

**FROM DETENTE TO ENTENTE
SINO INDIAN RELATIONS SINCE 1988 TO 2003**

**Dissertation submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University
partial fulfillment of the requirement
for the award of the Degree of**

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

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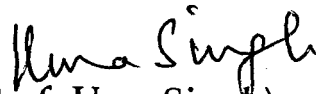
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Certified that the dissertation entitled, "FROM DÉTENTE TO ENTENTE: SINO-INDIAN RELATIONS SINCE 1988 TO 2003" submitted by me in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of **MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**, has not been previously submitted for any other degree of this or any other university and is my own work.

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Dedicated

To

My

Parents

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PREFACE

Bilateral and multi lateral relations have been behind the growth amongst regional as well as development of amity amongst nations in the world. Diplomacy has been able to play its role in diffusing tensions amidst nations that has led to the growth of regional forums and world bodies.

The Sino Indian Joint Communiqué that was signed between the Premiers of India and China, was a significant breakthrough in the relations that the nations shared with each other from 1962 till the end of the eighties. It was a major shift in the China policy that was being maintained by the Indian leadership till the rise of Rajiv Gandhi in the position of the Indian Prime Ministership. He was the first Prime Minister to move away from the border issue to delve into the issues of economic, cultural and social integration amongst India and China. This sort of paradigm shift in the 'China Policy' makes it necessary for a study to find out the necessity for such a step to be taken by the Indian leadership, and the then forthcoming movements that took place after the initiation of the age of détente to usher into the age of entente.

The first chapter will deal with the basic crux on which the relations between India and China hanged on. The Tibet issue, the border dispute, the regional ambitions that the nations nurtured and the like will be studied to understand the misunderstanding, suspicion and the misgivings that the nations had for each other. The second chapter will deal with the accord in its entirety. There will be an attempt to study the basic regional and international changes that forced the Indian leadership to change their decade's long stand on the border dispute. The main changes that were brought in will be analysed and

the perspectives of the Indian as well as the Chinese press, political leadership and the public opinion regarding the accord has been studied.

The third chapter will briefly study the border dispute that the nations had with each other and the manner in, which there were significant attempts to find an amicable solution to the problem. The new mode with which the Joint Working Groups started working in and the breakthroughs that the relations had in relation to the border dispute has been studied. The next chapter has studied the nuclear politics that the nations had with each other. The reaction of the Indian leadership after the first Chinese nuclear tests and the vibes that emanated from the Chinese leadership after the 1998 nuclear tests of India and later the comments and the letter of the Prime Minister to the American President has been studied.

The last chapter has analysed the manner in which the government headed by Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, made significant breakthrough in the relations with India and China. The economic relations that the nations have started sharing have also been analysed. This study has tried to bring forth the dimensions that have played their own significant roles in the development of the relations of India and China. Though there has been emission of quite some perspectives that could have increased the ambit of discussion, but an attempt has been made to understand the dynamics that changes the relation between India and China, from having a negative tone to a significant development oriented positive tone.

I fully take the responsibility of any errors that has stayed back in the study and request the reader to forgive me for such errors.

CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

Sino Indian relations are a complex mix of prejudices, egoism, ambiguity and suspicion as well as cordiality, cultural and traditional links and economic interaction. India and China had a chequered history from 1947 till date having its ups and downs. Relations especially during the early 1960s soured considerably leading to a major armed clash on the Sino-Indian borders.

India took a leading role for the developing nations after it achieved independence. From the initiation of the Non-Aligned Movement, leading developing nations in the Commonwealth of Nations and acting a major role in the United Nations, Indian political leaders under the able guidance and leadership of Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru started playing a visible role in world politics, which was even appreciated by world leaders. Whereas China after coming under the governance of the Communist Party of China (CPC) was ignored as the Western world had already taken a strong anti-Communist stand. Rather the West recognized the status of Taiwan as an independent nation. But India became the second nation after Soviet Russia who recognized China as an independent and sovereign nation.¹

INDIA AND CHINA: MISUNDERSTANDINGS

India and China from the very initial years of relations that they started sharing amongst themselves were marred by some disputed issues that led to the 1962 major border clashes. The disputes were on the status of Tibet, the misunderstandings on the border issue, and the conflicting regional aspirations that the nations strove for. There is a need for discussing in brief the above mentioned disputes.

¹ Anil Joseph Chandy, "A Chronology of Sino Indian Relations", in Kanti Bajpai, Amitabh Mattoo, eds., *The Peacock and the Dragon*, (New Delhi: Har Anand Publication, 2000), p.428.

Tibet had been a buffer zone for the British Empire between Czarist Russia and the British themselves as China at that point of time was not a power to reckon with. The border that was agreed to between British India and Tibet in the early twentieth century was not agreed to by China. British India did not accept the concept of 'suzerainty' that China thought that it exercised over the territory of Tibet. But when, the British moved out of the Indian subcontinent, on October 1950, the Chinese People's Liberation Army moved into Tibet, much to the annoyance of the Indian leadership. The spiritual leader of Tibet, the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama had strong relations with the Indian leadership and from the time of the Chinese invasion, they made constant appeals for seeking political asylum in India.² During this time period there were constant attempts to gain back some sort of autonomy by indigenous Tibetans from the Chinese governance. But they were severely suppressed by the Chinese leadership by sheer force. In 1959, Dalai Lama escaped into the Indian Territory and got political asylum³.

This created a sort of suspicion by the Chinese government on the intentions of the Indian government. Refugees from Tibet also started pouring into India from various traditional trade routes that existed between Tibet and India. The Indian government also did not stop or prevent the Tibetan refugees to enter Indian Territory and they mostly settled in the Indian state of Himachal Pradesh. This sort of moral support that was provided to the Tibetan refugees by the Indian government was not at all to the liking of the Chinese leadership.

² Swaran Singh, *China - South Asia: Issues, Equations, Policies*, (New Delhi, Lancer's Books, 2003), pp. 50 - 51.

³ T.S. Murty, *Paths of Peace: Study of Sino Indian Border Dispute*, (ABC Publishing house, New Delhi, 1983.),p.71.

The China India border covers a distance of three thousand six hundred kilometers⁴. The borders that were demarcated by the British government were the borders that were recognized by the Indian government. The Chinese relied more on the traditionally demarcated borders and had no faith on major border demarcations like the McMahon Line, the area of Aksai Chin and areas in the North Eastern Frontier Agency (NEFA) and more areas of disputes that were the creations of British India. The dispute took formidable shape when the Indian Armed Forces found the existence of a newly made Chinese road in the Aksai Chin region. Allegations and counter allegations led to major armed clashes between the armed forces of the two nations in the Northern frontiers that soon spread to the North Eastern frontiers.

Conflicting Regional Ambitions: India and China both economically were in the same platform during the initial years of the 50s decade. In matters of international recognition, India got an upper hand as it headed the NAM, the Commonwealth Nations as well as the leaders of the national movement became recognized all throughout the world for their sacrifice and courage. But as the Chinese were headed by a Communist government, which came to power under the supervision of the Soviets, it became difficult for them to receive the same reception as that of India from the Western developed world. For some years, they were not even given proper recognition. That boosted the aspirations of the Indian leadership, who saw themselves as assisting China getting international recognition and took the driver's seat of becoming a major regional power not only in the Indian subcontinent but in Asia. As China was being sidelined by the Indian leadership, they rather gave more attention on consolidating the Chinese territories, increasing and strengthening their defence forces and developing their economic backbone of the society. China

⁴ Ibid. p.78.

and India both due to their conflicting regional ambitions made attempts of conciliation in 1954 which resulted in the Panchsheel agreement, but that could not avoid the 1962 conflict that ensued within eight years of the said agreement.

Pakistan and China, within this time period started making positive diplomatic maneuvers. Both of them were able to initiate some sort of dialogue on the border issues that vitiated relations between India and China. Pakistan and China though started coming closer to each other after the Sino – Indian border clashes but the foundations of such relations were laid in the Bandung Conference in 1955.⁵ In 1963, they also resolved the border misunderstandings that they had amongst themselves. China always took a pro – Pakistani stand during this period in relation to Kashmir, and supported that the issue can be resolved only through the fulfilling of the promise of plebiscite.⁶

SINO-INDIAN RELATIONS: 1962 TO 1976

China's Nuclear Tests in 1964: On 16th October 1964 China conducted its first nuclear test at LopNar⁷ which gave India the feeling of insecurity from the Chinese side. The India Pakistan war – 1965: On 26th of March 1965 Sino –Pak boundary protocol involving territory in Jammu and Kashmir was signed in Pak occupied Kashmir between Chinese Premier Chou En Lai and the then Pakistani President Ayub Khan. In April 1965 China extended support to Pakistani aggression in the Rann of Kutch.⁸

⁵ Safdar Mahmood, *Pakistan: Political Roots and Development 1947 - 1999*, (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 189.

⁶ Anil Joseph Chandy, "A Chronology of Sino Indian Relations", in Kanti Bajpai, Amitabh Mattoo, eds., *The Peacock and the Dragon*, (New Delhi: Har Anand Publication, 2000), p.437.

⁷ "Sino Indian Ties: Chronology in Reverse Order", Hindustan Times.com. See <http://www.hindustantimes.com/news>

⁸ "Sino Indian Ties: Chronology in Reverse Order", Hindustan Times.com. See <http://www.hindustantimes.com/news>

Insurgency in Northeast India and China: In 1967, China started incursions in the north-eastern region of India and supported the Naxalite movement. China began training groups of Naga guerrillas at a camp near Tanzhong in southwestern Yunnan Province. Groups of Naga fighters trickled to Yunnan via the Kachin state in north Burma. In China they were given training and modern arms and then returned to India's northeast. Nearly eight hundred Naga rebels were trained in China through the mid-1970s. Several hundred more attempted to reach China but were turned back by the Burmese government or Kachin state military forces. China also broadcasted radio programs to Naga insurgents, conveying encouragement, political education, and instruction in techniques of guerrilla warfare. Chinese training substantially increased the combat effectiveness of the Naga insurgents. Indian casualties rose when ever they engaged Chinese-trained Nagas. The Indian army struggle against the Naga insurgency dragged on for twenty years, from 1954 to 1974.⁹

Sikkim: On 27th August China accused India of crossing the Sikkim-China boundary. During the India Pakistan war in the year 1965 China accused India and declared her criminal counter part. In the very same year on November 13th Chinese troops intruded Sikkim and NEFA once again¹⁰.

RELATIONS : 1976 TO 1988

In the year 1976 both countries resumed diplomatic ties which were snapped after 1962 border war. K.R. Narayanan has been send to China as an ambassador India and

⁹ Jhon.W.Garver, Protracted contest, *Sino-Indian Rivalry in the Twentieth century*.(Oxford University Press, 2001.), pp.31-32.

¹⁰Sardar swaran singh, "China-India Ties: Coming A Full Circle", in G.P.Deshpande and Alka Acharya eds., *Crossing a Bridge of Dreams: 50 Years of India China*, (Tulika, New Delhi, 2001.), P.193.

Chen Chao came India in the form of Chinese ambassador.¹¹ In the year 1978 Chinese radical leadership has been replaced by the moderate leader Deng Xiaoping who had the modern outlook. He tried to improve relations with India. The good will visits from Chinese side took place to India in this particular year. India also sent the then foreign Minister A.B. Vajpayee to China in the year 1979.¹²

On the question of boundary settlement Deng revived the proposal of “East west swap.”¹³ In the year 1981 and from Indian side the then Indian Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi resumed border talks with China and from 1980 to 84 five rounds of talks have been completed in which china accepted India’s approach of settling down the issue on the bases of sector by sector approach.¹⁴ In the year 1986 China invaded its troops in the Sumdorong Chuu in the north eastern region of India. Indian army launched operation Checkerboard in the Vandong valley¹⁵ to get rid away from this operation. This incident casted its shadow over seventh round of border talks and China showed its annoyance before the talks started. China has been asserted its clame over 90 thousand Sq miles of territory in the eastern sector through out the meeting. This incident once again put the border issue on the back burner.

DÉTENTE TO ENTENTE: 1988 TO 2003

In the year 1988 the then Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi visited china to add new dimensions in the relationship of both countries. The two most important developments of this visit were: first the accord signed between Rajiv Gandhi and the

¹¹ Ibid, 202.

¹² Sonica Gupta, “Sino Indian Relations”, Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies 2.html., See www.ipcs.org/ipcs/issue

¹³ Baum, Richard, *Burying Mao: Chinese Politics in the Age of Deng Xiaoping*, (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1994).

¹⁴Sumit Ganguly, “India and China: Border Issues, Domestic Integration, and International Security”, in Francine R. Frankel and Hurry Harding, eds., *The India China Relationship: What the United States Needs to Know*, (Columbia University Press, New York.), pp.111-112.

¹⁵ Ibid., p.116.

then Chinese President Yang Shang Kun and second the setting up of Joint Working Group for the settlement of border problem. This accord has set the age of détente and the process of rapprochement began. India first time dropped its previous stand border talks as a precondition for any other talks.

THE FIRST CONFIDENCE BUILDING MEASURE: 1993

In the year 1993 when the then Indian Prime Minister P.V. Nersimha Rao went to China and signed an agreement with the then Chinese counterpart Li Peng on the maintenance of "Peace and Tranquility along the Line of Actual Control." This was the major shift in the stand of both countries on the question of Line of Actual Control.¹⁶ After Rajiv's visit first time both countries took such a big step to avoid conflict along the Line of Actual control and agreed to create tranquil atmosphere which could give them an opportunity for the settlement of boundary problem. The establishment of expert groups to assist Joint Working Groups was also the major achievement of this visit.

SECOND CONFIDENCE BUILDING MEASURE: 1996.

The 1993 agreement paved the wave for another CBMS that have been achieved in the year 1996. Then Chinese President Jiang Zemin came to India and signed an agreement containing 12 articles in addition of prior agreement of 1993 to resolve the boundary question. India's nuclear tests and anti Chinese pronouncements by The then defence Minister George Fernandes and letter written by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to the then American President Bill Jefferson Clinton portraying China behind its nuclear tests made China indignant from Indian side and relations

¹⁶ Jhon.W.Garver, *Protracted contest, Sino-Indian Rivalry in the Twentieth century*, (Oxford University Press, 2001.), p.94.

has ruptured for a while. Though this phase did not last long and both countries soon returned on the path of rapprochement on which they had been walking previously.

In the new millennium exchange of visits of senior leaders and officials eased down the tensions between two countries. In the year 2003 the visit of the then Indian Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee gave new dimensions to the relations of both countries. Indian Prime Minister went to china on his six days long trip from 22nd June to 27th June 2003.¹⁷ This visit improved relations and setting up of Joint Study Group (JSG) for exploring complementarities between two countries is one of the positive outcome of this visit. Apart from this Vajpayee laid emphasis on bilateral trade and expressed the need to enhance bilateral trade. On the question of boundary problem both countries appointed special representatives to seek mutual acceptable solution of this problem as early as possible. In this visit both countries pledged that they don't perceive any threat from each other which is a Healthy sign as far as the relations of both countries is concern. This visit laid down the foundation of future talks for the betterment of relations.

This is how both countries made its journey from 1950s to 2003 with full of ups and downs. Sino Indian relations can be characterised as a seesaw. If it is look upon that how relations changed from time to time it can be said that first two phases marked by rigidity present in the minds of leaders of both countries. The third phase has shone the sign of sincerity and flexibility on the question of boundary problem the main bone of contention between two countries. The fourth phase gives clear picture of Sino Indian relations that they have been moving beyond from confrontation. The age of détente that has been set by the path breaking visit of 1988 between two countries has turned into the age of entente in the 21st century.

¹⁷Swaran singh and Zhao Gencheng, "Vajpayee's China Visit: An Overview.",2003., See, www.sjis.org.cn/english/journal/2003/india.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The South Asian region has been one of the principle unstable regions of the world. After India gained her independence she has been involved with numerous conflict situations which has increased as well as decreased her prestige and national interest throughout her diplomatic history. The conflict that significantly reduced India's national interest was with the conflict that it had with China in 1962, in regard to the disputed borders that it shared with China. From 1962 till 1988, Indian leaders kept cautiously away from making any significant positive movement to come close to the Chinese leadership, though there were stray incidents, like that of the re-installation of diplomatic relationship from 1976, the then Indian foreign minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee's visit in 1979, the meetings that were held by the high level dignitaries of both the nations, that led to the base on which the 1988 Accord took place.

The principle objective of the study is to analyse, what made the Indian leadership move on the path of rapprochement, the major achievements that were achieved with the accord, the significant developments that took place during the period that followed after the accord was signed till Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's visit in 2003, and the paths of confidence building that has not been treaded on.

DESCRIPTION OF THE CHAPTERS THAT FOLLOWS

There are three chapters that will be analysing the 1988 Accord and the decade of relationship that followed after the accord was signed. In the following chapter, the disputes that marked the relationship till the 1988 Accord and the efforts that were put in for rapprochement will be discussed in detail. The necessity that arose for the change of India's stand regarding the relationship it wanted to have with China will be studied. The changing world and regional perception, especially during the last part of

the eighties put significant pressure on the Indian leadership to think afresh about the relationship it shared with China. This changing perception and the domestic opposition the Indian leadership faced will be discussed.

The third chapter will discuss about the border dispute. The border dispute had remained as the principle obstacle in the path of any diplomatic relationship with the two nations. From 1962 onwards, the Indian leadership stood fast on the demand that any sort of dialogue between India and China can be initiated only after the disputes regarding the borders must be resolved. For the first time in 1988, the onus of dialogue making between India and China shifted from the disputed borders to economic, cultural, and other spheres as the Indian leadership took the decision of making parallel dialogues on the spheres of border as well as the development of mutual understanding and relations. The Confidence Building Measures that has been taken between the nations in 1993 and 1996 will be analysed, having special reference to Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's visit.

The fourth chapter will study the aftermath of the nuclear tests conducted by India on May 11/13 in the year 1998 at Pokhran on the relations of both countries. In this chapter it will also be analysed that how china got angry from India after its nuclear tests. The Sino Indian post nuclear rapprochement will also be studied in this chapter.

The fifth chapter will be concluding chapter in which rap up of the relations will be given India and China had been regional powers in Asia from the time of independence and due to their varied regional aspirations had a bickering diplomatic and political history. But the study will analyse, how the realist paradigm of international relations has become a fact for the betterment in relations within India and China. The manner in which leaders, bearing all the opposition that they had to

face. on realist lines have walked on the path of détente to entente, will be the crux on which the entire study will be done.

CHAPTER-II

THE BREAKTHROUGH IN 1988

INTRODUCTION

The Sino Indian Joint Communiqué brought forth a significant change in the relations between the nations. The Accord that was signed between the two Premiers of India and China brought in the age of entente from the age of détente. As it was a single handed decision of Rajiv Gandhi, the then Indian Prime Minister of Changing the major onus of the relationship that India shared with China till that point of time and the major change of diplomacy that was brought in with the Accord. To understand the necessity of such change there will be the necessity to understand the international as well as the regional changes that took place over the world, the need for significant refreshment of diplomatic posture shared between India and China have to be seen.

During the last phases of the eighties, world politics went through a major transformation. With the initiation of economic liberalization that the Soviet economy was forced into as the nation's exchequer was depleted by the Afghanistan imbroglio, the separatist movements that were spreading throughout the Soviet expanses, the increasing defence expenditure that halved the Soviet national economy, the rise of religious extremism inside the Soviet territory and the like. The Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev with the introduction of Perestroika and Glasnost tried to achieve some sort of breakthrough that would save the Soviet economy as well as the society from collapsing. But the moment these relaxations were introduced, there were immediate mass movements against the Communist government. This led to a coup led by the people

headed by Boris Yeltsin, which later led to the downfall of the Communist government in Soviet Russia, that also led to the breaking up of the entire nation.

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan led to the rise of severe instability in the region of South Asia. But the relation that India shared with the Soviets made them unable to come out openly against the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan. As it also increased the Soviet influence in the region, the Indian leadership was more or less secure in the strategic position they were in that position. But when the Soviets took the decision of moving out from Afghanistan and slowly retreating into Soviet territory, the Indians were left with a feeling of insecurity as hostile neighbours surrounded it. Even the relationship that India shared with the US was more on the lines of 'staying away from each other'. The Soviet backed Vietnamese also started moving out from Kampuchea during that period. Urged by the Soviets, Vietnam began to withdraw some of its 140,000-man occupying arm, with plans to be completely out by 1990.¹ In this manner the region slowly was being evacuated from the Soviet influence and the overbearing influence of the Chinese and the US.

On top of that the strained relations that China had with the Soviet, on various aspects, like that of border sharing, on the issue of Mongolia, Afghanistan, Kampuchea, North Korea, the clashes that took birth out of the regional ambitions of both the nations, and the like. Slowly they made sincere attempts to crease out the differences that they had amongst themselves. In 1987 as well as in 1988, the Soviet President proposed a Sino

¹ Vietnamese Intervention in Kampuchea 1978-1991, December 16, 2000, see <http://www.onwar.com/aced/data/charlie/cambodia1978.htm>

Soviet meeting that ultimately took place in 1989 from May 15 to 18.² With the Soviet decision that they will be pulling out troops from Mongolia, from Afghanistan as well as from Kampuchea, the obstacles in the path of cordial relations were removed. The border problem that even led to armed skirmishes between the nations, especially in the Usuri River area, were resolved and the nations made a sincere effort in lowering down any sort of misgiving that they had towards each other.

SINO INDIAN RELATIONS

China achieved significant success in normalizing relations with her neighbours. On the issue of Communism, disputed borders or trade, the Chinese government was able to reach to amicable solutions with the nations that it had any sort of misunderstanding or long standing dispute. It was also to make very good friendship with some nations like that of Pakistan, Myanmar, and even improved relations with that of the Soviets, that left only one nation in the region, that still had an unresolved dispute with China which was the principle hurdle in the improvement of relations. And this nation was India. The fear psychosis that had set in the mindset of the Indian leadership, made them unable to go ahead with any sort of dynamic and path breaking steps to improve relations with China. China had from the very beginning of the eighties has shown its eagerness to improve ties with India, but the Indian leaderships misgivings about the clear intentions of the Chinese leadership, could not break the ice between the nations.

But with the change of the regional as well as international political form as well as the rise of a new, young and dynamic leadership provided by Indian Prime Minister

² "End the past and open up the future"-the normalization of relations between China and the Soviet Union, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, November 17, 2000, see <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/ziliao/3602/3604/t18018.htm>

Rajiv Gandhi there was a basic change of perception of the then necessity of apt decision making in foreign policy making. He has already taken the step of initiating talks with his Pakistani counterpart, Benazir Bhutto, which in itself for the time being had reduced the tensions between India and Pakistan considerably. This sort of peace process that was initiated by the Indian Prime Minister was possibly due to the insecurity that the Indian leadership was going through. As described above, that all the nations that had any sort of difficult relations with China had come to some sort of dialogue with China. Even the Soviets that formed the principal security cover in the region, themselves came closer with China. Their moving out of Afghanistan also flashed the weakness of the Soviet leadership. It narrowed the avenues of diplomacy that the Indian leadership could follow keeping close relation with China.

After the assassination of the Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, and Rajiv Gandhi getting selected to be the next Prime Minister of the nation, there was a bit of an apprehension about the capability of the Prime Minister. For that reason, when Rajiv took the decision of changing the diplomatic stand that India maintained from 1962 with China especially where India maintained a "Parallel policy" that basically is a policy that stated that India should resolve border problems with China and improve Sino-Indian relations at the same time.³ Here Rajiv planned to shift the onus of dialogue from the border dispute on to the promotion of a bilateral developmental relation that would benefit India as well as China. The bureaucracy in the Foreign Ministry as well as the basic leadership that was in the helm of politics at that point of time could not forget the nightmare of the early 1960s brought forward in the form of Chinese aggression. They

³ "Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi Visited China", November, 17, 2000. , Bharat Rakshak.com, See, www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/ziliao

though made halfhearted attempts to smoothen out the relations but could not achieve significant success in such dialogue processes.

Rajiv, being farsighted felt the swiftness with which the world political structure was transforming into and he knew that he had to take some positive steps that would at the end secure the entire region from more armed clashes between nations. Perceiving the then shift of power balance that was taking place he started to initiate to test the domestic political grounds and the reaction that will come of such major shift in foreign policy is implemented.

Within the Congress Party itself there was significant opposition as they felt that the steps that were being taken by the Indian Prime Minister was a bit rash in nature that was being taken without thinking the pros and cons and the past experiences that the Indian leadership gained while trying to mend the relationship with the Chinese leadership. As C. Raja Mohan has written “the full story of Rajiv Gandhi's visit to Beijing remains to be told. As he sought to redefine India's position on the boundary question and recast Sino-Indian relations. Rajiv Gandhi had to face considerable resistance within the Congress party. Many senior colleagues in the Cabinet too were opposed to the visit. For many Congressmen, Rajiv Gandhi's visit to China and his flexibility on the boundary dispute were nothing less than a political betrayal of the legacies of Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi”.⁴

C. Raja Mohan has commented more on this issue while saying that “to get a measure of the Chinese leadership, Rajiv Gandhi had dispatched P.N. Haksar, the veteran diplomat and Principal Secretary to his mother, to Beijing in early 1988 in an unannounced visit.

⁴ C. Raja Mohan, “Realism on the China border”, *The Hindu*, November 25, 2003, see <http://www.hindu.com/thehindu/2003/11/25/stories/2003112500581200.htm>

This was followed by public engagement between Congress politicians and the top guns of the Chinese Communist Party. To get the strategic community to digest the new Indian approach to Beijing, the Government got the India International Centre in the capital to organise seminars on its China policy throughout 1988”.⁵

With the initiation of diplomatic relations from 1976, there were constant attempts of sending high dignitaries to each other's nations. The highest level visit was of Atal Bihari Vajpayee, in 1979, who at that point of time was the External Affairs Minister on India. But his visit failed because during that period the Soviets had went ahead with the Afghanistan invasion, much to the annoyance of the Chinese, and the Chinese leadership wanted a clear stand of the Indian leadership on the Afghanistan issue which, due to the alliance India shared with Soviet Russia, had to maintain a neutral stand in regard to the Afghanistan invasion. But after the 1979 visit, there were significant visits made by the two foreign Ministries of India and China.

THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE OF 1988

Premier Li Peng and Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi held talks in an atmosphere of friendship, candidness and mutual understanding. President Yang Shangkun of the People's Republic of China, General secretary Zhao Ziyang of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and Chairman Deng Xiaoping of the Military Commission of the CPC Central Committee had separate meetings with Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. The leaders of the two countries held earnest, in depth discussions on the Sino-Indian boundary question and agreed to settle this question through peaceful and friendly consultations. They also agreed to develop their relations actively in other fields

⁵ Ibid.

and work hard to create a favorable climate and conditions for a fair and reasonable settlement of the boundary question while seeking a mutually acceptable solution to this question. In this context, concrete steps will be taken, such as establishing a joint working group on the boundary question and a joint group on economic relations and trade and science and technology.⁶ During his visit, the two Governments signed the Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Science and Technology, the agreement Relating to Civil Air Transport, and the Executive Programme for the Years 1988, 1988 and 1990 under the Agreement for Cultural Cooperation. Both the Premier and the Prime Minister were present at the signing ceremony.⁷

The two sides made a positive appraisal of the cooperation and exchanges in recent years in trade, culture, science and technology, civil aviation and other fields, and expressed satisfaction with the relevant agreements reached between the two countries. They emphasized the vast scope that existed for learning from each other.⁸ Both sides found the dialogue and meetings between the officials and the leaders extremely useful, as they enhanced mutual understanding in the interest of further improvement and development of bilateral relations. The two sides made a positive appraisal of the cooperation and exchanges in the amount of trade, and the exchanges that enhanced their respective cultures, science and technology, civil aviation and the like in the recent years and expressed satisfaction with the relevant agreements reached between the two countries.⁹

⁶ Sino-Indian Joint Press Communiqué, Beijing, September 23, 1988, see <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/wjb/zzjg/yzs/gjlb/2711/2712/t15913.htm>

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

They emphasized the vast scope and opportunity that existed between them that can be achieved by learning from each other. They emphasized that the Five Principles of mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence, which were jointly initiated by China and India and which have proved full of vitality through the test of history, constitute the basic guiding principles for good relations between the nations. These principles will not only create a relationship that will be built on trust, confidence, friendship, respect for each other but also will be the guidelines for neighboring as well as other nations to follow suit from the example that will be set by the two giants, which will be the stepping stone for the beginning of a new world order whose foundation will be based on peace, development, friendship and trust on each other.¹⁰

India also reiterated its stand on the question of Tibet that she considered Tibet as an autonomous region of China.¹¹ They emphasized that the Five Principles of mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence, which have proved full of vitality through the test of history, constitute the basic guiding principles for good relations between states. These principles also constitute the basic guidelines for the establishment of a new international political order and the new international economic order. Both sides agreed that their common desire was to restore,

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

improve and develop Sino-Indian good-neighborly and friendly relations on the basis of these principles.¹²

CHANGING SINO INDIAN RELATIONS

Rajiv in his speech said that both the nations were among the few countries that have been able to develop advanced remote sensing satellite technology for the mass arrangement of natural resources. Both the nations have made useful advances in many areas of industrial and defence electronics and material sciences in the decades of the seventies and the eighties. In telecommunications India and China have developed their own digital switch systems. Both of the leaders have also recognized their significant capabilities in the field of software development including working in the most sophisticated software development areas.¹³

Apart from minor objections, no main national political parties raised any hue and cry against these “concession” by Rajiv Gandhi. This was because (a) the Congress Party, at this time, had an overwhelming majority in Indian Parliament and (b) the earlier major initiative towards building peace with China had been taken during the Janata Party government in February 1979. Moreover, eight rounds of border talks (initiated during Foreign Minister. Huang Hua’s visit to New Delhi in 1981) had already created some sort of favorable backdrop.¹⁴ Apart from these interactions at the political level, Rajiv Gandhi’s visit also opened avenues for direct military interactions. Because of the 1962 war, any interaction between the military personnel or on defense related matters remained a taboo until the early 1990s. The first exchange in this direction was made by

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi’s Address at the Qinghua University, Beijing, December 21, 1988, Ministry of External Affairs, see www.meadev.nic.in

¹⁴ Swaran Singh, “Building Security and Confidence with China” in *Across the Himalayan Gap*, Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, New Delhi, 1998, see <http://ignca.nic.in>

the senior serving officials of the National Defence College (New Delhi) and the National Defence University (Beijing) respectively visiting each other in 1990 and 1992.¹⁵

The two have also since been considering undertaking an arrangement for an institutional exchange wherein at least one officer could attend the others training courses. The military-to-military dialogue was taken to a higher level by India's Defence Minister, Sharad Pawar's visit to China in July 1992.¹⁶

Once again, just like the lack of interactions and other historical legacies had colored their visions during the earlier years, increasing information and confidence has led to revision and rectification of various policies on both sides. One good example of this spectrum of biases in perceptions can be seen in the way various China watchers interpreted the incident when in May 1992 China detonated a 150 megaton nuclear device just hours after President R. Venkatraman arrived in Beijing. While some called it an act of intimidation, others described it as an expression of China's solidarity with India in their strategic defiance of Washington. However, with persistent efforts from both sides, a relatively more objective understanding of each other has started to emerge during the 1990s. Observing the tenor of policy pronouncements from both sides there appears to be an obvious shift of emphasis away from the assertion of huge territorial claims or high moral principles increasingly towards "mutual concessions" and "accommodation" from the Chinese side and on historical, legal, geographical realities

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¹⁵ Surjit Mansingh, "India-China relations in the post-Cold War era", *Asian Survey*, vol. XXIV, no. 3 (March 1994), p.293.

¹⁶ *The Statesman* (Delhi), 31 July, 1992.

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from the Indian side with both now calling for a “fair, reasonable, and mutually acceptable” compromise solution to their boundary question.¹⁷

There has been a visible change of attitude between the nations of India and China. “The last few years have witnessed China endorse India's views on various issues including Kashmir, and except for a brief problematic period following India's nuclear tests during May 1998, China's appreciation of India's policies was visible in China's neutral posture during the fourth Indo-Pak war in Kargil in May-July 1999”.¹⁸

On the issue of Tibet, India maintained its stand that Tibet is an autonomous region of China. It also confirmed its firm faith that it would not allow any sort of anti-Chinese activities taking place from Indian territory. India not only agreed to describe Tibet as an integral part of (not just an autonomous region) of China but also expressed “concern over anti-Chinese activities by some Tibetan elements in India” – a proviso which was criticized by some as a clear sell-out of the Tibetan interests.¹⁹ India's over-reaction towards Tibetan protesters during the visit by Premier Li Peng in 1991 was another demonstration of India's resolve in not letting Tibet become a problem in the way of Sino-Indian *rapprochement*.

The border talks were made on a much more formidable basis as they gave more stress on the inclusion of the armed forces as well as the bureaucracies of both the nations, as that would simplify the complications that would be faced by the members of the Joint Working Group. Especially with the next visit of the Indian Prime Minister to

¹⁷ Shen-chun Chuan, “Peking's relations with India and Pakistan”, *Issues & Studies*, vol. 25, no. 9 (September 1969), p. 292.

¹⁸ Swaran Singh, “Sino-South Asian Ties: Problems & Prospects”, (IDSA, New Delhi), see <http://www.idsa-india.org/an-apr-03.html>

¹⁹ Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, “India-China Joint Press Communiqué”, Statement on Foreign Policy, (New Delhi: Ministry of External Affairs, External Publicity Division, October 1969), pp. 62-64; also Giri Deshingkar, “Gains from the China visit”, *The Indian Express* (New Delhi), 9 January, 1989.

Beijing there were significant attempts to come to some significant step making in respect of making the JWG meetings worthwhile. To avoid any sort of misunderstanding and untoward incidents till an ultimate solution was pending to the boundary question between the countries, the two sides shall strictly respect and observe the line of actual control between the two sides. No activities of either side shall overstep the line of actual control. In case personnel of one side cross the line of actual control, upon being cautioned by the other side, they shall immediately pull back to their own side of the line of actual control. When necessary, the two sides shall jointly check and determine the segments of the line of actual control where they have different views as to its alignment.²⁰

The factors that were responsible for the success of the communiqué were as follows. To cite the important reasons behind this process of rapprochement the following reasons that can be put forth are as follows:

The first reason which acted as a major thrust towards the move of rapprochement was the process with which the Soviets were retreating from Asia. This retreat was not only narrowing down the options in front of India but had given birth to the concept of a regional insecurity that the leaders were suffering from. With the weakening of the Soviets, the Indian leadership did not have the luxury of keeping strong adversaries at her doorstep. Trade was becoming more and more the yardstick of good relations so it was neither in the favour of India nor for China to stick with its conflicts and stay away from each other. Since 1978 when Deng Xiaoping came into power he initiated bold domestic

²⁰ Agreement between the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of the Republic of India on the Maintenance of Peace and Tranquility along the Line of Actual Control in the China-India Border Areas, Beijing, September 7, 1993, see <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/wjz/zjg/yzs/gjlb/2711/2712/t15915.htm>

as well as external policies so that China could mould itself into a major player in the economic arena of the world. Its desire could be fulfilled only having a supportive as well as a developing neighbourhood and the support of India the second largest country in the Asia would be a major boost on that path. In order to fulfill his desire, Deng soon after acquiring power extended the hand of friendship towards India. During this period, both countries acted sensibly and came closer to each other by the virtue of this accord. In his address in Qinghua University Rajiv Gandhi also reiterated the same feeling when he said that “We believe that India and China will work together in International forums to bring about a new international economic order, based on recognition of global interdependence”.²¹

The second factor that paved the path of such an accord was the changing structure of the region. The nations of the region especially China and Pakistan were in a nexus where they had an agreement that China would transfer as well as upgrade Pakistan's defence forces. There was also constant intelligence information that the Chinese were transferring nuclear technology to the Pakistanis who weren't able to build their own indigenous nuclear defence systems. In such vitiated atmosphere, it would have been the only option that was left in the hands of the Indian leadership that they mended their broken relations and built a growing relationship.

Both India and China represent one fifth of the world's population and one third of Asia. Both were also the household of an enormous amount of skilled but cheap labour as well as were the storehouse of mammoth amount of natural resources. They were also on the verge of going through the technological revolution that was sweeping the world at

²¹ Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's Address at the Qinghua University, Beijing, December 21, 1988, see <http://meaindia.nic.in>

that hour. The potentials and the amount of success that was in store if the nations worked for the well being of each other was beyond imagination. With such partnership they would not only aid themselves but as they are situated in one of the most underdeveloped and deprived sections of the world, will be able to pull multiple nations from that state and bring the entire Central and South Asian region as major players in the world economic and political forum.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE VISIT

The achievements of the visit were multi faceted. It can be seen that there has been a significant increase of trade and commerce between the nations. As the initiation of trade started with that of the Accord, the initial percentages of trade that took place between the nations were not that significant in comparison to that of the resources that the nations had. But there was an extremely positive movement in the volume of trade that started to move within the nations. On the front of information and technology, China has achieved expertise in the area of hardware, whereas India is a haven for soft ware engineers. That has led to the interaction of both these services that the nations could provide to each other.

With the initiation of positive relations where the head of the governments met each other, the commencement of the age of entente started, ending the three-decade-old age of détente. Both the leadership paved the path on which both the nations leadership is moving on even till date and has helped in the growth of a strong and healthy relationship. The belief that both the nations are mutually incompatible as they together are striving for a global role as well as a major power in Asia was proved wrong by this

visit. It was not only not a success for the Chinese and the Indian leadership but can be considered to be a major feat for both the foreign offices of India and China.

One major achievement was the major shift from the long standing view of the Indian government on the issue of the border dispute that before the border dispute was not settled there cannot be any mutual dialogue on the issue of trade, commerce or any other sphere or field. Rajiv's visit made a major shift from the border dispute on to the mutual relationship that needed to be nurtured and grown and the dispute regarding borders must be resolved in an amicable manner, taking both the nations' respective views into consideration. The leaders of both the nations through the consecutive JWG meetings will try to come to some sort of understanding so that India and China can walk together on the plank of development and growth.

Especially with the initiation of the 90s and the age of globalization ushering in the usefulness of the accord was felt with the beginning of the next decade and especially in the later part of the 90s. Both the nations, till a time period had inward looking economies as the decade of the fifties and the sixties were spent for the development of their respective economies which was in shambles. They had to take recourse to extensive protective economic policies to save their economies from the international economic actors who, at that point of time were in the search of weak economies with big markets which they would be able to monopolize as well as to drain away.

With the increase of economic interdependence amongst nations, India and China both of have moulded as well as remolded their respective economic policies to suit the needs that would not harm their indigenous economies from the international world market as well as maintaining their role as global economic players. Both the economies

have liberalized a lot maintaining some sort of restraint wherever the economic needs of the nations. Though the private sector has started playing a much bigger role in the economies but the major backbone of the economies still rests on the public sector enterprises. But as both the nations has abundance of resources, players in the economic sector, public or private, has received ample breathing space in which they can develop themselves as well as develop the nations' economies along with them. This move by both the nations has provided more autonomy to the economic enterprises and created a favorable and conducive atmosphere for the foreign investors to select both these nations as attractive destinations for their funds to be invested in.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The 1988 Accord has been a major break through in changing the turn of relations with India and China, and based on the neo functional theoretical perspective where, nations before looking beyond towards the global environment has to take a glance through the regional environment. Similarly India and China had to go through such neo functional changes in relations where in perspective of the changing global environment, dynamic leaders taking positive steps to mould the relations of the nations so that they are able to look forward an age of entente from an age of détente.

CHAPTER-III

ADDRESSINGS THE BORDER DISPUTE

INTRODUCTION

Sino Indian relations have been marked by several issues since independence of India and China's reunification under the regime of Communist party. Though India and China started building its relations in a cordial atmosphere, it did not last long. Both the nations have been confronting with each other on the question of boundary the settlement of which is still the main impediment between two vis-à-vis their relations. The Sino Indian border stretches over a length of around 3600 Km.¹ that can be divided into three sectors: Eastern, Middle and Western. In the western sector the boundary runs between India's Kashmir and Tibet and Xinjiang (in China). The middle sector runs from the Tibet-Kashmir- border junctions to the Nepal-Tibet Uttar Pradesh- Uttranchal border junction, while the eastern sector starts at the China India-Bhutan border junctions and extends to the China-India-Myanmar border junctions.² Into eastern sector China has claimed over 90 thousand Square miles of territory which is largely covered by the present state of Arunachal Pradesh of India. In the middle sector India and China have disputed on the question of Tibet and Sikkim though this problem has been solved to large extent by the leadership of both countries. In the western sector Aksai Chin is the main issue between the two.

The boundary problem that still exists between two countries has been the principal obstacle in the path of rapprochement. This problem emerged in the year 1951 when for the first time the Chinese Peoples Liberation Army (PLA) invaded

¹ Swaran Singh, *China South Asia: Issues, Equations, Policies*, Tibet: The Perennial Link, School of International Studies, New Delhi. 2003.

² T.S Murty, *Paths of Peace: Study of Sino-Indian Border Dispute*, (ABC Publishing House, New Delhi, 1983), p.42.

Tibet and India considered it as a threat to its security. The second major development in this regard took place initially when first time the then Chinese Premier Chao En Lai wrote a letter to the then Indian Prime Minister Nehru claiming 90 thousand Square Miles of territory in the eastern sector on 8 September, 1959.³ China denied accepting the McMohan line as drawn by the British in 1914 in Simla conference.⁴ On the other hand Nehru was not willing to give any concession regarding McMohan line to China. The Indian Prime Minister Nehru said that “Himalaya has given us magnificent barriers and any breach of these barriers by any one will not be entertained.”⁵ Rigid stand by both countries on this issue led them into a border war in the year 1962. Though this war was brief war but it has its significance on the relations of both countries.

After the 1962 episode both the countries went away from each other for 14 years and their relations were resumed only in the year 1976. The decade of 1980s ushered in a new chapter in the history of both India and China. Between 1980 to 1987 eight rounds of border talks were completed⁶ though these could not give any tangible result but they built an atmosphere for further talks in the future. In December, 1988 the path breaking visit of the then Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi changed the whole scenario. For the first time India agreed to discuss upon other issues dropping its previous stand in which the border issue was the precondition for any other talks.⁷

³ Neville Maxwell, *India's China War*, (Jaico Publishing House, Bombay, 1971), p.271.

⁴ Ibid. p.272.

⁵ Alka Acharya, “*Crossing a Bridge of Dreams: 50 Years of India China*”, in G.P. Deshpande and Alka Acharya, (Tulika, New Delhi, 2001), p.197.

⁶ Sumit Ganguly, “India and China: Border Issues, Domestic Integration, and International Security”, in Francine R. Frankel and Harry Harding, *The India-China Relationship*, (Columbia University Press, New York, 2004), p. 108.

⁷ Indian Prime Minister Rajive Gandhi visit to China, Bharat Rakshak.com, November, 11, 2000. See, www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/ziliao

The positive outcome of this visit was the setting up of Joint Working Groups (JWG) for the settlement of the border issue in the future. The agreement of 1993 concluded between the then Indian Prime Minister P.V. Narsimha Rao and his Chinese counterpart Li Peng on the maintenance of peace and tranquility along the line of actual control⁸ and another confidence building measure that has been achieved in the year 1996 and boosted the spirit of settling the border dispute that had been lingering upon both countries for so long.

In the 21st century, the visit of the then Indian Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee added new dimensions to the relations between both countries and in the direction of resolving the border dispute, both Vajpayee and Chinese counterpart pledged to take concrete steps. The most important outcome of this visit was the recognition of Sikkim as an integral part of India by China can really be appreciated. This is how the two countries made their journey from 1950s to 21st century. We will study in detail that how this problem put its effects on the relations of both countries and it will also be tried to analyse that to what extent the CBMS,(JWG) and expert groups contributed in this direction of resolving this dispute. It will also be analysed the periodical approach of Indian government and Chinese government in the settlement of this principle issue.

SINO INDIAN BORDER DISPUTE UPTO 1979

When both the countries emerged themselves as independent nations in the world forum in the year 1947/49 respectively they started improving relations with each other but in the year 1951, relations suffered a major setback when China tried to impose its control over Tibet which was known as an autonomous region. India for the first time got the feeling that its security from Chinese side was under threat. Both

⁸ Waheguru Pal Singh Sindhu and Jing Dong Yuan, "Resolving The Sino-Indian Border Dispute", Asian Survey, (University of California Press, January/ march, 2000), pp. 352.

India and China had their own reservations on the question of Tibet. China wanted to utilise Tibet for its security purpose because Tibet was the back door to China in terms of security concern. On the other hand India did not want China to occupy Tibet because it was a direct threat to India's security from Chinese side. The then Indian Prime Minister Nehru wanted to maintain the status quo defined by British at the 1914, Simla conference in which Tibet had been given the status of autonomous region but China denied to accept the proposal of Simla conference. Hence China refused to accept the legality of McMahon line as drawn by British in the same conference.⁹ China contended at that point of time that it was in a vulnerable situation so it could not defend its rights but now the situation has been changed and now China has its own voice. Both India and China were exchanging arguments and counter arguments on the question of Tibet's autonomy but in the year 1954 the then Chinese Premier Chao En Lai visited India and signed an agreement named Panchsheel¹⁰ with the then Indian Prime Minister Nehru based upon five principles of peaceful co-existence.¹¹ Both countries pledged not to violate each other's territory and India relinquished its rights over Tibet.¹²

In 1959 Chao En Lai wrote a letter to Nehru claiming 90 thousand Square miles of Indian Territory in the north eastern of area but Nehru strongly denied his demand and said that McMahon line can not be altered. He took three important decisions on the territorial limits and the security of the Indian state. He declared the McMahon Line (MML) to be India's non-negotiable border in the north-east 'map or no map';¹³ significantly, he made no statement regarding the frontier in Ladakh.

⁹ Neville Maxwell, n.3, p.275.

¹⁰ Anil Joseph Chandy, "A Chronology of Sino Indian Relations", in Kanti Bajpai, Amitabh Mattoo, eds., *The Peacock and the Dragon*, (New Delhi: Har Anand Publication,2000), p. 421.

¹¹ Ibid, p.421.

¹² Ibid, p.422.

¹³ T S Murty, n.2, p.52.

Nehru's third decision was to draw the Indian security perimeter along the Himalayan range, taking in Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim, and to warn that any breach of border along the Himalayas would be regarded as a threat to India. In doing so Nehru unilaterally defined limits that could be challenged by the hill states as well as by China, both territorially and politically. China did not react to this challenge, thereby suggesting that it would accept the MML as the international border and did not question the silence on Ladakh.¹⁴ Both the countries viewed the territorial problem through their own prism.

In 1960 Chao En Lai the Chinese Premier had meeting with the Indian Prime Minister Pandit Nehru and placed a proposal of East-West swap in which China showed its will to settle this issue only if India gives China the part of western sector in return.¹⁵ China was ready to accept the status quo on the McMohan line but under domestic pressure Pundit Nehru did not accept this proposal. This is reflected in the statement issued by him in which he said, "If I give them [Aksai Chin] I shall no longer be Prime Minister of India. I will not do it."¹⁶

Nehru also stated that if this demand is accepted who knows that in the future how high a prize Beijing might demand.¹⁷ Nehru's forward policy was also responsible for the border war to a large extent. The forward policy was designed to contain China's further advance, establish India's presence in Ladakh, to be in a position to cut Chinese supply lines, and ultimately to force a withdrawal. Nehru, however misperceived that the Chinese would not respond, which in his seventeen

¹⁴ Neville Maxwell, n.3, p.276.

¹⁵ Jhon W. Garver, *Protracted contest, Sino-Indian Rivalry in the Twentieth century*, (Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 64.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, p.67.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, p.68.

year tenure as Prime Minister was perhaps his greatest folly.¹⁸ This policy was obviously based on the false premise that the Chinese would not risk an open war with India or use force against Indian posts in Ladakh and NEFA areas. On the other hand China's domestic problems may also have been another motivating factor in the military move in Ladakh and NEFA areas. This was failure of the so-called "great leap forward".

In 1959, the change of leadership in the Communist Party, created an international impression that China had become weak, And incapable of resisting nibbling on its borders.¹⁹ India was also preening on its victory in Goa in December 1961 over a rag-tag Portuguese occupation Force. Nehru began openly speaking about use of force "if necessary" to clear Indian territory of Chinese "incursions" swayed perhaps by military victory in Goa and encouraged by NATO's non-response to Goa's military takeover despite Portugal being a member of that US-led military alliance.²⁰ After the border war, both the countries went away from each other. China went on accusing India on the question of Sikkim. In April 1975, China expressed strong condemnation and utmost indignation at the merger of Sikkim with the Indian Union.²¹ China viewed this act of India as another example of hegemonic tendency. In 1978 the leadership in China had been replaced by Deng Xiaoping, a moderate and dynamic leader and the radicals were removed.²² Apart from this the then Indian foreign Minister A.B. Vajpayee visited China in 1979 while a Chinese delegation also came to India on good will visit. These were the minor developments which generated

¹⁸ J Mohan Malik, *India Looks east: An Emerging Power and its Asia Pacific neighbours*, in Sandy Gordon and Stephen Henningham, (Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, Canberra, 1995) *Sino Indian Relations and India's Eastern Strategy*, p. 123.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, p. 125.

²⁰ *Ibid*, p. 126.

²¹ "Sino Indian Ties: Chronology in Reverse Order", *Hindustan Times.com*, See <http://www.hindustantimes.com/news>

²² Anil Jospeh, n. 10, p 439.

several hopes for the settlements of pending issues but these changes could not give the expected results to the people of both the countries.

THE DECADE OF 1980's

The decade of 80s ushered some attitudinal changes in the policies of both the countries as evident from the initiatives of the Indians and Chinese leaders and officials. In a dramatic return to power in 1980, Mrs. Gandhi resumed political dialogue with senior Chinese leaders. During her regime (1980-1984), five rounds of talks took place between the Governments of India and the China on border question.²³ There was no tangible outcome from these official talks on account of the diametrically opposed positions held by each nation.

But in May 1981, Deng Xiaoping had revived the 1960 proposal of Premier Chao-En-lai for a package deal on the entire China-India boundary. Broadly speaking, Deng had proposed Chinese recognition of the McMahon Line in the eastern sector in return for Indian acceptance of the status quo along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the western sector.²⁴ Deng said in an interview that the boundary issue could be solved if both sides would respect the present state of the border. He also said, China would accept India's ownership of the southern slope and India should accept China's ownership of Aksai Chin.²⁵

Though India did not accept this proposal, Beijing agreed with India to solve this issue on the bases of "Sector by Sector." approach during the fourth round of

²³ Sumit Ganguly, "India and China: Border Issues, Domestic Integration, and International Security", in Francine R. Frankel and Harry Harding, *The India-China Relationship*, (Columbia University Press, New York, 2004), p.108.

²⁴ Baum, Richard, *Burying Mao: Chinese Politics in the Age of Deng Xiaoping* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1994); p. 38.

²⁵ *Ibid*, p. 39.

border talks in 1983.²⁶ But according to Mrs. Indira Gandhi's foreign policy Advisor, G. Parthasarthy, she had even agreed to accept the Chinese package deal only that, with the Chinese assent, the formal announcement had been postponed until after December 1985 general elections. Soon the assassination of Mrs. Gandhi in October, 1984 and later the Sumdorong Chu valley incident in December, 1986 were to completely rock this spirit of accommodation and delay the initiatives by many more years.²⁷

After Sumdorong Chu incident, the seventh round of border talks began but that incident cast its shadow over this round of talks. China reiterated its demands on south of the McMahon Line. In an interview shortly before these talks began, China's vice foreign minister Liu Shuqing said that the eastern sector is the biggest dispute and key to the overall solution.²⁸ He also stressed that a settlement had to involve concessions by both the sides. Implicitly, he was calling for Indian concessions in the eastern sector, not in the west as in the 1960 and 1980 proposals.²⁹ During the talks Liu Shuqing asserted that the line of actual control could not serve as a basis for settlement. India had aggressively occupied Chinese territory on the southern slope, and that land had to be returned to China. While some irregularities in the western sector had been solved during the 1962 war, the middle and eastern sectors remained unresolved. If India was willing to make concessions in the east, China would certainly consider making a gesture in the west.

When India gave the status of Indian State to NEFA and renamed it as Arunachal Pradesh, China strongly condemned India's move. In one of Chinese

²⁶ Jhon W. Garver, n. 15, p.112.

²⁷ Alka Acharya, n. 5, p. 201.

²⁸ Faisal O Al Rfough, "Sino Indian Relations: From Confrontation to Accommodation (1988-2001)", China Report, (Sage Publications, New Delhi/Thousand Oaks/London,2003.) pp.22-

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²⁹ *Ibid*, p.23

newspaper Wen Wei Bao was more threatening. India, the paper said, was “occupying another country’s territory, and legalising it through domestic legislation.” Did India believe that it could “force the invaded country to submissively obey and hand over its territory by this means? Even a weak country would resist, let alone a strong and independent China!” The Indian government was “lifting a rock only to drop it on its own feet will certainly eat its own bitter fruit.”³⁰ Referring to tension in the Sumdorong Chu region near the Thagla Ridge about the same time, the paper warned: “History has proved that it is unwise to try to solve border disputes by force of arms. The border conflict of 1962 may serve as a lesson. We would like to remind the Indian government that it should not mistakenly take China’s sincerity.”³¹

While rejecting Indian protests as ‘unjustified’, a spokesperson of the Chinese foreign ministry further stated: “This area has always been in the Chinese territory.” While refuting the Chinese claim, India asserted that Arunachal Pradesh was an integral part of India with an elected legislature and China had nothing to do with it.³² On the other hand, China, in an unprecedented move, distributed at the UN headquarters a press release presenting the Chinese version of the India—China border dispute accusing India of usurping large tracts of Chinese territory.³³ Reacting to these reports, India’s prime minister Rajiv Gandhi stated that India’s stand on settling the issue through talks was very clear and there was no question of granting any ‘territorial concession’ to China.³⁴ On 3 April 1987, the Chinese vice-foreign minister Quian Qichen said in Beijing that China had ruled out a settlement of its

³⁰ Ibid, p. 27.

³¹ Stven A. Hoffmann, “Perception and China Policy in India”, in Francine R frankel and Harry Harding, *The India-China Relationship*, (Columbia University Press, New York, 2004), p.62.

³² *Times of India*, (New Delhi November, 16, 1986).

³³ Faisal O Al Rfough, “Sinc Indian Relations: From Confrontation to Accommodation (1988-2001)”, China Report, (Sage Publications, New Delhi/Thousand Oaks/London, 2003.) p.29.

³⁴ Ibid, p.30.

boundary disputes with India on the basis of historic treaties, and as long as India was unwilling to make territorial concessions in the eastern sector, China could not be expected to make concessions in the western sector.³⁵

In the early eighties, the steps have been taken for the settlement of boundary dispute was completely wiped out by Sumdorong Chu incident and it seemed that this issue has been put on the back burner once again. After the completion of eight rounds of border no tangible result has come. During the same period both Deng Xiaoping and Indira Gandhi showed some sort of willingness to solve the problem but under domestic pressure she could not do much. In spite of all these negative developments, Rajiv Gandhi the then Indian Prime minister took a courageous step to visit China and visited China to add new dimensions in the relationship of both the countries in December, 1988.

RAJIV GANDHI'S VISIT TO CHINA A MILE STONE

The Sino Indian relations entered in a new phase in 1988 with the visit of then Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's visit to Beijing in December. His visit set a tone for positive "atmospheric changes" in the bilateral relationship. Both the sides agreed to break the impasse on the question of boundary and to maintain peace and stability along the Line of Actual Control (LAC). During this historical visit, both the countries signed an agreement for the first time to set up a Joint Working Group to defuse tension along the border. They also decided to arrange at least one meeting of this group in a year.³⁶ The most important thing about this group was the pattern in which for the first time not only officials and military personnel were included but

³⁵ Al-Rfouh, Faisal O, "Sino-Indian Relations: From Confrontation to Accommodation (1988-2001)", *China Report*, vol.39, no.1, (New Delhi, 2003), pp.26-27.

³⁶ Fang Tin-Sze, "The Sino Indian Border Talks Under The Joint Working Group", *Issues and Studies*, (National Chengchi, Taipei, Taiwan, September,2002), Institute of International Relation, 38, no.3, p.151.

surveyors and cartographers of both the countries became a part of it.³⁷ This was the real development in the path of settling down the border issue which had been the main obstacle in Sino-Indian good relations. The 15 meetings of this group have been completed till date but tangible results have yet to come.

During his visit to China Rajiv laid down the foundation for further talks for resolving border dispute in the following years. In this visit India for the first time dropped its previous stand discussing border problem before any further talks. India also recognized Tibet as an integral part of China. Rajiv Gandhi with his Chinese counterparts formulated set a new mechanism for the settlement of boundary problem by setting up Joint Working Group (JWG) for the settlement of this issue. The change in the approach of both the countries also reflected during these talks. This was the maiden attempt by forgetting the past both countries that showed a sign of flexibility regarding line of actual control LAC. The setting up of (JWG) tells clearly that both countries have agreed to give concessions to each other regarding LAC. This visit also has significance because efforts towards the clarification of LAC have been started with the foundation of joint working group, which has never happened before.

THE BORDER DISPUTE IN POST COLD WAR ERA

The tone which has been set by the virtue of path breaking visit of 1988 by Rajiv Gandhi did get momentum in the following years. In December 1991 the then Chinese Premier Li Peng came to India. This visit by the Chinese Premier was after a gap of 31 year and once again both the countries pledged to resolve the boundary question through friendly consultations.³⁸

³⁷ Ibid, p.152.

³⁸ Jhon W. Garver, n. 15, p.125.

In 1993 Indian Prime Minister P.V. Narsimha Rao also made an official visit to China which culminated by an agreement with the Chinese counterpart Li Peng. That was an accord on the maintenance of peace and tranquility along the Line of Actual Control³⁹ (LAC). In December 1993 a group of experts—comprising experts from the military and the foreign ministry—was established under the privileges of the JWG to complete the task of full delineation of the LAC. There was also a move to motivate talks to draw up principles under which troop cutbacks could be made along the border areas. The agreement to open the border Gunji in Uttar Pradesh in 1992 and at Himachal Pradesh from 1994 with Tibet entailed every likelihood of making the border porous and thereby enabling cross-border economic and people-to-people exchanges.⁴⁰ The agreement which was signed by the two leaders for maintaining peace and tranquility along the LAC was the major achievement in the process of rapprochement. After 1988 this can also be characterized as the first concrete step towards confidence building measure (CBMS). This also became Asia's first major agreement on conventional military disengagement, which has resulted in effecting realistic disarmament (Not just arms control) between two former adversaries and that too without any role-played by third countries. The full text of this notable agreement read as follows:

Article I of the MPTA starts by highlighting the consensus where both sides wish to resolve the boundary question "through peaceful and friendly consultations and both undertake to "strictly respect and observe the line of actual control" and never to "use or threaten to use force" and whenever necessary "Jointly check and determine the segments" of their borders.

³⁹ Abhijit Ghosh, " Dynamics of India China Normalisation", China Report,31:2, (Sage Publications, New Delhi,1995), p.252.

⁴⁰ Ibid, p.254.

Article II makes a far more concrete recommendation asking the two sides to keep their border military presence "to a minimum level compatible with the friendly and good neighborly relations" and in fact to further agree "to reduce" them "in conformity with the requirements of the principle of mutual and equal security." Taking off from here, Article III talks of evolving "effective CBMS" and asks each side not to "undertake specified levels of military exercises in mutually identified zones" and to "give the other notification of military exercises" along the border. Then Articles IV and V speak about their agreement to create mechanisms for dealing with intrusions and other exigencies while in Article VI both the sides clarify that despite these resolutions, nothing in this treaty shall "prejudice their respective positions on the boundary question."

To actually kick off initiatives, Article VII asks both sides to start by specifically defining the "form, method, scale and content of effective verification measures," and Article VIII initiates this process by asking each side to "appoint diplomats and military experts to formulate, through mutual consultations, implementation measures for the present agreement". And this setting up of an Expert Group can be easily described as the greatest achievement of this Pact in terms of building Sino-Indian CBMS. Finally, Article IX gives its date of coming into effect and declares all its versions--Hindi, Chinese, and English—as equally valid.⁴¹

After signing this accord the Indian Prime Minister contributed much from his side to consolidate the process of rapprochement and it seemed that both countries for the first time after 1988 seriously making efforts to resolve the boundary issue. This accord laid the foundation of the second CBMS achieved in the year 1996 when the

⁴¹ Haq, Noor ul, (ed), "Indo China Relations", IPRI Fact File, Islamabad Policy Research Institute, (Islamabad, July 2003), vol. 5, n. 7, pp.77-80.

Chinese Prime Minister Jiang Zemin visited India and held talks in New Delhi in harmonious atmosphere. This visit was the first ever visit to India by the Chinese President was "long overdue", according to diplomatic sources who said that "the time has come to end our estrangement and make a new beginning, which will benefit the people of both the nations."⁴²

This statement expressed the mood of the Chinese President that how optimistic he was at that point of time. In the light of this optimism another agreement for the confidence building measure has also been signed. This is the twelve-Article agreement on CBMS signed during President Jiang Zemin's November 1996 visit to New Delhi. Amongst some new initiatives, this treaty is primarily geared to fulfill the agenda of their first such agreement of 1993 and it seeks to further extend their existing CBMS to more specific and sensitive areas in the military field.

Going by its first Article that reads, "Neither side shall use its military capability against the other side," it virtually stands out as a no-war pact and both sides have also projected it in that spirit. The agreement once again affirms their commitment to the LAC (Article II) while this time fully recognizing that both have "different perceptions" on certain segments for which the two agree "to speed up process of clarification" and start "to exchange maps indicating their respective perceptions...as soon as possible" (Article X). It is this businesslike approach to these sensitive questions that gives hope for the future as it depicts their mutual confidence in the current state of their rapprochement. Besides, all these years there had been major confusion as China did not consider its deployments in Tibet as being open for mutual reductions and India believed that Chinese forces on the Tibetan plateau have

⁴² Abhijit Ghosh, "Dynamics of India China Normalisation", China Report,31:2, (Sage Publications, New Delhi,1995), p.156.

a clear one-to-ten advantage against Indian forces that will have to operate from below.

Accordingly, Article III of this agreement provides that in keeping with "the principle of mutual and equal security" all future ceilings is expected to be based on "parameters such as the nature of terrain, road communications and other infrastructure and time taken to induct/deduct troops and armaments." Article IV clearly categorizes certain types of offensive weapons, withdrawal of, which will be given priority. These include combat tanks, infantry combat vehicles, guns (including howitzers) with 75 mm or bigger caliber, mortars with 120 mm or bigger caliber, surface-to-surface missiles, surface-to-air missiles, and to start with, the two sides will "exchange data on the military forces and armaments" that are to be reduced. It also exhorts the two to "avoid holding large scale military exercises involving more than one division (15,000 troops) in close proximity to the LAC" and to inform the other side on "type, level, planned duration and areas of exercise" in case it involves more than a brigade (5,000 troops), and about deduction "within five days of completion," and the other side shall be free to seek any number of clarifications as it deems necessary.

Taking a major step forward, the two agreed that no combat aircraft which "include fighter, bomber, reconnaissance, military trainer, armed helicopter and other armed aircraft" shall be allowed to fly "within ten kilometers" of the LAC "except by prior permission" from the other side (Article V). Similarly, Article VI prohibits any use of "hazardous chemicals, conduct blast operations or hunt with guns or explosives within two kilometers" of the LAC unless it is "part of developmental activities" in which case the other side shall be informed "through diplomatic channels or by convening a

border personnel meeting, preferably five days in advance." Then to "strengthen exchanges and cooperation between their military personnel and establishments,"

Article VII provides that the two sides shall expand (a) "meetings between their border representatives at designated places; (b) "telecommunication links" between these border points; and (c) establish "step-by-step medium and high-level contacts between the border authorities" of the two sides. Should any land or air intrusions take place "because of unavoidable circumstances like natural disasters," the other side is expected under Article VIII to "extend all possible assistance to them" and the two shall exchange information and have consultations to work out "modalities of return of the concerned personnel." And finally, as under Article XI, the Sino-Indian Joint Working Group on Boundary Question starts "mutual consultations" for "detailed implementation measures". Once again under Article IX each side shall have "the right to seek clarification" regarding the "manner in which the other side is observing the agreement" or on any "doubtful situation" in the border region, and under Article XII, though all Hindi, Chinese and English versions are "equally authentic," but "In case of divergence, the English text shall prevail" and like most other agreements, it is also subject to ratification and "shall enter into force on the date of exchange of instruments of ratification".⁴³

These two significant agreements of 1993 and 1996 boosted the spirit of rapprochement and brought both the countries much nearer to find the solution of boundary problem. In the first agreement, both the countries showed their keenness to develop mutual understanding and their wish to resolve the boundary problem reflected in the articles of that agreement both accepted that they would observe the Line of Actual Control and the military presence will be reduced from the LAC. In the

⁴³ Haq, Noor ul, n. 41, pp. 80-83.

some of those articles both countries pledged to setup new mechanism for the settling this dispute. In the 1996 CBMS both countries inserted the clause of clearing LAC from heavy infantry and hazardous chemicals can really be appreciated. Both the country also tried to observe each other's activities by exchanging data about military strength and reduction in their number which also was a concrete step taken by both of them for the consolidation of mutual understanding. All these provisions indicate the willingness of both the nations to make an environment favorable for the solution of this problem.

There is another side of the status quo in the agreement maintaining peace and tranquility along the Line of Actual Control that tells about the steps which will be taken by both the countries but it has failed to suggest that how the main problem can be resolved and on what basis the LAC will be turned in to international border between two countries. The other coming short of the accord is the time limit in with which both the countries would take steps to implement the provisions given in the articles of this (MPTA).

The second CBMS in the year 1996 is the extension of the prior agreement that these twelve articles agreement can be characterized as a "No war pact" between two countries. Once again much has been said in the articles but no provision is visible in the whole agreement that can bind both countries to implement decisions taken by them. Every aspect has been left upon their willingness that weakens the spirit of agreement. This (CBMS) directs both the countries to exchange maps regarding location of LAC as soon as possible but unfortunately China showed its reluctance of exchanging maps.

Though both (CBMS) are very sound in nature and these are the pioneer efforts in settling down the dispute but lack of interest by both countries has delayed

the process of taking concrete steps regarding Line of Actual Control. In spite of these criticisms we can not forget that these (CBMS) initiatives have laid down the foundation for further talks in the future. These agreements have also consolidated the mutual understanding between the two and have also geared up the process of rapprochement. This agreement raised several hopes in the hearts of citizens of both the countries that this problem will be solved in a tranquil atmosphere. The setting up of expert groups has laid down the foundation for clarifying and conformity of LAC and in the year 2002 the exchange of maps in the middle sector was the achievement of these groups.⁴⁴

For the first time in the year 1993 both the countries showed flexibility in their stand after Rajiv's visit of 1988 on the question of Line of Actual Control, the agreement "Maintaining Peace and Tranquility along the Line of Actual Control". It relates how both the countries have changed their stand on the border issue. The phrase "Peace and Tranquility" means that this problem can only be solved in a friendly atmosphere and both the countries realised that rigidity can not be a solution for delineation of LAC. Peace means that no war and Tranquility means friendliness. So the new mechanism for settling down of boundary problem set by Rajiv Gandhi got momentum in 1993.

THE NDA APPROACH TOWARDS BORDERDISPUTE

In 1996 the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) said in its manifesto that India should seek an early solution to the boundary problem with China. This simple statement was a radical departure from the past positions of New Delhi. This statement showed the willingness of NDA to solve the pending problem between two most vital nations of the Asia as well as the world. When the NDA government came

⁴⁴ Fang Tin-Sze, n.36, p.148.

into power with a full majority, it started the process of finding amicable solution for the border problem that culminated in the visit of A.B. Vajpayee the then Indian Prime Minister to China in June 2003.

While the NDA government showed its willingness to solve this problem at the earliest, during the (NDA) government several bilateral visits took place between senior leaders and officials of both countries to find amicable solution of this principle problem that have been lingering upon them for so long and which has been the major hurdle in the path of rapprochement but in the year 1998 India conducted its five nuclear tests and the anti Chinese statements by the then Indian defence Minister George Fernandez sighting China “Potential threat” for India’s security⁴⁵ and the letter written by Prime Minister Vajpayee to the then American President Bill Jefferson Clinton portraying China behind its nuclear tests⁴⁶ made China indignant. As a result, the bilateral relations who were progressing towards normalcy came to a grinding halt. The justification for the Pokhran tests conducted by citing a security threat from China was not taken too kindly by the Chinese leaders. A peeved China, did not respond positively to India's plea for holding the 11th round of the JWG for 11 months. The meeting of JWG could take place only in the month of April 1999 whereas it was scheduled in the month of May 1998⁴⁷ when India conducted its nuclear tests.

INDIA AND CHINA IN THE 21ST CENTURY

As mentioned above, that the two agreements on confidence building measures have lain down the foundation for talks in subsequent years to resolve their disputes both

⁴⁵ Amitabh Mattoo, *Pokhran and Beyond*, (Gitanjali Publishing House, New Delhi, 2000), pp.64-65.

⁴⁶ Ibid, pp.66-67.

⁴⁷ Bhartendu Kumar Singh, “Sino Indian Ties: The 11th Round of Joint Working Group Meeting, Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, January,11,1999, See. www.ipcs.org/ipcs/issueIndex .

the countries utilised this opportunity and slowly but gradually started journey towards its destination. However the 1998 Pokhran episode derailed the process a bit but the sincerity and wisdom of both Titans did not let this opportunity to go away from their hands and soon they returned back on the track.

In the year 1998-1999 the Indian government released a statement that she reiterated how we seeks good relations with all her neighbors including China. Further it stressed that the five Principles of peaceful co-existence, jointly enunciated by India and China, are of continuing relevance to the development of mutual relations and that India seeks a relationship in which both sides are responsive to each other's concerns. The statement also reiterated that India remains committed to the process of dialogue to resolve outstanding differences and to the development of friendly, cooperative, good neighborly and mutually beneficial relationship with China.

The India-China border has remained generally peaceful. Both sides have reiterated their commitment to the maintenance of peace and tranquility in accordance with the Agreement on Border Peace and Tranquility (1993) and Agreement on Confidence Building Measures in the Military Field along the Line of Actual Control in the India-China Border Areas (1996).

The Joint Working Group (JWG) on the boundary question was set up by a decision of the Prime Ministers of the two countries in 1988, to seek a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable settlement of the boundary question. The vacuum which has been created as the aftermath of Pokhran-2 incident between India and china was filled with the visit of the then Indian External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh to China in 1999. On January 14 to 16 Jaswant Singh was sent to Beijing where both

side reiterated that they no longer perceive any threat from each other.⁴⁸ Feb 22: In his inaugural address to the budget session of Parliament, President KR Narayanan said, "India seeks to strengthen and deepen its historic and friendly relations with China and is looking forward to continuing the dialogue with that country."⁴⁹

In 2000 the then Indian President K.R. Naraynan went to China and held talks with the then Chinese counterpart Jiang Zemin. During his talks with President Jiang Zemin, he brought up the issue, only to be reminded that such "difficult historical disputes" could not be settled overnight and needed both time and patience from both sides.⁵⁰ Mr. Jiang pointed out that China had resolved most of its other border disputes, including those with Russia, the Central Asian Republics and Vietnam, but the border problem with India involved some knotty questions, and rushing it would serve no purpose.⁵¹

Under an agreement signed in 1993, both sides are committed to solve the border issue. Mr. Narayanan stressed; he also said that right now, to make a meaningful initiative, the two sides should exchange maps on the LAC. But the Chinese leaders made it clear that they were not in a hurry. However, a spokesman of the Chinese Foreign Ministry said that his government could consider a "comprehensive agreement" with India to settle the border and "other related issues"⁵² between the two countries. He added that the groundwork for such an agreement was laid when Beijing and New Delhi signed a border accord in September, 1995.

⁴⁸ Sujit Dutta, "Sino Indian Diplomatic Negotiations: A Preliminary Assessment, Paper Presented at the IDSA Fellows Seminar on January 19, 1999.

⁴⁹ Mira Sinha Bhattacharjea, *India and China: Principles of Constructive*, in Mira Sinha Bhattacharjea and CV Ranganathan, *China Report*, vol. 36 n.3, (Sage Publications, New Delhi, 2000), p.388.

⁵⁰ Gaurang Desai, *India China For Fair Settlement of Border Dispute*, *The Times of India*, New Delhi, May 30, 2000.

⁵¹ Sataybrata Rai Choudhri, *Sino Indian Border Dispute: Why the President Drew a Break*, *The Tribune*, (Chandigarh), September, 12, 2000.

⁵² *Ibid.*

In 2001, the senior member of Chinese peoples Congress (CPC) Li Peng visited India. Li told an Indian news agency before he left for India. The Chinese leader's visit was a clear signal that Sino-Indian relations have come a long way after the troubled post-Pokhran phase. Speaking to the media in Beijing, he emphasized the need for patience and the right conditions to settle the issue. "I hope, in the spirit of mutual understanding, and mutual accommodation, this issue can be resolved. Of course given its complexity, it requires patience and the right conditions for its settlement," he said that the issue could be resolved provided "the people and the leadership of our two countries sincerely hope for a solution."⁵³ Li's comments on the border issue were yet another signal that China was ready for some hard bargaining to settle the issue. The Chinese side indicated that it would make significant concessions if India was willing to reciprocate. It emphasised that the border issue was a "sensitive" one for China too.

China has settled its land border disputes with almost all of its neighbors. Li Peng told the media before he came to India that he would be satisfied if the trip would "contribute in some way" to the settlement of the dispute with India. Senior Indian Foreign Ministry officials, however, gave the impression that they were not in a hurry to settle the long-running dispute, and that they would prefer to let it remain on the back-burner. During his visit, Li Peng also talked about a lack of understanding between the two countries on "certain issues" left behind by history. But in his meeting with Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee, he expressed satisfaction at the progress made on the clarification of the LAC and hoped that the process would be completed at the earliest.⁵⁴ The two sides had exchanged maps of the central sector of

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ John Cherian, Le Peng in India, *Frontline*, India's National Magazine, (The Hindu Publication Chennai), vol.18, February, 16, 2001, p.14.

the boundary for the first time.⁵⁵ Both Li Peng and Vajpayee expressed the hope that the process of demarcating the border would be completed soon.

The Experts Group and the JWG's met in the subsequent months to expedite the process. Speaking at the India International Centre in New Delhi, Li Peng said that mistrust and lack of understanding continued to create problems between Indian and China. Building "greater trust" between the two countries was a priority, he said.⁵⁶ He said that China "has never taken India as a threat, nor do we intend to pose a threat"⁵⁷ to India. The Chinese statement clears that Beijing's mood was reflecting clearly that how willing it was to solve the pending matters and how both countries can go together in 21st century. Li also invited the Indian Prime Minister to visit China to meet the Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao for further talks on border as well as other issues.

On January 13, 2002 the Chinese Premier Zhu Rongji visited India and met with the then Indian Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee. Both expressed hopes to resolve border problem though the emphasis of this visit was on the enhancement of economic ties. Zhu Rongji also invited the Indian Prime Minister to China. In the same year 2002 the then Indian External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh visited China and held talks with Chinese foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan. He expressed hopes for the betterment of relationship between two countries. In his meeting with Jaswant Singh, Tang Jiaxuan in a friendly atmosphere said that bilateral relations have maintained a high momentum and the earlier visit to India by Premier Zhu Rongji's in January had further promoted ties between the two countries. Tang also noted that

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid, p.15-16.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

China is expecting the formal visit of Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to China later in the year.⁵⁸

According to Tang China and India, as two largest developing countries in the world, have broad common interests in advancing the multi-polarisation process, protecting interests of developing countries and working to forge a new international order. Stance the need for the two countries to strengthen coordination and cooperation. Tang pointed out that in order to push forward the bilateral relations the two sides should maintain the momentum of the exchanges of high-level visits, strengthen the mutually beneficial economic and trade cooperation and further expand the personnel exchanges to increase mutual understanding, And both sides should also actively promote the process of resolving border issues through practical negotiations,⁵⁹ Tang said.

Jaswant Singh agreed on Tang's viewpoints concerning the bilateral relations. He said that the Indian government attaches high importance to the long-term constructive relations of cooperation with China on the basis of the five principles of peaceful co-Existence-Panchsheel Premier Vajpayee expressed his thanks to Premier Zhu for the invitation to China, saying he is expecting to pay a formal visit later in the year. Singh said that as two great countries, both India and China should not view each other as a threat. Singh also stressed that India would, as always, hold to the One China Principle and would never allow the Dalai Lama's Tibetan clique to launch political activities in India.⁶⁰

Singh also proposed a series of concrete suggestions on strengthening the dialogue and cooperation between the two countries and solving the remaining

⁵⁸ *The Hindu*, (New Delhi), February, 25, 2002.

⁵⁹ Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan Held Talks with Indian Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh, April, 01, 2002, See, www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/wjb/zizq/yzs/gilb

⁶⁰ Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan Held Talks with Indian Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh, April, 01, 2002, See, www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/wjb/zizq/yzs/gilb

historical issues between two. Tang agreed on these suggestions. The two sides reached a broad consensus in this area and were satisfied with the results.

Jaswant Singh said made it clear that on the question of line of actual control (LAC) the major steps are being taken. At a question answer session, Jaswant replied that as per the procedure followed, India has have taken the middle sector first, exchanged the maps at a certain agreed scale so that the LAC and areas of difference are identified. He also said that the process has been completed in the case of the middle sector and later begin with the western sector and then move on to the eastern sector.

When questioned whether the areas of differences been identified, Singh replied, "We have identified the areas of differences. There is very little scope for descriptive or definitional confusion. This is the confirmation and clarification of the LAC and not the boundary." Replying to another question he said that there is a problem of different names for common pasturages in areas such as Mana and these are being resolved.

Indeed this is a part of the process of LAC clarification, which takes into account difference in names on both sides. For instance, progress has been made in exchange of vital hydrological data on the Brahmaputra River. I had proposed that we exchange hydrological data on Brahmaputra River, which is called by a different name in China and there is no difference on what Brahmaputra is. He also admitted that he had not listed all the agreements that India and China hadreached. Shri Singh also said, "We should take this one step at a time as I inherited a problem which is half-a-century old. I would much rather move first on the LAC, define the existing differences, thereafter strengthen CBMs and then move on to the border question. We are moving in accordance to a carefully thought out step-by-step manner in resolving

this complex issue, which is apparently intractable. I do not believe this issue cannot be resolved.”⁶¹

Consequent to these statements hopes of clarifying LAC were intensified since such kinds of steps were not taken before and to intensify this process the then Indian Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee went to China the subsequent year. By now the tone had been set by the efforts done by the officials of both the countries and a meeting at the highest level had been a waiting fortunately in June when Indian Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee paid an official visit to china and held talks with the senior most leaders of China. This visit can also be characterised as a stone mile in the Sino Indian relationship.

A.B. VAJPAYEE’S VISIT AND SINO INDIAN TIES

Indian Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee visited China on a six days long trip from 22nd June to 27th June 2003 in which the he discussed several issues with the Chinese counterpart. Wen Jiabao and other Chinese officials like, President Hu Jintao of the People's Republic of China, Chairman Jiang Zemin of the Central Military Commission, Chairman Wu Bangguo of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress and Vice President Zeng Qinghong of the People's Republic of China and reached some agreements regarding border problem as well as economic developments.

This was the first visit by Indian Prime Minister in the initial phase of 21st century and it was also significant because both the countries reciprocated each other’s efforts and moved further to resolve pending problems. After the visit, it seemed if they were on the verge of settling the issues hindering its relations for so long. On 23 June, 2003 a joint declaration was issued by the Peoples Republic of China and the Republic of

⁶¹ *South China Post*, (Hong Kong), April, 02, 2002.

India to go by the documents now available for wider circulation. The Declaration clearly makes several important decisions. They include regular high-level exchanges between the two countries, a Joint Study Group to explore complementarities between the two countries and submit a study report by the end of June 2004,⁶² and above all appointment of special representatives to provide a “political perspective” to their ongoing boundary negotiations. Last but not least, the declaration highlights the two nations’ perspectives of each other that “the common interests of the two sides outweigh their differences”, “the two nations do not pose a threat to each other” and “neither side will use or threaten to use force against the other”.⁶³ This principle stresses two points: differences should be addressed through peaceful means in a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable manner and differences should not be allowed to affect the overall development of bilateral relations.

On the question of boundary, the two sides exchanged views on the China-India boundary question and expounded their respective positions. They reiterated their readiness to seek a fair reasonable and mutually acceptable solution through consultations on an equal footing. The two sides agreed that pending an ultimate solution, they should work together to maintain peace and tranquility in the border areas, and reiterated their commitment to continue implementation of the agreements signed for this purpose, including the clarification of the line of actual control.

The two sides agreed to appoint a special representative each to explore, from the political perspective of the overall bilateral relationship and the framework of a boundary settlement.

⁶²Swram singh and Zhou Gencheng, "Vajpayee's China Visit: An Overview", See, www.sis.org.cn/english/journal

⁶³ Swram singh and Zhou Gencheng, "Vajpayee's China Visit: An Overview", See, www.sis.org.cn/english/journal

The declaration also mentioned about the Indian side recognizes that the Tibet Autonomous Regions part of the territory of the People's Republic of China and reiterated that it does not allow Tibetans to engage in anti-China political activities in India. The Chinese side expresses its appreciation for the Indian position and noted that it is firmly opposed to any attempt and action aimed at splitting China and bringing about "independence of Tibet". The Indian side recalled that India was among the first countries to recognize that there is one China and its one China policy remains unaltered.

Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao said the declaration he and Vajpayee would sign identifies the goal and guideline principles for the two countries' relations, and outline a plan for comprehensive cooperation in all spheres. The document indicated that China-India bilateral ties had entered a new phase. The prestigious paper of Beijing's Zhongguo Jingji Shibao emphasizes that Vajpayee being the first Indian prime minister to visit China in 10 years. It also wrote to say that this signifies that India's suspicion and fear of a powerful China is gradually diminishing.

Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee had wrapped up his visit to China by saying the agreements reached would help bring an end to the nations' territorial disputes. Mr. Vajpayee, speaking in Shanghai said the appointment of special border envoys was a significant step in solving a "vexed problem".⁶⁴ India's National Security Adviser Brajesh Mishra and Chinese vice Foreign Minister Dai Bingguo were named as envoys to the border talks.

The prime minister praised the "cordial and fruitful talks" with Chinese leaders and said he had achieved his objective of strengthening ties and increasing co-operation. In a statement on conclusion of his visit, he pointed to the signing of 10 agreements

⁶⁴ Vajpayee Hails China trip Success, BBC News, South Asia, See, www.news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia

and a joint declaration on the development of relations. Prime Minister Vajpayee also invited Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao to visit India before leaving China. That also indicates the willingness of both nations to enhance its relations and that they do not want this spirit to be disturbed any more. Mr. Vajpayee, the first Indian prime minister to visit to China for 10 years, said relations had been "transformed" as the two sides sought new ways to overcome their differences.

Though the visit ended after achieving some goals and the steps taken by both countries to improve its relations in the new millennium were appreciated by several generalists, intellectual's political analysts and academicians but the whole process could not satisfy those persons fully. That is why this visit was criticised by many of them but in totality this initiative taken by both the countries can be described as historic one. If one should try to analyse or scrutinise this visit, then it can be described as follows. The outcome of the visit is partly disconcerting, partly questionable and partly gratifying. The disconcerting aspect relates to Sikkim and Tibet.

The BBC 's Asia analyst, Jill Mcgivering, said that the breakthrough on borders represents a quiet shift from political grandstanding to quiet pragmatism.⁶⁵ The BBC's Sanjeev Srivastava, who had been following Mr. Vajpayee on his trip, said relations between Delhi and Beijing are now at their best since the 1962. However, he also says the joint declaration is in reality as much diplomatic fudging as genuine progress in areas of differences.⁶⁶ The most important issue of boundary problem had been given much wait age in that summit As reported in the press, the Indian side had also been assured that the follow-up actions like rectifying China's official maps and official records as also recognizing Indian passports of the Sikkim will be taken in due course

⁶⁵ Vajpayee Visit Under Scrutiny, See, www.w3c.org/TR/1999/REC-html

⁶⁶ Vajpayee Visit Under Scrutiny, See, www.w3c.org/TR/1999/REC-html

of time. It is in that spirit that this decision on Sikkim clearly marks a historic shift in China's attitude towards the boundary question.

Putting together these two initiatives during Vajpayee's China visit - i.e. the elevation of boundary negotiations framework and signing of the MOU on a new border trade route through Tibet and Sikkim - will go a long way in resolving their major difference on the larger boundary question as also facilitating China's strategy of developing its western region by providing it an easy access to expand its trade with this larger region. South China Morning Post wrote to say that the key is for the leaders and people of both countries to have a long-term footing, and from now on strive to maintain and deepen friendship and co-operation.

Hong Kong's South China Morning Post termed the Vajpayee visit as "historic". Their joint declaration on the sensitive border disputes and the question of Tibet marks a significant step in the right direction," the paper wrote. But it thinks there is still a long way to go. "The first such visit for 10 years was never expected to resolve the difficult diplomatic issues," it commented.

The Hindustan Times breaks ranks however, viewed this as a reality check on Vajpayee's China visit is needed because of the hype. The paper listed examples of what it saw as Indian diplomatic "know-tows" - "window-dressing to showcase the visit". Another comment was that not only did the Vajpayee team forget that reciprocity is fundamental to diplomacy, it also agreed to part with whatever leverage India had been left with. The Times of India also urged caution to say: "Conventional wisdom would have it that India and China arrived at a breakthrough understanding," In India, the Hindi-language Dainik Bhaskar was upbeat by commenting that the ice that had accumulated over the years on India-China relations has now started melting gradually.

In the above mentioned views expressed by all prestigious papers of both India and China gives clear picture of Vajpayee's visit. It seems that they all are quite hopeful and optimistic about the future of both countries. But we should not forget that every option has two sides and it is not worthy to look at the shiny part of that option. The former Indian foreign Minister J.N. Dikshit pointed out that the satisfaction over Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's visit to China stands diminished in Indian public perception by the confrontation between the Chinese and Indian border personnel when Vajpayee was still in China.

The incident took place at Asaphi La sector of the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Arunachal Pradesh, a sector about which there is difference of opinion between the two countries as to the location of the LAC.⁶⁷ Though the incident was more or less accidental, what is of concern is the manner in which the Chinese side handled the situation. According to reports in the media, the Chinese were aggressive in their discussions. They detained the Indian personnel, disarmed and interrogated them and then sent them back to the Indian side of the LAC (according to Chinese perception) after which their arms were returned.

The controversy was further exacerbated by the assertion of the spokesperson of the foreign ministry that China does not recognise Arunachal Pradesh as a part of India.

On the question of Sikkim China made its stand clear by saying that "Sikkim issue can not be solved overnight." In BEIJING June 24 hailing the latest Sino-Indian Declaration and the memorandum on bilateral border trade as aspects of "a win-win solution" to the differences between New Delhi and Beijing, the Chinese Foreign

⁶⁷ J. N. Dixit, *Appeasement will not pay in dealing with China*, *South Asia Monitor*, See, www.southasiamonitor.org/opinion/aug/02dixit.html

Ministry today took the definitive position that the Sikkim question "cannot be solved overnight" To a specific question from the correspondent of the leading Indian daily, *The Hindu*, the Foreign Ministry spokesman, Kong Quan, defined Beijing's position on Sikkim with a touch of high diplomatic nuance. He said: "Sikkim is an enduring question left over from history. We have to respect history. (But) we have to take into consideration realistic factors (too)." Adding this accent on "realistic factors"⁶⁸, the spokesman delivered the punch-line to say that the issue concerning Sikkim's political status "cannot be solved overnight".

India has admitted that the Tibet Autonomous Region is (the) inalienable part of the territory of China. On the question of Sikkim, China verbally accepted that it is an integral part of India but in the joint declaration, Sikkim has not been mentioned apart from this pronouncements regarding Sikkim that "Sikkim issue can not be solved over night ." generated several doubts in the minds of Indians from the Chinese side. These were the negative statements which made Indian people unhappy when Indian Prime Minister had been accepted Tibet as an inalienable part of China and yet what might be the reason for not recognizing Sikkim as a part of India by China? This generates several doubts in the minds of intellectuals. Secondly on the question of Arunachal Pradesh China's stand is under suspicion which slightly wounded the soul of Indian path-braking visit of 2003 by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

EVALUATION

The Sino-Indian relations are the complex mix of sweet and bitter memories. Their experiences in the last fifty five years did not allow them to come closer as much as the two most important actors of a continent must come. The inexorable ramification

⁶⁸ Sikkim Issue can not be solved Overnight, *The Hindu*, (New Delhi), June, 25,2003.

of the 1962 war scars the relations most and this episode has generated several doubts in the minds of both the countries which have been lingering upon till date and are not allowing both giants of Asia to forget their bitter memories and improve relations at a rapid pace. Though the efforts have been taking place between two titans and the phase of rapprochement which has been initiated with the path-breaking visit of Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's in the year 1988 could not reach its zenith.

The most important issue about the Line of Actual Control that led both countries in to a situation of wars could not be solved till date despite several the efforts by both the countries. The fifteen rounds of (JWG) and thirteen rounds of experts groups have been completed but the tangible come out is still expected. In spite of this, both India and China are quite hopeful for the settlement of their disputes in near future. This hope also gets reflected in the inaugural address by Yashwant Sinha External Affairs Minister at the Fifth Asian Security Conference organized by the Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis, New Delhi when he said, "let me however assure everyone gathered here that India's approach to relations with China is and will remain forward looking and infused with a sense of optimism. Further he said, "India's policies will not be based on fear of Chinese power or envy of China's economic achievements. They will be based on the conviction that a prosperous India is inevitable. So is a strong and prosperous China. It is, therefore, logical, reasonable and in the enlightened self-interest of both that the two countries learn not just to live with each other but also address differences and build on what is common. Further, both India and China are too large and too strong to be contained or cowed down by any country, including each other."⁶⁹

⁶⁹ Inaugural Address By Shri Yashwant Sinha External Affairs Minister At Inaugural Address By Shri Yashwant Sinha External Affairs Minister At The Fifth Asian Security Conference Organised By The Institute For Defence Study, By IDSA (New Delhi), 27, January, 2001, <http://meaindia.nic.in/speech>

A substantial measure of success has been achieved by now in the endeavor to establish mutual understanding between India and China. Despite the fact that the India-China border spans thousands of kilometers of territory and there exist material differences in perception, the two countries have been successful in maintaining relative peace and tranquility for over twenty-five years. This achievement should in no way be underestimated. Moreover, the process of clarifying the Line of Actual Control along the India-China border based on the institutional framework provided by the important agreements of 1993 and 1996 is making progress.

India-China relations have diversified and a series of dialogue mechanisms are in place including subjects such as counter terrorism, security issues, policy planning and the boundary question. Functional delegations to learn from each other's experiences are criss crossing each other's countries. High-level visits are also being regularly exchanged. Premier Zhu Rongji visited India and Prime Minister Vajpayee also visited China. Both countries realise, however, that much more ground remains to be traversed.⁷⁰ So asserted the Indian external Affairs Minister.

This sort of statement clearly indicates that India knows that the problem can only be solved through diplomatic means. So in the later part of his speech Yashwant Sinha paid much emphasis upon exchange of high level meetings between two nations. Mr. Sinha also said that much goodwill has to be covered by both the countries that relate the complexity of the problem. Apart from this, rapprochement is not an easy task to do. Only a visit or two can not change the whole perspective. Both the nations will have to go a long way to resolve its disputes.

⁷⁰ Inaugural Address By Shri Yashwant Sinha External Affairs Minister At Inaugural Address By Shri Yashwant Sinha External Affairs Minister At The Fifth Asian Security Conference Organised By The Institute For Defence Study, By IDSA (New Delhi), 27, January, 2001, <http://meaindia.nic.in/speech>

If we look back at these developments, the “border” problem has been the main hurdle in the path of rapprochement. Then it will suffice to say that both the countries have viewed each other with several doubts and suspicion. In the initial phase of this problem, the leaders of both the countries took a rigid stand and allowed this problem to grow more which resulted in a border war of 1962. After the border war, Sikkim and latter Sumdorong Chu incidents shattered the hopes of resolving this dispute.

The visit of Rajiv Gandhi and setting up of Joint Working Group pushed both countries in the direction of resolving dispute. In the 1990 for the first time the aggressive stand has been changed and agreement like Peace and Tranquility along the Line of Actual Control concluded. The exchange of high level visits and sincerity of both the nations resulted in a fruitful manner. One should say that the environment was never as propitious as it is today for both the countries to achieve their goals and objectives.

On the question of boundary settlement it can be said that China has solved its border problem with its other neighbouring countries on the basis of give and take relations. India has also taken this policy into account and settles this problem on the basis of “east west swap.” It will be nothing but an ideal situation to think the retrievals of a chunk of territory in the Aksai Chin which had been annexed by China in the 1962 war. Over more China is comparatively a much stronger actor in Asia vis-à-vis India so it is but natural that one can disagree but can not stop China to do that. When the Indian leaders can recognise Tibet as an inalienable part of China then why they are so reluctant to settle rest of the issue on above mentioned basis? That is the moot questions.

We can accordingly redraw our western sector boundary with China along the general line south of the Karakoram Pass to the Chip Chap river valley, then on to Chushul and Spangur Lake to end up at Demchok. This alignment may become the formal Sino-Indian boundary in the west.⁷¹

Aksai Chin is nothing but an ice desert and has no geographical, economic or military values just like Siachen. Demitting this region to China should cause no heartburn to us- we only loose some ego! In any case there is precious little we can do to retake Aksai Chin other than making the usual pretentious vote bank noises during elections.

Though both India and China agreed to enhance mutual understanding following the five principles of peaceful co-existence ,non interference in the internal matters of a country , both of them will poses no threat to each other's territorial integrity and so on but China has violated this commitment while attacking in the Asaphi La sector of the Indian state Arunachal Pradesh The former Indian foreign secretary J.N. Dikshit pointed out that the controversy was further exacerbated by the assertion of the spokesperson of the foreign ministry that China does not recognise Arunachal Pradesh as a part of India.

In another statement the Foreign Ministry issued described this incident as an accidental one. It further said Chinese aggression was the result of provocation of a statement by an Indian journalist that Arunachal Pradesh is an integral part of India. When necessary the two sides shall jointly check and determine the segments of the LAC where they have different views as to its alignment. Article 4 of the 1993 Treaty clearly states: "In case of contingencies or other problems arising in the areas along the LAC, the two sides will deal with them through meetings and friendly

⁷¹J K Dutt, Brass trakes of China India Border Tussle, (New Delhi) 18, April, 2002, See, <http://meaindia.nic.in/opinion>

consultations between border personnel of the two countries.” The Chinese patrol challenging the Indian patrol, disarming them, detaining them, interrogating them, is in clear violation of these two articles, leaving aside the general spirit and content of the Sino-Indian agreements on the LAC and CBMs of 1993 and 1996, respectively.⁷²

As far as the Chinese spokesman categorically asserting China's claims on Arunachal Pradesh is concerned, it is not sufficient for India to say that the Statement was provoked because of an Indian journalist's question and that the Chinese have not said anything new. It is also not enough to state in passing that Arunachal Pradesh is a part of India.

Being measured and reasonable should not diminish the clarity and the firmness in the articulation of the country's positions and policies. A formal statement categorically stating that the Chinese border patrol's behavior was in violation of the 1993 and 1996 agreements and that Arunachal Pradesh is an inalienable part of the territory of the Indian republic should have been made with adequate publicity. The same points should be conveyed formally and firmly to the Chinese government underlining that in the interest of continuing the initiatives for peace and normalcy, Beijing should be more reasonable and tempered in its responses so that misunderstandings due to intemperate communications, which spoiled Sino-Indian relations between 1956 and 1961, are not repeated.

India would do well to keep in mind Winston Churchill's advice on appeasement in inter-state relations: *"Appeasement out of fear or just to avoid unpleasantness can be disastrous. Appeasement from a position of clear policies and strength might be the surest, and perhaps the only road to peace."*

⁷² J. N. Dixit, *Appeasement will not pay in dealing with China*, *Opinion*, (New Delhi), June, 30, 2003, See, www.southasiamonitor.org/opinion/aug/02dixit.html

This statement is very true to a large extent regarding Sino India relations. It is true that China is a larger nation vis-à-vis India but India should put its points strongly before China and must not accept the Chinese demands in a hurry.

In Vajpayee's visit China has got what it wanted but on the question of Sikkim its stand was dubious in nature. Secondly China did not give any assurance on the question of Arunachal Pradesh and the incident took place during the Indian Prime Minister visit tells a sad story. More over the statement China said that Arunachal Pradesh is not an integral part of India generates several doubts in the minds of Indian officials.

These are some pronouncements that still hinder the process of delineation of LAC but losing hopes can not be the solution of any problem. There are other developments that are taking place like functioning of JWG. The Joint Working Group that was set up in the wake of the historic visit to China by the then Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1988, the JWG has been an important instrument for speeding up the normalization process. Its twin objective of ensuring peace and tranquility in the border areas and making concrete recommendations for an overall solution of the vexed boundary question laid the foundation for the later strides taken in bilateral relations. Indeed, in the ten meetings of the JWG Between 1989 to 1997,⁷³ the two countries have come a long way from their dramatically opposite positions on the Sino-Indian border to create a Conducive environment for resolution of the problem. This was done by the evolution of several Confidence and Security-Building Measures (CBM's).

For instance, There was an agreement on meetings between the military commanders of the two sides taking place at least twice a year and setting up 'hotline'

⁷³ J. N. Dixit, *Appeasement will not pay in dealing with China*, *Opinion*, (New Delhi), June, 30, 2003, See, www.southasiamonitor.org/opinion/aug/02dixit.html

links between These commanders (1992); opening up of more border trading posts and measures for increased transparency about military positions and activities along the Line of Actual Control LAC (1993); avoidance of troop concentrations (1994); and dismantling military posts in some areas (1995).

Following an agreement reached during Prime Minister Nersimha Rao's visit to China in September 1993, a Sino-Indian Expert Group was set up in February 1994 to assist the JWG comprising high ranking diplomats, surveyors, and military personnel from both sides. At its 10th round of talks held in New Delhi in August 1997, the JWG ratified the agreement on extending CBM's to the military field as decided during President Jiang Zemin's visit to New Delhi in November 1996. The 11th round of JWG meeting had been postponed for a year due to Pokhran incident but now both the JWG and Experts Group are performing well and because of these groups the exchange of maps in the middle sector have become possible. China is a powerful nation as compare to India and that is why China always tries to put can upper hand over India.

It will be neither in China's nor in India's favour to linger on its boundary dispute and obstruct the path of rapprochement which can take both titans of Asia in a new phase of relations in present century. Both India and China both are showing their willingness to resolve all disputes through peaceful means and through diplomatic channels. The foundation of its talks will be the "Five Principles" jointly initiated by both countries in the year 1954 and commitment towards those principles have been repeated several times by both the giants of Asia.

The key of this whole process is the interest taken by both the countries and their commitment towards settling down the pending issues can only give them fruitful results. The latest developments are bringing some hopes that these problems

will not remain as hurdles in the path of rapprochement in near future. Both the countries have recognised each other's potential in economic field and they are trying to capitalise on there by promoting trade and setting joint ventures in each other's states.

In spite of all these positives moves some way or another suspicion towards China gets reflected in India's actions that do not allow her to go smoothly on the path of rapprochement. Secondly China's continuous support to India's traditional rival Pakistan in her nuclear program generates many doubts in India's mind. Apart from this India have enough examples that tell the whole story of China's nuclear aid to Pakistan China has also delivered m9- M11 missiles to Pakistan late in the last century.

China has also viewed India as a country having hegemonic tendency. It also has a vision of sighting India to be a major actor in this region which more or less has compelled to make its policies accordingly. These are the issues which are the main obstacles in its path of rapprochement India's former Ambassador to China C.V. Ranganathan says that it will be futile to think that China will give up all its ties with her most loyal friend at the cost of improving its ties with India.⁷⁴

The best way is to resolve the most important problem of boundary settlement is on the acceptance of proposal of "east west swap." Both countries must try to focus more in economic field which can consolidate the spirit of mutual understanding and will also remove suspicion from the minds of both countries about each other's stand. China should analyse that if India has the tendency of hegemonism then what China is doing by pressurising Nepal and Bhutan. The Chinese actions with Pakistan can not

⁷⁴ C.V. Ranganathan, "Sino – Indian Relations in the New Millennium: Challenges and Prospects", *China Report*, vol. 37, no. 2 (Sage Publications, 2001), p.34.

be ignored. If one could analyse those actions then China's internal will to weak India by supporting its rival can be exposed. But apart from this if both the countries try to built an atmosphere of cordiality and rather than looking at each other with suspicion and doubts they should give up all their anxieties and try to promote their connections in every possible field.

The ice which has been frozen between the two for many years will take some time to melt. It will not wise to think that everything could be solved and all right in a jiffy. Rapprochement is not an easy task. It is a path, full of thorns and it is the duty of both countries to clear all these thorns and make the path smooth to walk on.

CHAPTER-IV

MANAGING SINO-INDIAN NUCLEAR DIFFERENCES

HISTORY OF SINO-INDIAN NUCLEAR PROGRAMME

After the end of the major armed conflict that took place in the borders between India and China, the latter within two years became a nuclear weapon state as it tested in Lop Nur in 1964, which is situated approximately 265 kilometers south-east of Urumqi in the Xinjian region. China has conducted one test on average every 284 days till date.¹ In the very initial stages it prompted India as well as to go ahead with its nuclear programme that started even before China went ahead with its nuclear tests. But the major thrust of going ahead with the nuclear programme was achieved through the Lop Nur tests.

India and the leaders that were associated with the independence movement never favoured nuclear arms or never agreed India to enter such race. It was also against India going ahead on the path of mass weaponisation, as they were the followers of the non-violence movement. Nehru himself joined the Non Aligned Movement so that the nation can avoid getting entangled with the then nuclear arms race that was persisting incessantly between the US and the Soviets. Moreover, when war ultimately would come it would be nothing else but a nuclear war. This would be the greatest disaster, Nehru explained, "For war today means total destruction of humanity, without victory or profit to any nation or bloc of nations."² Based on these

¹ China's Nuclear Weapons and Testing Programs, *Green Peace*, April 1996, see <http://archive.greenpeace.org/comms/nukes/ctbt/read11.html>

² John W Garver, *Protracted contest: Sino-Indian Rivalry in the Twentieth century*, (Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 314 - 315.

premises; by the early 1950s Indian defence as well as foreign policy was to work for the eventual abolition of all nuclear weapons as part of a programme of general disarmament. But with the defeat that it had to bear in the 1962 war in the hands of the Chinese and later China going ahead with the nuclear option, India had to change her nuclear stand and started seriously thinking about trying out the nuclear option at hand.

The first test made by Chinese scientists was an atomic bomb in 1964. The second significant test was in 1967, which was China's sixth nuclear test was on June 17, which was a hydrogen bomb. From then on China intermittently has gone ahead with testing nuclear weapons in the Lop Nur test range.³ As M.J. Vinod has commented that, "India's nuclear programme must be understood in the light of the defeat at the hands of the Chinese in 1962. The Chinese nuclear test on October 16 1964, further added to this sense of insecurity".⁴

As Ming Zhang has commented that "before conducting its first nuclear test in 1974, India's nuclear policy was directed toward the perceived threat that it had from China".⁵ India went ahead with the nation's first nuclear test in 1974 in the Pokhran test site that is also known as Pokhran I, after the May 1998 tests. Immediately after the tests were made, the US administration put the entire Indira Gandhi administration under considerable stress that made the Indian government to shelve the nuclear doctrine that they had taken, which remained shelved for the forthcoming two decades or so.

³ China's Nuclear Weapons, Present Capabilities, Nuclear Weapon Archive, see <http://nuclearweaponarchive.org/China/ChinaArsenal.html>

⁴ M.J. Vinod, "Nuclear Proliferation in South Asia: Current and Future Trends", *Strategic Analysis* (New Delhi), vol. XVIII, no. 12, March 1996, p. 1608.

⁵ Ming Zhang, *China's Changing Nuclear Posture: Reactions to the South Asian Nuclear Tests*, (Washington, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1999), p. 12.

China's support to Pakistan in developing Pakistan's nuclear weaponisation became an eye sore for the Indian political leadership. Especially, the reports that has been published by the American intelligence lately, shows that the Indian perception of threat that it had with such symmetry that China and Pakistan shared, was not uncalled for. Newly declassified U.S. government documents made public on Friday March 5, 2004, shed new light on almost three decades of U.S. unease over China's suspected cooperation with Pakistan's nuclear weapons program. For 15 years, over the course of four U.S. administrations, China ducked and denied repeated American inquiries about Beijing's cooperation with Pakistan's nuclear weapons program. But one of the briefing papers released on that day stated: "We have concluded that China has provided assistance to Pakistan's program to develop a nuclear weapon capability" in the areas of fissile material production and possibly also in nuclear device design.⁶ This assistance increased in the eighties and nineties as well as when China assigned its scientists to Pakistan for helping her out in its nuclear project. China has also delivered five thousand ring magnates used for the enrichment of uranium. Chinese clandestine support to Pakistan in its nuclear program and transfer of missile technology made India anxious about Chinese intentions.⁷

POKHRAN II NUCLEAR TESTS OF INDIA

On May 11th and 13th 1998 India conducted its nuclear tests in Pokhran, which attracted world's attention towards this region of South Asia. India became a nuclear power immediately and stood second after China in the world's largest continent Asia. On May 28 and 29, India's traditional rival Pakistan went ahead with a tit for tat nuclear tests.

⁶ Carol Giacomo. "Documents link China to Pakistan Nuclear Program", *Reuter*, March 5 2004, see www.reuters.com/locales/news/Article.jsp;40492c77:8dbda9f938da783c

⁷ Kanti Bajpai and Amitabh Mattoo, eds., *The Peacock and the Dragon* (New Delhi: Har Anand Publications, 2000), p. 427.

The entire world political actors came down heavily on such decisions taken by the Indian and Pakistani decision makers. The Indian then Defence Minister, George Fernandes came out with an explosive statement to make the nuclear tests logical. He commented that "China is potentially threat number one". He went on saying that "China has its nuclear weapons stockpiled in Tibet along India's borders. I'm sure they are directed elsewhere also... The potential threat from China is greater from than that from Pakistan and any person who is concerned about India's security must agree with that".⁸

Then came the revelation of the letter that was written by the Indian Prime Minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee to the then US President Bill Clinton, which was revealed by the *New York Times*, where he clearly mentioned that "I have been deeply concerned at the deteriorating security environment, especially the nuclear environment, faced by India for some years past. We have an overt nuclear weapon state on our borders; a state, which committed armed aggression against India in 1962. Although our relations with that country have improved in the last decade or so, an atmosphere of distrust persists mainly due to the unresolved border problem. To add to the distrust that country has materially helped another neighbour of ours to become a covert nuclear weapons state. At the hands of this bitter neighbour we have suffered three aggressions in the last 50 years".⁹

These tests left several implications upon the relationship of India and China the two most populous nations of the world. The dawn of its relations came under a shadow of these nuclear tests conducted in Pokhran.

⁸ *South China Morning Post*, May 4 1998, see https://archive.scmp.com/May_4_Indian

⁹ *New York Times*, May 13, 1998, p. A12.

Unfortunately, this was not Mr. Fernandes' first such statement. Days before the arrival of General Fu, when Pakistan test fired its Inter Regional Ballistic Missile (IRBM), Ghauri, he declared that China was the mother of Ghauri and raised the threat of a Chinese encirclement of India.¹⁰ This was a categorical statement, not nuanced in any manner. He then proceeded to detail the exact nature of this threat and to explain how India was being encircled along its land and sea borders by Chinese military and naval activity in our neighbouring countries, and added that India has to be "prepared for any eventuality".¹¹ In Mr. Fernandes' book, such preparation calls for taking tough decisions that include "ruling in" the nuclear option.

But the nuclear test put India on an entirely new footing in having leverage in international political decision-making. Though she was not immediately recognized as a member of the nuclear club, a club that had five nations, the US, Russia, China, France and United Kingdoms in it. India and Pakistan joining that club was certainly not a very attractive proposition of the nuclear weapon holding states. But they immediately understood that the manner in which the entire South Asian region was pushed towards a nuclear holocaust as the region is still considered to be one of the unstable regions of the world. There are two reasons which can be shown which can be cited as principle reasons that motivated India to go ahead with the nuclear tests.

First, the statements made by the Indian leadership, after the tests were done put a very shaky picture of the Indian leadership who was suffering from some sort of a fear psychosis from the 1962 war with China. This sort of paranoia that the Indian leadership advertised in front of the world political arena made the picture clear about the apprehension India had about China even after signing accords like that in 1988. The Prime Minister's letter to the US administration clearly stated that there were

¹⁰ Statements by Defence Minister George Fernandes, 11 May 1998, see <http://www.ipcs.org/ipcs>.

¹¹ Ibid.

some significant positive movements for rapprochement between the nations but the lingering veil of distrust still covered the relations between nations as the disputed borders remained as the principle bone of contention.

The second reason is the Chinese clandestine support to Pakistan in its nuclear program and transfer of missile technology which remained a cause of deep concern. India could not ignore these facts. Apart from this China the other most important neighbour of India had a huge nuclear arsenal. It was hard for India to forget that China committed arms aggression against her in the year 1962 and the territorial dispute remained unresolved. There are some reports that even were known to the Indian administration about the amount of nuclear technology that was transferred to Pakistan from China. In 1983, the Indian administration with the assistance of the US administration came to know that China was assisting with the production of fissile materials and possibly with the design of weapons. The issuance of the Pressler Amendment on Pakistan as the US administration doubted about Pakistan's involvement in the procurement of nuclear weapons. China, especially on the issue of assisting Pakistan on the nuclear front was extremely quite making South Asian neighborhood highly suspicious about the nexus that it had with Pakistan. This was also one of the causes given by the Indian Prime Minister, in his letter to the US President Bill Clinton.

SINO INDIAN PERCEPTIONS ABOUT NUCLEAR WEAPONS

India's perception regarding nuclear tests is based on the principle of "no first use."¹² Indian Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee in the Lok Sabha said: "We will not be the first to use the nuclear weapons. Having stated that, there remains no basis for their use against countries which do not have nuclear weapons?"¹³ In other words, India will not use its nuclear weapons in a conventional war, and even in a nuclear war it would not use the weapons till India is first subjected to a nuclear weapon attack. Thus, India would use the nuclear weapons only by way of retaliation for its survival against nuclear weapon attack. In regard to the question of any further tests, the Prime Minister declared that: 'We can maintain the credibility of our nuclear deterrent in the Future without testing.'¹⁴ This sort of statement clearly indicated that India has conducted its nuclear tests to expose that India is not a weak state to be suppressed by any super power having nuclear weapons. C Raja Mohan has commented that "the two principles suggest that the only purpose of India's nuclear arsenal is to prevent blackmail from other nuclear powers."¹⁵ Jaswant Singh India's External Affairs Minister wrote: 'the nuclear tests by (India) conducted on 11 and 13 May (1998) were by then not only inevitable but a continuation of policies from almost the earliest years of independence'.¹⁶

On the other hand China has expressed almost similar views on her own nuclear policy. China had also pledged the "no first use" policy. But in China's policy, there remained a serious caveat; for example the Chinese pledge did not apply

¹² Bharat Karnad, "Nuclear Weapons and Indian Security", (Macmillan India Limited, New Delhi, 2002), pp. 63.

¹³ Vijay K Nair, "The Structure of Indian Nuclear Deterrent", in Amitabh Mattoo (ed.), *India's Nuclear Deterrent: Pokhran II and Beyond*, (Har-Anand, New Delhi, 1998), p. 66.

¹⁴ Ibid. pp. 67.

¹⁵ C Raja Mohan, "Vajpayee's Nuclear Legacy", *The Hindu*, 21 April 1999.

¹⁶ Ming Zhang, "China's Changing Nuclear Posture, Reactions to the South Asian Nuclear Tests", pp10.

to Taiwan 'which is a part of China'. By the same logic the areas such as South China Sea and Arunachal Pradesh which are claimed by the Chinese as Chinese territory, would not come under the purview of no-first-use.¹⁷ This can pose a serious threat to countries like India during any case of aggression in the future between two countries.

SINO INDIAN RELATIONS AFTER POKHRAN II

The atmosphere was not congenial for both China and India to issue such statements which made its relations at stake. On May 2 1998 the then Defence Minister of India described China as a major military threat to India. However, he subsequently claimed that his observation made to a private TV channel was distorted. On May 5 China reacted angrily over Fernandes' remarks dubbing China as a threat, and described them as "absolutely ridiculous and unworthy of refutation".¹⁸ These statements and counter statements generated mutual distrust between the two and the Pokhran II episode played its role to darken the picture that had become gloomy before. On 14 May China strongly condemned India's nuclear tests. On June 27, Chinese president Jiang Zemin and US president Clinton signed a joint statement, after the latter's visit to Beijing in the last week of June, 1998.¹⁹ It said that: "Recent nuclear tests by India and Pakistan and the resulting increase in tension between them are a source of deep and lasting concern". To both these pronouncements by China, India became wary and above all the letter written by the then Indian Prime Minister to the then the President of America Bill Clinton portraying China as a threat number one for India was solely responsible to increase tensions at the highest levels.

¹⁷ Ibid. pp. 11-12.

¹⁸ Sino Indian Relations A chronology in Reverse Order, June 18 2003, see <http://www.hindustantimes.com/news>

¹⁹ Ibid.

Prime Minister Vajpayee wrote in his letter “I have been deeply concerned at the deteriorating security environment, especially the nuclear environment, faced by India for some years past. We have an overt nuclear weapon state on our borders, a state which committed armed aggression against India in 1962. Although our relations with that country have improved in the last decade or so, an atmosphere of distrust persists mainly due to the unresolved border problem. To add to the distrust that courtly has materially helped another neighbor of ours to become a covert nuclear weapons state. At the hands of this bitter neighbor we have suffered three aggressions in the last 50 years.”²⁰

The New York Times reports about Indian PM Vajpayee's 'letter' to Clinton citing India's perception of a possible threat from China as one of the reasons for Pokhran II. Chinese govt. reacted sharply.²¹ Prior to this skepticism about China also got reflected in the statements issued by the then Defence Minister George Fernandes and General Krishnaswami Sundarji, former Chief of Staff of the Indian army, wrote in 1995 that his country needed “both a nuclear and a conventional minimum capability to deter China and Pakistan,”²² adding that, “if the Chinese use only tactical nuclear weapons, India would do likewise.” Since the early 1980s, the annual reports of the Indian Ministry of Defense have persisted in identifying China as India’s most formidable threat.²³ There have also been reports of the nuclearisation of the Tibetan plateau. According to a report submitted by the American author John Avedon to the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee on 17 September 1987, “one quarter of China’s 350 strong nuclear missile forces are in Tibet.”²⁴

²⁰ *New York Times* May 13, 1998, p. A12.

²¹ Sino Indian Relations A chronology in Reverse Order, June 18 2003, see <http://www.hindustantimes.com/news>

²² *Op Cit* (Ming Zhan, 1999)

²³ Annual Report Ministry of External Reports, 1990 – 1991.

²⁴ Satish Kumar, “Nuclearisation of Tibetan Plateau and its Implications for India” 13 March, 2001, see <http://www.ipcs.org/ipcs/issueIndex2>

China's major nuclear sites are located in Tibet. China's nuclear production establishment, known as the Ninth Academy, was ready to produce nuclear weapons by 1971. The first batch of nuclear weapons manufactured was reportedly brought to Tsaidam Basin and stationed at the extreme north west of Amdo province. Because of its high altitude and isolation. These missiles, located at large Tsaidam and small Tsaidam, are reported to have a range of over 4,000 km, placing the whole Indian subcontinent within striking distance²⁵ which anxious India the most for these reasons and these pronouncements by political leaders as well as military personals clearly indicate that to what extent mutual distrust persist between the two nations.

Citing the recently improved Sino Indian relations, Xinhua, the official Chinese news agency in an article stated that the "China threat advocated by the Vajpayee government is not a fact. But the interference from a group of Indian political figures with China's internal affairs is a matter of record."²⁶ An article published in the PLA's Liberation Army Daily detailed Chinese perceptions of Indian nuclear developments, including a policy in existence since 1974 that reserves the option of building nuclear weapons for deterrence. China believes that India conducted nuclear research for weapons purposes and stored nuclear-weapon parts, which can be assembled as nuclear weapons when necessary. It "adopted the policy of vigorous development and comprehensive improvement."²⁷

THE REMAINING NUCLEAR DIFFERENCES

The spirit of rapprochement has been shattered for a while but this whole episode exposed one thing that still India suffers from a fear psychosis of China and

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Jasjit Singh (ed.), *Nuclear India*, New Delhi, 1998, p. 85.

²⁷ Ibid pp 87

still has limited faith on Chinese actions. The bitter memories of 1962 are still alive in the minds of Indian leaders as well as military personnel.

John W Garver has viewed Sino Indian relations through his own prism. He said there have been three central characteristics of the Indian-Chinese nuclear relationship: asymmetry, indirection, and status enhancement. By "asymmetry"²⁸ he meant that Indian and Chinese threat perceptions have not been mirror image. Chinese and Indian perceptions of the origin and nature of nuclear threats, and of the role of the other in those threats, have been very different one from the other. China's threat perception focused on the United States and the USSR and Chinese perceptions of a potential nuclear threat from India seem to have been virtually non-existent. There is no evidence that such a threat Perception ever entered the consciousness of Chinese leaders, and considerable evidence that Chinese leaders have never thought of India either when they considered how China might use its own nuclear weapons or about possible threats of nuclear attack on China. Indian leaders, on the other hand, have perceived a nuclear threat from China since 1964 and have continually debated about how to deal with that threat.

By "indirection" Garver meant two things. First, the nuclear threat from China perceived by India came not primarily from fear of a direct Chinese nuclear attack on India. Ever since 1964 there have been a few Indian analysts and leaders who believed that the threat from China was substantial and immediate enough as to require Indian acquisition of nuclear weapons.²⁹ But this view was a distinctly minority view and was never manifested in the government policy.

²⁸ John W Garver, "South Asia's Nuclear Dilemma," Paper presented at conference in Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, 18-19 February 1999, see

<http://www.meadev.nic.in>

²⁹ Ibid.

Garver has presented his view that India did not perceive nuclear threat from China. India's main focus is on its traditional rival Pakistan. Though Pakistan has been the traditional rival of India since its independence but it should not be forgotten that in the year 1962 it was China not Pakistan who attacked India and became the first nation who committed arms aggression against India. Second thing, China's nuclear arsenal is very huge as compared to India. China's clandestine support to Pakistan in its nuclear program is not far from India's knowledge. When Indian analysts concluded by the 1980s that China was assisting Pakistan's nuclear weapons programme, the Pakistani nuclear threat became linked; cognitively to the Chinese threat cognitively it was almost as though China was transferring a portion of its nuclear arsenal to Pakistan, allowing that country to threaten India.

So it will be a fatal mistake if India does not exercise its nuclear capability. Atmosphere was charged and both India and China looked at each other with uncertainty, the ambiguity between the two persisted but the second phase after Pokhran II episode began in the July-middle to December, 1998, there were signs of a mellowing down of Chinese rigidity on the bilateral aspect. In the same month Chinese ambassador visited India his statement published on 10 July and at a public address at the India International Centre on 25 July. Two remarks from the Hindu article needs to be quoted. First, referring to the statements since April, the Ambassador said that the tests and the statements and counter statements from government officials from both the nations has "sabotaged the atmosphere of the current Sino-Indian relations, harmed the developing bilateral relations between China and India and endangered the future of the relations between the two countries."³⁰

³⁰ Jabir T Jacob, Report of the IPCS Seminar held on 26 March 2004, see www.ipcs.org/ipcs/issueIndex2

Second, is the condition that he ascribes to restoring good relations between our two countries, where he says: - "However, it is up to the doer to undo the knot' just as a Chinese saying points out. The Chinese side hopes that the Indian side will make responsible explanations with regard to the aforesaid remarks against China immediately stop all its accusations and take actual actions."³¹

The Ambassador's speech at the Centre on May 25 2003 described China's policy on reform and opening up, China's foreign policy, China's South Asia policy, and traced the history of Sino-Indian relations. The last paragraph of this talk deserves to be quoted in full: "Since April and May this year the Sino-Indian relations have witnessed abnormal developments. That is something we are unwilling to see. The so-called China threat to India's security is baseless. Fictitious charges against China have greatly hurt the feelings of the Chinese people and harmed the Sino-Indian Relations."³² What China hoped from India is neighbourliness, friendship and co-operation. What China wishes India is stability, progress and development.

China did not pose any immediate threat for India, especially when the rapprochement process had already started moving on a positive note. The Chinese side could not but refute some wanton attack and accusation against China by certain personages in India in order to safeguard the friendly relations between our two countries and bring the Sino-Indian relations back onto the track of healthy development. On August 4, 1998, the Indian PM Vajpayee told the Indian Lok Sabha that India was keen on improving its relations with China and asserted that his

³¹ Maj Gen Dipankar Banerjee (Retd.), "India-China Relations", *IPCS*, 6 August 1998.

³² Sino Indian Relations A chronology in Reverse Order, June 18 2003, see <http://www.hindustantimes.com/news>

Government had never dubbed China as an enemy or a threat.³³ He also said India wanted to accelerate the efforts for a solution to the border problem.

Making his remarks in Lok Sabha on May 27 1998, the then Defence Minister, he commented that, "Sir, we have taken this decision taking in to account the threat perception to the nation... My statement about China has been discussed in the house in detail. Sir, I maintain that in terms of threat perception China can be considered as enemy number one...."³⁴

The Indian Prime Minister replied to the discussion in Lok Sabha on nuclear tests on May 29, 1998. "Concern has been expressed by some Honorable Members regarding China's reaction to our decision. Let me assure this House that we seek good relations with all our neighbours, including China, our largest neighbor. India and China are two of the world's largest and most populous countries... There is considerable potential to expand our economic and commercial cooperation. But we have some concerns... There are issues relating to India's sovereignty, territorial integrity and security that have been reflected at various levels, including highest levels... On the boundary question, we recognize that a resolution requires time and patience. But progress can, and should, be made.

Our concerns regarding China's defense cooperation with Pakistan remain. Unlike India-China relations, who have shown improvement despite the difficulties of the past, Pakistan remains reconciled to good relations with India. Our view in regard to external military assistance to Pakistan has been consistent over the last fifty years. Given Pakistan's approach to India, assistance in the defense field to Pakistan affects India's security directly and adversely... On our part, we do not seek a confrontation

³³ Parliament Debate, Prime Minister, Vajpayee's Address in Lok Sabha, see <http://www.las.org/news/india/1998/05/0829059807.htm>

³⁴ Ibid, pp 332-344.

with China... We remain committed to the process of dialogue to resolve outstanding differences and to the development of friendly, cooperative, good neighborly and mutually beneficial relationship with China. Statements by Honorable Members have clearly indicated a sense of solidarity in meeting any challenges to India's security with firmness and resolve. Government welcomes this expression of unity."³⁵

By this statement in the Lok Sabha, the Prime Minister tried to clear any misgivings that China might nurture about the Indian leadership. The manner in which India was forced into going ahead with the nuclear tests, the basic motivation behind such tests, and so forth was properly explained in the lower house of the Indian Parliament.

Justifying the tests, India's National Daily *The Pioneer* wrote on June 16, 1998, "no external guarantees can defend a country of India's size which has extremely sensitive borders.... France itself, under the charismatic De Gaulle, strengthened its security over and above a US security cover due to political uncertainty in Europe. India too confronts an uncertain strategic climate forcing it to augment its security".

After analyzing all the avenues of nuclearisation, one should not forget that this phase did not last long. Soon after Pokhran II incident, the Indian Prime Minister told Rajya Sabha on May 27, 1998 that: "We seek good relations with all our neighbours, including China, our largest neighbor. We would like the Chinese side to appreciate that our concerns need to be addressed in meaningful manner with a view

³⁵ Ibid, pp.391- 396.

to finding early resolution. We do not seek a confrontation with China. We seek relationship in which both sides are responsive to each other's concerns".³⁶

These statements give the clear picture of Sino India relations though relations were slightly moved from its path but soon returned on the track. China also suspended the Eleventh meeting of Joint Working Group scheduled to be held in the month of November 1998 but this suspension did not last long and meeting was held in the month of April 1999.³⁷

The formal beginning of this post-nuclear *rapprochement* was made by China Institute for Contemporary Relations (CICIR) that invited Indian experts to Beijing during October 1998 to discuss the future of India-China relations. This was reciprocated by the Indian side inviting two Chinese delegations to India during November 1998 and January 1999 which were respectively hosted by Institute of Chinese Studies (ICS) and Center for Policy Research (CP) in New Delhi. Of these, the second five-member delegation from Beijing was led by former Chinese Ambassador to India, Cheng Ruisheng. They visited New Delhi during January 24-29, 1999 and, in addition to their three-day deliberations with Indian experts, they also called on India's President, K. R. Naraynan which was very important in terms of sending positive signals about their post-nuclear *rapprochement*.³⁸ Prior to this India was first to send Mr. Jaswant Singh to Beijing on June 14-16, 1999 where both sides re-iterated that they no longer perceive any threat from each other.³⁹ The first India-China Security Dialogue held in Beijing on March 6-7, 2000 implied was Beijing's tacit acceptance of at least India's new *de facto* nuclear status. *Secondly*, this marked a shift from Beijing's initial high-pitch anti-India rhetoric to more businesslike

³⁶ *Lok Sabha debates*, May 27 1998, Vol.II No.1-2, pp. 301-302

³⁷ Bhartendu Kumar Singh, "Sino-Indian Ties: The 11th Round of Joint Working Group Meeting", 7 June 1999, see www.ipcs.org/tpcs/issueIndex2

³⁸ India China Post Nuclear Rapprochement .

³⁹ *Ibid.*

deliberations at bilateral official channels. *Thirdly*, both sides indicated that they were now willing to put India's tests in the context of global trends and agreed to have a broad-based agenda for discussions. There were also some reports of Security Dialogue having a sub-group on nuclear issues but this not been materialized.

The second round of India-China Security Dialogue took place at New Delhi on February 8, 2001. This time the China-India Security Dialogue teams were led by Assistant Foreign Minister of China, Wang Yi, and Additional Secretary in India's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, T. C. A. Rangachari. On its conclusion, China's Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Zhu Bangzhao told the press in Beijing that the two sides "had a candid and in-depth exchange of views on major issues of mutual concern, and reached consensus on strengthening coordination and cooperation on the international and regional arena."⁴⁰ She further said, that "Both sides believed that the dialogue was conducive in enhancing the mutual understanding and trust and should continue."

All these non-official political visits had created an atmosphere conducive for bold official political initiatives. For example, the week-long visit on January 2001 by former Premier and Chairman of China's National People's Congress, Li Peng, had been a success. Apart from having deliberations with India's top political elite, this visit also resulted in institutionalizing confidence building among the India-China political elites by formally setting up a mechanism of annual visits by parliamentarians. There have been dozens of similar initiatives at various other levels of officials, experts, and opinion-makers.

⁴⁰ NK Pant, "Chinese Criticism" Indian Annual Defence Report, 25, June, 2001, see www.ipcs.org/ipcs/issueIndex2

CONCLUSION

In the present situation Indian and China have started walking on the path of some sort of understanding on the issue of decreasing the nuclearisation of the region by creating some sort of mutual understanding on this issue. Though Pakistan remains as a major obstacle in the path of major growth of relationship between India and China, as China unabatedly is assisting Pakistan in the development of not only its nuclear arsenal but also with the up gradation of its already existing defence technologies. But as all the three nations has achieved some sort of independence of its nuclear technology and has developed delivery systems that can put the entire regions' future in jeopardy, there has been some sort of thaw in relations between the three relations. The very reality of 'mutually assured destruction' has become a reality in the region, making leaders who were in no mood to compromise had moved on to the dialogue table. The nuclearisation of the region in that way has helped the nations come closer together, by clearing out mutual distrusting, suspicions and antagonisms.

CHAPTER-V

CONCLUSION

India and China had a tumultuous history before achieving independence. Both were exploited by colonial and imperialist powers, draining their resources for centuries. For that reason, after the nations achieved independence both wanted to regain back their past lost prestige and honor in the world political platform.

China and India have sought to turn themselves into major powers in the region as well as in the world. Being neighbors their aspirations clashed inevitably. Their attempts at territorial consolidation led to misunderstandings that culminated in the 1962 war. Since then dispute has remained a major bone of contention in their relationship. Since the late 1970s India and China have shuffled to normalize their relations.

Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi visit to China in 1988 provided the breakthrough. It ushered in the age of détente and since then there has been a steady improvement in bilateral relations. That does not mean India and China did not have any misgiving towards each other. The two political establishments tried to overcome difficulties and develop initial understanding. The number of visits made by senior political leaders of both the nation's made it clear that India and China were now ready to mending the strained relationship which they had fort the last three decades.

Within the age of globalization, it was necessary for nations to come closer to each other. India and China both felt the need to realize their capabilities as well as the amount of untapped resources they have. They also understood their respective potentialities which forced them to sit together to initiate the age of entente.

The study has tried to analyze the causes that compelled India and China to deepen of the dialogue and expand understanding. The amount of cultural, political

economic exchanges might not be considerable in respect to the potential both the nations have. But they have grown rapidly since 1988. The visit of the Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to Beijing in 2003 has initiated a process of problem solving that would make the task of any future government easy. The manner, in which both the nations have recognized the points of convergence where the national interests meet, has been an extremely successful achievement for both the political leaderships.

Since the late 1990s, the two sides began to address move purposefully the major impediment in bilateral relations –the border dispute at the same time other issues like economic and cultural exchanges began to intensify. The border issue has been seen from a new perspective with the joint working groups trying to find a way out of the jigsaw puzzle. The other issues like Tibetan and China's clandestine support to India's traditional rival Pakistan in its nuclear program, through remain major problems. While China has close relations with Pakistan, it has not prevented closer relations with India.

Bilateral agreements and accords are instruments through which nations either come closer to each other, strengthen relationships, come into alliances, and maintain regional power balances, boost economic and trade partnership or remove pre conceived nations about each other. The study has tried to analyze the accord of 1988 between two dynamic political leaders of India and China and how this accord became the focal point on which the terse relations that remain within the nations started thawing. The study has also tried to look upon issues which can bring both countries closer to each other and how both the "Asian Giants" can move together in the 21st century.

It was found that international politics, regional developments and internal political dynamics of both the countries left its impacts upon the relationship of both countries in the nineties. The changing world order in the post cold war era practically made both India and China move on the path of rapprochement, as well as economic necessities of exploring fresher and new markets improved its relations as much as they could have done before. This became possible because the world was changing after the disintegration of Soviet Russia and the change from a bipolar world that till 1989 molded world politics suddenly became unipolar. America the sole super power of the world wanted to utilize the situation in its favour.

In this situation both India and China acted responsibly and the foundation that was laid down by the Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in the year 1988 while visiting China, was put into operation by both nations to build a strong relations among themselves.

The decade of the nineties witnessed the initiatives taken by both the countries on the boundary dispute. The two major achievements of this decade were the two confidence building measures (CBMS) that was taken in 1993 and 1996 respectively. The spirit of rapprochement how ever was fested when India conducted its nuclear weapons in the year 1998 in Pokhran and the suggestion by the defence Minister of India Mr. George Fernandes China was the number one threat to Indian security and both the Pokhran tests and the apparently ambiguous stand of the Indian political establishment annoyed China considerably. But the nuclear picture not last long and both countries returned quickly on the track of rapprochement.

Sino Indian relations in the 21st century marked a new beginning with the exchange of the leaders at the highest level that boosted the spirit of rapprochement. Purposeful talks on boundary problem and the exchange of maps regarding Line of

Actual Control raised hopes for an early settlement of the disputes on the frontiers. The visit of the then Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to China in 2003 elevated the negotiations on the boundary dispute to the political level and laid foundations for a resolution of the dispute over Sikkim.

The visit also resulted in the setting up of the Joint Study Group (JSG) which would aid to promote bilateral trade and develop closer relations between the two nations. In this visit opened the doors of the Nathu La pass for trade between Sikkim and Tibet. The total bilateral trade is likely to cross US \$ ten billion in 2004. Volume by China and India, being the most populous nations of the world, can get benefit from each other by utilizing their respective natural and human resources for their national and regional development.

India could not come closer to China last century while Pakistan cemented its ties with Beijing since the last 1980s India has significantly needed its ties with China. China also reciprocated India's initiatives by extending the hand of friendship towards India. The détente which began in 1988 has now become an entente. While Pakistan remains a problem in bilateral relations, India and China has begun to skirt the issue. They have developed a successful framework to deepen and widen their relationship as the age of rapprochement unfolds; Sino Indian relations have never been as wide covering as they are today. The future of Sino Indian relation could be very unlike the past.

Now the relations have entered in a new phase the focus has been shifted on other issues like economic enhancement and promotion of bilateral trade. In Atal Bihari Vajpayee's visit to China in the year 2003 added new dimensions regarding this field and the most important development is the opening of Nathu La pass to promote trade through Sikkim between India and Tibet. The rapid growth of trade and

interest showing by businessmen of both countries to setup joint ventures will certainly enhance trade.

Mr. Rattan Tata chairman of one of the leading business group in India said that it's an opportunity¹ for the two Asian giants to tap each other's huge market. "He visited the Chinese city of Hangzhou on Wednesday, met with senior Chinese ministers, government officials and top Chinese firms in sectors like information industry and tourism, was optimistic about India-China cooperation in a range of business fields.

"While many may consider China and India as competitors, we consider China to be a very source of partnerships between our groups and companies in China."² Mr. Tata said. "Tatars would therefore like to commit ourselves to making an investment in China and would also like to explore ventures where Chinese companies would like to invest in India, promoting two-way investment and trade between the two countries

In the year 2002 the then Chinese counterpart Zhu Rongji visited India and expressed hopes. That trade volume will reach 10 billion in the next few years that would involve tripling of the trade turnover nearly three-fold from the last year's performance at \$ 3 billion. Prime Minister Vajpayee also expressed hopes to improve trade in the software and services where India leads.

Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), the two major business associations, has sent exploratory investment delegations to China. But the most promising areas for cooperation are software and related services. China is a leader in manufacturing, while Indian companies continue to move up the value chain in the global software business, earning about \$10 billion a year in exports, according to industry estimates.

www.tata.com/tata_sons/media

² Media report, India-China Cooperation Mutually Beneficial: *The Statesman*, Feb 16, 2004, see www.tata.com/tata_sons/media

Some Indian software e firms in sectors like information industry and tourism, was optimistic about India-China cooperation in a range of business fields.

Sino Indian bilateral trade registered the growth of 30 percent annually but in the first four months of 2003 there was astonishing growth of 70 percent in bilateral trade between two countries. Apart from this bilateral investments have also started picking up 15 Chinese companies in India and 71 projects are being running by Indian firms in China. In the Atal Bihari Vajpayee's visit of 2003 the Joint Study Groups of economists and officials from both countries have been established to review existing cooperation, to identify new areas of promise and to draw up a comprehensive perspective plan for the further development of a multi-faceted economic interaction.

Apart from this the joint declaration issued by both countries on 23rd June 2003 says much about the economic enhancement. In this joint declaration the two sides welcomed the positive momentum of bilateral trade and economic cooperation in recent years and shared the belief that continued expansion and intensification of China-India economic cooperation is essential for strengthening bilateral relations.

Now both nations have not been confronting each other they have explored other avenues for further cooperation a new chapter has ushered in the relationship of both titans.

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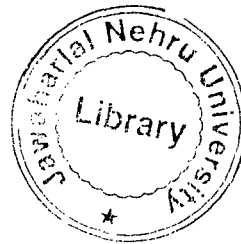
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