

The Chinese export their money and their culture together be it in the form of language, Confucius culture, people going abroad in the form of students and workers etc. Chinese focus on exporting culture finds mention even in its recent Five-Year Plans – through international dialogue, cultural exchange, cultural aid, building libraries, media centers, art schools, promoting cultural goods worldwide. Confucius institutes have dramatically increased. It stands as the leading global exporter of cultural products according to UNESCO – cultural exhibitions, advertisements and products sold online are the fastest growing cultural items, while others include acrobatic performances, copyrights, digital publications, game machines, handicrafts, movies, musical instruments, operas, songs and dances, and television plays. It also hosts around 60 million tourists in a year (in India the figures stand at 10 million). Also, half a million of its students -largest among all countries – study abroad. Soft power works as the 'third face of power' or as the 'invisible power'. So, something 'made in China' has both an economic and a cultural export. Be careful!

## **2.4 SECURITIZATION<sup>5</sup>**

There has been a consistent modernization of the Chinese army. They are increasing their presence in both the neighboring and the far-off countries too – and are working on rapidly increasing its presence - which are to its strategic importance. The Chinese PLA (People's Liberation Army) is the world's largest military force, it also boasts today the second largest

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<sup>2</sup>Ikenberry, G. J., & Lim, D. J. (2017). China's emerging institutional statecraft.

<sup>3</sup>Mousavizadeh, N (2017), Who fills the Global Power Vacuum? [Online: Web]

Accessed 23 Mar. 2018 URL: <https://www.reuters.com/article/idUS224017065820110926>

<sup>4</sup>Yuankai, T (2016), Cultural Industry Goes Global [Online: Web]

Accessed 23 Mar. 2018 URL:[http://www.bjreview.com/Current\\_Issue/Editor\\_Choice/201604/t20160418\\_800054687.html](http://www.bjreview.com/Current_Issue/Editor_Choice/201604/t20160418_800054687.html)

<sup>5</sup>Lourdus M. (2017), The New World Order, [Online: Web]

Accessed 23 Mar. 2018 URL: <http://edition.cnn.com/interactive/2017/05/world/chinas-new-world-order/>

defense budget in the world. It has capabilities from nuclear warfare, cyber-warfare to even space-based warfare. China is increasingly on the path of isolating in the region be it from building the String of Pearls around it, or through its aggressive loan diplomacy or its deep pocket interventions. Its increasing presence in the middle east, African countries, its increasing participation in the countries where the U.S is withdrawing like Afghanistan, Pakistan etc. China also supplies 2,322 troops to UN peacekeeping efforts worldwide -- by far the most of any UN security council member -- and has pledged 8,000 for a fast-response force. Greater direct involvement in missions imply greater say in the future settlements. It is today part of almost all major important organizations/arrangements/agreements from international to regional.

### **3 HOW IS CHINA'S RISE MANIFESTING IN THE REGIONAL CONTEXT<sup>6</sup>?**

India is certainly facing a hegemon – economically, militarily, influentially - in the region, one which it has a major war in the 1960s and still continues to have a major border dispute on two fronts, water issue, and a huge trade deficit. India against the Chinese interests also hosts the Tibetan government in exile. India against the Chinese interests has kept itself away from the major investments and infrastructure and trade projects be it the OBOR, Maritime Sea Link, RCEP etc., and domestically it is seen as a threat in the country. Also, in the times of growing bipolarity between the U.S and China, India has improved its relations with the former. This is well evident from the following events: -

From being cold war rivals (India had both – NAM and a Friendship Treaty of 1971 with the USSR which reduced the credibility of the former), to India rejecting the NPT, to economic sanctions post Pokhran II to signing a civil nuclear deal. Things have changed, the Trump administration declared India to be a ‘major defense partner’ and a ‘foreign policy priority’ and asked it to play a major role in the ‘Indo-Pacific’ region but gave no relief on the H1B1 visa to India!

#### **3.1 EFFECTS ON THE INDIAN NEIGHBORHOOD**

India can be said to be increasingly losing control over its neighbors in South and South East Asia through the hard influence of the Chinese economy, military might, infrastructural projects, aggressive loan diplomacy, (free trade) agreements and long-term partnerships etc. The influence can be seen as follows<sup>7</sup>: -

The Chinese modus operandi has been quite clear as it first enters as a military supplier, then cultivates and partners with local elites, provides modern infrastructure with deferred payments, and entrenches then itself. Chinese investment is concentrated in hard infrastructure – power, roads, railways, bridges, ports and airports. Beyond hard infrastructure, China is thinking geo-economics too. It is investing in the financial systems of the many countries – like taking stakes in the stocks exchange of the host country and then even introducing Yuan in its currency. The one party authoritarian state structure (now with a long term stabilized/unchallenged rule of Xi), a strong economy and military structure has helped it to expand its influence far and wide quickly.

Chinese influence in the Indian neighborhood can be seen by the development of the ‘String of Pearls’ around it – with China having a great stake and control in countries like Pakistan (CPEC, technology transfer, investments, security, support at international institutions and forums etc.), Nepal (mitigating the influence of India by opening a second channel of support in all sectors for

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<sup>6</sup> Dar A.K, Ahmad S. (2014), “Major Bilateral Issues Between China and India”, *Arts and Social Science Journal* 5:064.doi: 10.4172/2151-6200.1000064

<sup>7</sup>Kumar S. (2017), China’s growing strategic influence in Asia is a threat to India, [Online: Web] Accessed 23 Mar. 2018 URL: <http://www.wionews.com/world/chinas-growing-strategic-influence-in-asia-carries-grave-implications-for-india-23307>

this land-locked country), Bhutan (relentless attempts and aggressive posturing has caused it to speculate the strengths of India, investments came along with the Doklam incident etc.), Bangladesh (investments and Beijing has investment in its stock exchange giving itself a chance to shape its financial architecture), Sri Lanka (investment, and then on account of the huge debt it got the Hambantota port for 99 years at lease), Maldives (huge investments and a rushed, much criticized FTA), Other South East Asian countries – controlled by its long term investments, cultural and geo-economic interventions.

### **3.2 IMPACT ON INDIA’S FOREIGN POLICY IN THE REGION<sup>8</sup>**

This means that India now has to play its cards more cautiously. It cannot both ignore and/or submit to the hegemon, it has to balance it both regionally and internationally. India has to learn the changed context of the world order and stop taking recourse to the ‘big brother’ attitude. It needs some smart diplomacy at its disposal to get through agreements be it the RCEP, EU FTA, Civil nuclear deals etc.; it has to maintain its time-tested relations with the Russians when the West is putting up sanctions and expelling diplomats post the nerve attack incident in Salisbury. Taking a lead in the International Solar Alliance is a welcome step, but it has to bring more countries on board especially when U.S President is not ready to recognize ‘climate change’ even a threat. It has look at the larger picture and should not focus either on Pakistan (security concerns and avoid playing up domestic politics on it) or even on China – that we have to contain its growth. The immediate focus in the South Block (MEA) should be a peaceful relation with the Chinese, maintaining greater trust in the region among the third world developing economies, a cordial relation with the U.S without giving too much in return and maintaining old friendship ties. As domestic politics affect and public opinion impact foreign policy – they could be constructed or at least mended within time before they take the rhetoric (say war with Pakistan, viability of a two-front war, intervention in Maldives, controlling Nepal etc.,) to a point of no return.

## **4. INDIA’S RESPONSES**

### **4.1 ECONOMIC/TRADE AND INVESTMENT**

With a booming economy and several domestic adjustments India is all set to increase and, in some aspects, even compete in the region and worldwide. It has signed treaties and agreements with some countries and several of them are in the pipeline to completion. India has a huge service sector and IT professionals which it can use to mitigate the trade deficits which it has with several countries. Against the rise of the hegemon, India is focusing on building and strengthening its relations with its erstwhile partners and bringing some new players in the list.

#### **4.1.1 INDIA AND AFGHANISTAN<sup>9</sup>**

India is investments heavily in Afghanistan in its national development projects. It is also balancing the Chinese influence over the Gwadar port of Pakistan with its investments at the Chabahar port of Iran. The port would help India to get a link to the Central Asian countries and specially Afghanistan for its projects of trade and investment. Student exchange programs, scholarships, trade incentives, cultural connections has further helped the two countries in strengthening relations.

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<sup>8</sup>Rajgopalan R. (2018), “The Political Consequences of China’s Rise” [Online: Web] Accessed 23 Mar. 2018 URL: <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/political-consequences-china-rise/>

<sup>9</sup>Kaura, Vinay (2018), “India-Afghanistan Relations”, The Diplomat, 01 January 2018

#### **4.1.2 INDIA AND BANGLADESH: -**

India gave its highest line of credit to Bangladesh in 2015 of \$ 2 billion and pledged for \$ 5 billion investments in 2015. Connectivity projects linking it with the north-eastern states of India is on the agenda. With the resolution of the land boundary agreement, much trust has been built up. Strengthening of regional groupings like the BIMSTEC, SAARC would further help India consolidate its position in the region.

#### **4.1.3 INDIA AND NEPAL<sup>10</sup>**

In Nepal, one could note that apart from India's pro-active help post the 2015 earthquakes and its deep-seated interests in the country's politics be it through direct interference through economic blockades and press statements, with the rise of China a reset in the relations was needed. On Mr. Oli's visit in April 2018, India would be focusing on a relation on more equitable terms avoiding the big-brother attitude. India will be connecting to it through a rail link between Raxaul (Bihar) to Kathmandu<sup>11</sup> along with a proposal for the development of inland waterways in both countries for movement of cargo within the framework of trade and transit arrangements. India had also pledged Rs 44 million to its neighbour for construction of the building of technical institutions.

#### **4.1.4 INDIA AND MYANMAR**

For India, Myanmar is the gateway to its 'Act East' policy<sup>12</sup>. Further, India, Myanmar and Thailand are building the Asian Trilateral Highway, which will connect India to ASEAN—which groups together Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. India is also building the Kaladan project, a road-river-port cargo transport project, which aims to link Kolkata to Sittwe in Myanmar and then from Myanmar's Kaladan river to India's north-east. Myanmar is also a key component of India's strategy to bridge South and South-East Asia through BIMSTEC. New Delhi has already extended \$2 billion in soft loans. It has offered to help Myanmar developmental assistance apart from setting up of infrastructure and socio-economic projects jointly with Myanmar in the restive Rakhine state.

#### **4.1.5 INDIA AND THE ASEAN<sup>13</sup>**

Both are extensively working for the fast conclusion of the Free Trade Agreement and the mutually beneficial and comprehensive Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). They also look forward to establish trade and investment centers. They have also reaffirmed their commitment to enhance physical and digital connectivity in line with Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025 and ASEAN ICT Masterplan. They are also working on maritime cooperation and keeping the region safe for trade.

#### **4.1.6 INDIA AND SRI LANKA<sup>14</sup>**

India is Sri Lanka's largest trading partner globally, while Sri Lanka is India's second largest trading partner in the SAARC. It is the number one source of supplies accounting for twenty

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<sup>10</sup>“India-Nepal Relations Back on Track in 2017”, The Economic Times, 27 Dec. 2017

<sup>11</sup> Nayak, N.R. (2018), “Oli's India visit: Resetting bilateral relations for mutual benefit” [Online: Web] Accessed on 11 April URL: <https://idsa.in/idsacomments/oli-india-visit-resetting-bilateral-relations-for-mutual-benefit-nrayak-110418>

<sup>12</sup> Roche, E. (2017), “Why ties with Myanmar are important for India”, The Livemint, 8 Sept. 2017

<sup>13</sup>Preety, B. (2018), “India-ASEAN economic relations: Examining future possibilities” [Online: Web] Accessed 25 Mar. 2018 URL: <https://www.orfonline.org/research/india-asean-economic-relations-examining-future-possibilities/>

<sup>14</sup> Moorthy, N.S. (2017), “Why India needs to re-calibrate relations with Sri Lanka” [Online: Web] Accessed 25 Mar. 2018 URL: <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/why-india-needs-re-calibrate-relations-sri-lanka/>

percent of Sri Lanka's total imports and third largest export destination for Sri Lankan products absorbing six percent of total exports. India and Sri Lanka also share the membership in other regional and multilateral trading arrangements namely – SAFTA, APTA, SAARC, BIMSTEC, WTO, GSTP which are influencing in increasing trade and economic relations between the two countries.

## **4.2 POLITICAL/PARTNERSHIPS**

When China is increasingly pulling countries into its fold through the influence of its economy and strength, India is also focusing on building on strong partnerships with countries worldwide – be it partnerships in connectivity projects or investments or trade and economic relations. Kautilya's Rajmandala theory is helping it in this endeavor.

### **4.2.1 THE QUAD GROUP**

It is a regional grouping formed from a diplomatic initiative (along the lines of the East Asian Summit) between India, Japan, Australia, the U.S most certainly for cooperation and working out a strategy to take on an assertive China in the region<sup>15</sup>. The official statement of the MEA read – “The discussions focused on cooperation based on their converging vision and values for promotion of peace, stability and prosperity in an increasingly inter-connected region that they share with each other and with other partners. They agreed that a free, open, prosperous and inclusive Indo-Pacific region serves the long-term interests of all countries in the region and of the world at large.”

### **4.2.2 SOLAR ALLIANCE**

India has taken a lead in setting up the International Solar Alliance with 56 countries having by now signed its Framework Agreement – it is open to 121 prospective member countries, most of them located between the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn. It was announced by PM Narendra Modi at the U.N Climate Change Conference in Paris in 2015. Taking a lead in international initiatives shows India's commitment towards becoming a global leader.

### **4.2.3 BIMSTEC**

The seven-member Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation initiative pushes for regional connectivity – physical, economic, cross border energy, digital and people to people connectivity<sup>16</sup>. This would enhance trust and cooperation in the region when the deep pocketed diplomacy of the Chinese is pulling every country in the region. It is considered a part of the “Neighborhood First – Act East” policy of India.

### **4.2.4 IBSA**

It is an international tripartite initiative between India, Brazil and South Africa for promoting international cooperation<sup>17</sup>. All the three countries are emerging economies and have huge potentials in their respective regions. Its formations against already existing BRICS forum represents the need of big powers away out of the arrangement.

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<sup>15</sup>Bhattacharjee, K. (2018), “India, Japan, U.S., Australia hold first ‘Quad’ talks at Manila ahead of ASEAN Summit”, *The Hindu*, New Delhi, 12 Nov. 2017

<sup>16</sup> Kundu, S. (2017), “BIMSTEC at 20: Hopes and Apprehensions” [Online: Web] Accessed on 25 Mar. 2018 URL: [https://idsa.in/idsacomments/bimstec-at-20-hopes-and-apprehensions\\_skundu\\_200617](https://idsa.in/idsacomments/bimstec-at-20-hopes-and-apprehensions_skundu_200617)

<sup>17</sup> “IBSA Dialogue Forum” [Online: Web] Accessed on 25 Mar. 2018, URL: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/IBSA\\_Dialogue\\_Forum](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/IBSA_Dialogue_Forum)

#### **4.2.5 INDIA'S PARTNERSHIP WITH JAPAN<sup>18</sup>**

Over the decades, Japan has built up huge equities in Southeast Asia. This is through its official Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) loans and grants, Japanese private sector investment, as well as the activities of the Japan-led Asian Development Bank (ADB). With Trump's withdrawal from TTP, responsibility of Japan in the South China Sea has increased that also while being a non-nuclear power state. Tokyo is increasingly joining up with other countries, especially India, and boosting its military in the Indian Ocean area in an apparent bid to counter Beijing's growing heft – by working on investments, connectivity projects, aid and public diplomacy.

#### **4.2.5 INDIA CLOSELY ALIGNING WITH THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

From being called as the natural allies to it being given the status of a 'major defense partner' of the U.S, the relationship has come up a long distance. The importance of the alliance increases in the region with China sitting as a hegemon with all its economic and military manifestations here. Further, Trumps' withdrawal from the JCPOA and the subsequent pressure on Iran, and laws like CAATSA and bilateral trade wars would only be successful if major countries take sides with America and India is seen as a major element in that. The successful holding of the 2+2 dialogue and India signing the COMCASA (Communications, Compatibility, Security Agreement), LEMOA (Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement) and the BECA (Basic Exchange and Commercial Agreement) bring both the countries strategically very close. Further, the Asia-Pacific region is now called as the Indo-Pacific region, highlighting the centrality of India. Apart from the Quad grouping for countering China in the region the two countries are also agreeing to hold their first tri-service military drill later this year.

#### **4.2.6 INDIA'S NECKLACE OF DIAMONDS<sup>19</sup>**

This is an Indian strategy to counter the Chinese String of Pearls in the Indian Ocean. This is to be done in partnership and close collaboration with key countries in the region like Australia, Indonesia, Vietnam, GCC countries, Iran, its own Andaman and Nicobar Islands and more may join the project as and when they get convinced of Indian arguments against China and about its own capability.

### **5. WHAT ARE THE INTERNAL PROBLEMS WITHIN THE INDIAN FOREIGN POLICY MAKING ESTABLISHMENT THAT HAMPERS INDIA'S RESPONSE?**

Bharat Karnad in his seminal book 'Why India is not a great power (yet)?' mentions that the "problem has been that it has not thought or acted strategically in spite of being a nuclear power, has sent missions on moon and mars, has several jet fighters, missiles which could attack far placed targets, being a stable and booming economy and a stable state and government structure"<sup>20</sup>. He lays the genesis of such woolly thinking on "bovine pacifisms originating from the Nehruvian times itself. He calls Nehru an 'intellectual giant but a practical pygmy' as he rightly thought of the world order – understood the threats from China, the U.S and the USSR and tried to place India's interests at the world stage and ensured that the interests of the third world

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<sup>18</sup> Amit, D, Miglani, S. (2017), "With China in mind, Japan, India agree to deepen defense" [Online: Web] Accessed on 25 Mar. 2018, URL: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-india-japan/with-china-in-mind-japan-india-agree-to-deepen-defense-idUSKCN1BP1T7>

<sup>19</sup>Lokhande, S. (2012), "India counters China's threat by 'necklace of diamonds'" [Online: Web] Accessed on 25 Mar. 2018, URL: <http://www.rediff.com/news/slide-show/slide-show-1-india-to-counter-chinas-threat-by-necklace-of-diamonds/20120131.htm>

<sup>20</sup>Prabhu, A.J. "Why India is not a great power yet" [Online: Web] Accessed on 5 April 2018, URL: <https://swarajyamag.com/books/why-india-is-not-a-great-power>

countries do not perish in the superpower rivalry but all this was coupled with abject incompetence and implementation (the problem and the attitude that India faces till today). He argues by basing ample anecdotes of stunted ambition, missed opportunities, and poor planning by Indian politicians, civil servants, and military brass that would make even the most committed teetotaler reach for a generous helping of liquid courage. The failure to become a founding member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the short-sightedness in not taking Vietnam up on developing a naval base at Nha Trang, the docile surrender of Indian national interests to American priorities in Iran, the absence of the armed forces in any higher echelon governmental decision-making, the turf wars between the Ministry of External Affairs and the military, the impossible logistics of the Indian Air Force, the exuberance over soft power in isolation, and the irresponsible comment repeated by senior bureaucrats that nuclear weapons are not weapons of war all make an appearance in this excoriation of seven decades of Indian policy.”

Karnad sees a major and real threat in China than in Pakistan and argues that India should instead reorient the Indian military policy and direct it towards the real *bête noire* i.e., China<sup>21</sup>. He argues that anything that can dissuade China from having its way with India will likely deter Pakistan too but not vice versa. “He emphasizes on independence or non-foreign dependence in the defense sector as he argues – Delhi must actively seek to set up a defense-industrial complex led by the private sector that would initially absorb technology transfers and later further its own R&D. Defense independence would not only be good for India’s pocket book but it would also improve the Indian military’s operational readiness and psychologically nudge Southeast Asia towards betting on Delhi to balance China.”<sup>22</sup> Further, Karnad alleges that communication between the different branches of the Indian military difficult, and this is also present within the same department as well. He says, different procurement policies, short-term fixes, and the tendency of the different branches to exist in isolation from its sister services which has necessitated several *jugaads* to make possible joint operations. India, he contends has also failed to take up offers to establish military supply stations on foreign soil.

Ramchandra Guha notes that “the challenges which will hold India back, he writes, are the Maoistinsurgency, the “insidious presence” of the Hindu right wing, degradation of the “once liberal and upright” center, the increasing gap between the rich and the poor, trivialization of media, the sustainability of “present patterns of resource consumption” and the instability and policy incoherence caused by multi-party governments”<sup>23</sup>.

## **6. CHINA’S INHERENT WEAKNESSES: -**

### **6.1 ECONOMIC**

The once double-digit GDP growth for well over a decade has slowed down to figures around 6 and 6.5, and with this downward consistency the Hind rate of growth will not be a far cry. The consumption of steel, coal and electricity has declined. In China, within a decade, the wages of Chinese workers have tripled and this has resulted in rise in price rise of commodities and therefore it is increasingly losing its position as a low wage country and therefore the workplace of the world. This implies shift in the global manufacturing center, which China had attracted in the 1980s. Also, China will have to take a big reform step in its labor culture to maintain the quality of its products which remain incompetent to products of say Germany or Japan. The danger of a real state bubble (burst) is also a possibility in China as without even considering

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<sup>21</sup>Prabhu, A.J. “Why India is not a great power yet” [Online: Web]  
Accessed on 5 April 2018, URL: <https://swarajyamag.com/books/why-india-is-not-a-great-power>

<sup>22</sup>Prabhu, A.J. “Why India is not a great power yet” [Online: Web]  
Accessed on 5 April 2018, URL: <https://swarajyamag.com/books/why-india-is-not-a-great-power>

<sup>23</sup>Biswas, S. “Why India will not become a superpower” [Online: Web]  
Accessed on 5 April 2018, URL: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-17350650>



demand projections of any project it has hugely invested in infrastructure projects – buildings, apartments, office spaces, designed cities, road and rail connectivity projects and even continues to do so, without any buyers/users. All this has also led to a huge public and private debt exploding in the past one decade which may lead to a serious credit crisis. The Chinese One-Child policy has back-fired, resulting in an aging population and a low workforce. Further, the rising trade war with the U.S will do much harm than good for its economy and may prolong its ambitious ‘China 2025’ project. Also, the increasing investments in connectivity and development projects in different countries has a risk factor involved as economy then starts depending on the stability of those countries as well – economically, politically and socially as well. Chinese industries have registered over-capacity, which has forced the government to cut production levels in steel, aluminum etc., and the service sector is not competent enough to make up for the losses; they now also carry their investments and labor together (to cater to the unemployment problem) – especially in the African continent and complains of racial abuses have also been reported along with such a practice.

## **6.2. POLITICAL**

Politically, China has an authoritarian model of state structure with a single party rule, and all powers is concentrated within the Communist Party of China (CPC). There is state control of almost everything – both public (speech and expression, media, social networking sites, search engines etc..) and private life (like one child policy till recently, control on people’s choices etc.). People with the rising globalization and connectivity and travel people are getting more and more conscious of their political and social rights. China may have grown at breakneck speed, but it has broken a lot of necks in the process. In contrast to India Shashi Tharoor argues that, “if China’s system faces a fundamental challenge, its only response is repression as it gives no avenues of issues being addressed in a democratic and peaceful and consensual, representative manner. That may have worked so far, but every autocratic state in history has reached a point where repression was no longer enough to ensure order and progress. If China encounters widespread popular unrest, all bets are off. The dragon could stumble, while the elephant trundles on. The top down model of the government and development structure therefore functions only within a certain condition.”<sup>24</sup>

The picture beyond the booming cities explains a different story of the 21<sup>st</sup> century China. Fewer people look “Chinese”, speak Chinese (either Mandarin or Cantonese), or act “Chinese” (mosques instead of Mao, chortens instead of chopsticks). It is not so much “ethnic minorities” living in “autonomous zones”, more non-Chinese majorities whose homelands have been swiped from beneath their feet. The Xinjiang province, Tibet and the Taiwan (also still sovereign) present a similar story. The sole focus on the economy has put the environment concerns at great risks, leading to problems such as poor air quality causing lung cancer and heavy-metal pollution resulting in birth deformities – things that would help in encouraging a movement by the people. With the leadership of Xi almost established in the near future and his extensive control over the country and the regime stability will only increase centralization and authoritarian tendencies in the country with greater demand of complying over questioning. This could be a recipe for a larger movement that may result when people become disillusioned to growth data as they would fail to meet their basic needs.

## **7. INDIA PLAYS A MAJOR ROLE IN THE MULTI-POLAR WORLD**

### **7.1. PROSPECTS FOR INDIA**

India holds the status of being the largest democracy with strong liberal orientations in its functioning with major focus on centrist politics at its core – which gives it the necessary long-

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<sup>24</sup>Tharoor, S. (2015), “China’s Brittle Development Model” [Online: Web]  
Accessed on 6 April 2018 URL: <http://sandbox.thedailystar.net/op-ed/politics/chinas-brittle-development-model-114616>

term stability, it has also one of the oldest civilization in the world – giving it a very strong soft power to depend and bargain upon. India is too a booming economy – being the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest in PPP terms, has a strong human resource element and holds huge prospects in natural energy, market, and natural resources. It certainly holds strong claims of becoming a superpower. It has historically been a leader of the third world and their concerns at international organizations and individually like even leading the Non-Alignment Movement. India holds deep diplomatic and cultural presence both in the region and other parts of the world. India has a largely non-doctrinaire approach to its foreign policy. It has been a responsible partner and holds pragmatism in its relations with countries. India is too a very strategically placed country geopolitically, and a huge list of resources to offer which the world cannot ignore both strategically and economically speaking. India to counter the growing hegemon in the region has joined important groupings like the Quad group, the Australia group, the Wassenaar arrangement, MTCR, European data sharing group etc., and is closely working with other countries like the Americans, British, French, Russians, Germany etc. For relations with the regional hegemon there is all the many reasons how “the dragon and the elephant can dance together”.

## **7.2. INDIA’S ROLE**

The biggest role for India for now will be in convincing its neighbors and the states worldwide at large about the dangers of Chinese policies, programs, and their inevitable fallout that may result in debt trap, impact on individual’s sovereign status be it in economic, political or social aspect of existence. The policy choices may however include – from being non-aligned (rethinking the idea and the policy in the changed world context), to hedging, to inter balancing (i.e., building indigenous economic and defense capabilities), regional balancing (by bringing in more and more powerful regional alliances), a strategic alliance with the Chinese regime itself, and/or a more closer alignment with the United States.

Some strategists have argued that in place of competing with the hegemon, India should in fact look for complementarities that it could provide to countries which are influenced/attracted by the Chinese economy might and thereby maintain a healthy if not antagonist relation with them. Further, India should learn from its past of micro-management of world issues it has done in the past be it doing the cold war rivalry (by giving the third option of being non-aligned) or neo-colonialism or neo-imperialism it has historically led the third world poor and exploited countries at various world forum and sometimes even by building one’s own institution.

India’s should also focus on a more strategic approach to harness the benefits of its huge strengths in the field of soft-power historically. Soft power is basically the ability of a country to persuade another country to do what it wants without resorting to coercion or violence. It has one of the world’s oldest civilization, a huge historical economic, social and cultural relations with many countries to fall back upon. “It’s spiritualism, yoga, movies and television soaps, classical and popular dance and music, its principles of non-violence, democratic institutions, plural society, and cuisine have all attracted people across the world and are strong cards that India holds that it can use to further its foreign policy goals”<sup>25</sup>. India can also act as a net security provider in the region esp. in the Indo-Pacific. There are too many complementarities with a varied number of countries but important is that India explores the options and work diligently with focus being on ensuring results.

## **8. THE ESSENTIAL MULTIPOLARITY: -**

The world is essentially witnessing multi-polarity in the world with multiple powers or group of powers rising and taking control of the hard powers. “The entire world order is undergoing a

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<sup>25</sup> Ramachandran S. (2015), “India’s Soft Power Potential” [Online: Web] Accessed on 7 April 2018 URL: <https://thediplomat.com/2015/05/indias-soft-power-potential/>

fundamental revision as multipolar-aligned Great Powers cooperate in reforming the global economic, financial, and political systems, but this is expectedly creating major friction with the unipolar US which doesn't want to lose its hegemony over International Affairs"<sup>26</sup>. There have been connectivity projects, economic and military groupings all around both regional and inter-regional. Increasing trade barriers and competition in gaining control may take the whole world to a back step. The need is of greater cooperation, alliances and groupings at a time when there is rising ultra-nationalism, human rights violation, refugee crisis, growing terrorism, slowing world economy, rising racism and violation against minorities, threats from non-state actors, environmental concerns etc. We can hope for a better world order from the present and India will have to play a major role in its articulating for it be based on some liberal equitable values.

## 9. CONCLUSION

This is the toughest part of any foreign policy/event/situations analysis, it requires perfect up to date information because before one could conclude about things, new issues, events do arise that may take the conclusion to a completely different direction. However, in the exercise which I have mentioned, it can be safely said that the world is changing – the center of power is now diffused, priorities and visions of countries have changed, the world has globalized where almost everyone has a stake in the world economy and is affected by its volatility. There have been some new things happening – from coming up of new institutions, to new (model of) developmental projects, new coalitions and partnerships and the balance of power is again shifting. Its important for countries to keep their domestic things in order to reap the maximum benefits from the happenings of the worldwide around.

Multipolarity has become the first principle of the globalized world today. India can at best keep maximum options open with it without antagonizing one at the cost of the other. It should understand its position – strengths and weaknesses – and should take well planned out strategic moves. It can learn from its own past and redefine the world order as it has done formerly too. The most important thing would be that India maintains its sovereignty in decision making intact, not being influenced by the demands and interests of others. In the light of the Wuhan and Sochi informal summit, it's important that India maintains the balance in its relations with the West as well. Although the 2 + 2 dialogue initiative produced little substantial success but its more important that India engages with countries. Also, it becomes very important that the neighborhood is well in order and towards that project a reinvigoration of regional groupings like SAARC would be a healthy step. The importance of this multipolarity is much more important at present than in history. With U.S pressurizing countries to fall in line with its foreign policy, the other bloc (led by China) attracting countries with its investments and development model, it would not be a daunting task at the South Block (India) to keep the multipolarity in existence and in meaningful practice.

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<sup>26</sup>Korybko A. (2017), "21ST-CENTURY GEOPOLITICS OF THE MULTIPOLAR WORLD ORDER" [Online: Web] Accessed on 7 April 2018 URL: <https://www.geopolitica.ru/en/article/21st-century-geopolitics-multipolar-world-order>

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