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(Mahatma Gandhi)

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Indian Oil Corporation Limited
Guwahati Refinery
While Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi being greeted by former US President Bill Clinton, Hillary Clinton hugged Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj and exchanged pleasantries before they sat down for talks.

BUSINESS BUZZ
BEST TIME TO BE IN INDIA:
PM MODI TO BUSINESS LEADERS

PENTAGON TERRORISM
PENTAGON REPORTS ON TERRORISM

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi accompanied with External Affairs Minister handed over a multi-purpose chopper to the Nepal Army. The helicopter with maximum take-off weight of 5,500 kg was handed over in a special function attended by Prime of Nepal Minister Sushil Koirala. The 14-seater Advanced Light Helicopter (AHL) was indigenously developed and manufactured by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited, India.

People and UN

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Indian Federation of United Nations Associations, New Delhi.
WITH NEW hopes and aspirations for progress, peace and development, we welcome 2015.

The year 2014 saw significant political change in our country. The nation elected Narendra Damodar Das Modi as Prime Minister to lead India.

The leadership quality and political acumen of Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been widely admired by world leaders.

It is a matter of pride that India’s Prime Minister received a very positive response in BRICS, G20, ASEAN and SAARC Summits for India’s development programmes pitched by him. The signing of various agreements and MOUs with countries like Japan, Vietnam, Myanmar, China, Russia, Australia and the US are an outcome of the confidence and goodwill he has generated for India in these nations.

This has also reinforced the confidence in him by his countrymen who are craving for development and economic growth.

Addressing the United Nations General Assembly Prime Minister Modi strongly put forth India’s long pending demand for reform and restructure of the Security Council with India as its permanent member. We hope the United Nations, which is celebrating its 70th Anniversary in 2015, will give due recognition to India, a country of 1.25 billion people.

India’s net energy imports (mostly oil) account for more than six per cent of its gross domestic product (GDP). We are the third largest importer of crude oil, the third largest importer of coal and the fifth or sixth largest importer of natural gas. If oil prices stay at their present levels of $75 or drop further, as the big oil exporters seem to think they will, and nothing else changes dramatically on the trade front, India will be in the happy position to enjoy a surplus on the trade account. With the price of energy cut by nearly 40 per cent in the last six months, the oil import bill falls in a full year by 2.5 per cent of GDP (or Rs 3.2 lakh crores). That will be the first “current account” surplus in over a decade — the last such surplus was in 2004, when oil prices were at about $50 per barrel. The implications of this amazing turnaround are dramatic. If capital inflows (portfolio as well as foreign direct investment) continue at their present rate of $40 billion annually, India will be awash in dollars, and there will be upward pressure on the rupee. Then the only surviving peso-product subsidies will be on krill feed, cooking gas, and these are small and reduced, thus improving the trade arithmetic for “Ache Din”.

On December 16, the Pakistani Taliban (TTP) attacked a minority-run school in Peshawar, Pakistan. Eighty people, including 145 children, were killed in the attack. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif vowed that the government “will not rest until the perpetrator is killed,” but there is deep concern that he can deliver on that promise. India’s External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj rightly stated in the Rajya Sabha, “Pakistan has made a mockery of its pledge to take terrorism by allowing bail to the mastermind Zakir Rehman Lakhvi.”

Prime Minister Modi in his address to ASEM and G20 nations has appealed all the member nations to “Unite to Fight Terrorism Together”. For Nawaz Sharif, it is a testing time to prove his credentials.

A man carries a student who was injured during the attack in Peshawar.

The horrific attack on an army-run school...
Best time to be in India: 
PM Modi to Business Leaders in Australia

Addressing global Business Leaders in Melbourne Prime Minister Narendra Modi invited Australian corporate honchos to invest in India which is undergoing reforms to improve business environment.

"In India we are working to create conducive environment for trade and industry. We need your partnership," Modi said inviting Australian businessmen to cooperate in developing green technology, LNG, gas, education and tourism sectors.

Speaking in English to a gathering of over 600 Australian and Indian business leaders in the Governor’s House after a CEO roundtable meeting Prime Minister Modi said “My government is making all efforts to ensure faster, all round inclusive growth to revive the economy, to create policy environment that is conducive, transparent and fair.”

He asked the leaders to forge ties with India saying “you have the best time to be in India...you have the best time to work in India”.

"Reforms are being undertaken to enhance ease of doing business," Modi said. The high-profile meeting was attended by top CEOs of the Australian corporate world, including mining magnate Gina Rinehart, BHP chief Andrew Mackenzie, Lindsay Fox and Visy Industries Chairman Anthony Pratt, ANZ head Michael Smith, Infosys Sr VP Jackie Korhonen, AJBC Chair Dipen Rughani, Australia India Institute CEO Amitabh Mattoo and Indian High Commissioner Biren Nanda.

Others who were present at the meet were Adani’s Enterprises head Gautam Adani, Mahindra and Mahindra Chairman Anand Mahindra, Infosys CEO Vishal Sikka, Essar Group chairman Shashi Ruia and Gujarat NRE Coke Ltd CMD A K Jagatramka.

Modi said that his government was planning to develop world class infrastructure, including new world class ports, smart cities and low cost airports.

He said government was working for a single window clearance scheme at the federal and state level. “We have recently launched “Make in India” initiative to encourage growth in manufacturing,” he said.

“India has three Ds—Democracy, demography and demand. We are trying to harness strength through good governance...” Modi said while citing that the greatest strengths of India was its 65 per cent of young population below the age group of 35 years.

Earlier the Prime Minister Modi met over 30 CEOs at a roundtable meeting and heard their views on several key issues regarding trade and investment.

“Our economic growth had slowed down in the last few years. But my government is working hard to create an environment to foster growth. The results have been encouraging, the economy registered 5.7 per cent growth, one per cent more than last year,” he said.

“I want to draw your attention to the opportunities in tourism. There is immense scope for investing in tourism infrastructure as well. I am personally committed to environmental issues. We want to move to gas-based economy. That tells you how many LNG terminals we would need,” he said.
North East States Raise Eyebrows

China puts first Brahmaputra dam in operation

"It is only then after a thorough study can the risk posed by the dams be determined. We have to see how much water comes from China, and how much is contributed by different tributaries.

— General (rtd.) V.K. Singh, Minister of state.

China has put into operation its first major dam on the middle reaches of the Brahmaputra River, with the first section of the 510 MW project taking off in Zangmu in Tibet.

The Zangmu dam, on which construction started in 2010, raised attention in India as the first major hydropower project on the middle reaches of the Brahmaputra, which has its source in Tibet, where it is known as the Yarlung Tsangpo (or Zangbo in Chinese).

Indian officials have said they have received assurances from China that the dam is a run of the river hydropower generation project, which will neither divert the river's waters nor have a major impact on downstream flows.

China's official Xinhua news agency said the first section of the $1.5 billion dam went into operation in November. Five other sections will be completed next year. The dam will generate 2.5 billion kilowatt hours of electricity every year, Xinhua reported.

China’s plans to build dams in Tibet have been a source of concern to India regarding the possible impact downstream. To address those fears, both sides in July signed a first agreement that will allow Indian hydrological experts to con-
Current Event

As per the MoU, China will extend provision of hydrological data from May 15 to October 15 every year, adding half a month to an earlier agreement. The MoU followed a first agreement on transformer rivers signed in 2013 when then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh visited Beijing.

Last year, China gave the go-ahead for three new dams on the Yarlung Zangbo, one of which is even bigger than Zangmu, Tibet’s biggest hydropower station. A 640 MW dam is slated for construction at Dagu, 18 km upstream of Zangmu. Two smaller dams will be built at Jiacha and Jiexu, also on the middle reaches. China has said the dams are run of the river projects for generating power, and will not divert the river’s waters.

The government has said it will “vigorously” push hydropower projects in Tibet in its current Five Year Plan (2011-15) to address the energy shortfall in the region. Chinese hydropower and energy companies have been lobbying the government to allow more hydropower projects to tap Tibet’s fast-flowing rivers with as many as 28 proposals put forward by hydro engineering companies awaiting approval.

Environmental groups have expressed concern on the impact of the planned dams on the Tibetan plateau’s sensitive ecosystem. While China has committed to taking into account concerns of India as a lower riparian country, the absence of a water sharing agreement between the two countries, hydropower experts say, only gives India limited avenues in terms of monitoring Chinese projects and water flows.

Experts are divided on the impact of Chinese dams. While China has not embarked on any diversion projects – and none are, as yet, planned – the construction of large hydropower dams could impact the river’s flows, green groups say.

General (rtd.) V.K. Singh, Minister of state.

Asked about the dams on a visit to Beijing earlier this month, Minister of State for External Affairs General (rtd.) V.K. Singh said the Indian government would carry out a detailed study of the Brahmaputra’s basin to ascertain the volume of flows from China. The extent of the dependence of downstream volumes on flows from China is as yet unclear, as a substantial catchment area for the river is located in the lower reaches.

“We first need to reexamine studies done in the past,” Singh said. “It is only then after a thorough study can the risk posed by the dams be determined. We have to see how much water comes from China, and how much is contributed by different tributaries.”
Is China building a big airstrip in the South China Sea Island?

According to Reuters — a leading defence publication — satellite images show China is building an island on a reef in the disputed Spratly Islands large enough to accommodate what could be its first offshore airstrip in the South China Sea.

The construction has stoked concern that China may be converting disputed territory into military installations, adding to tensions. These waters are also claimed by Taiwan, Malaysia, the Philippines, Vietnam and Brunei.

IHS Jane’s said images it had obtained showed the Chinese-built island on the Fiery Cross Reef to be at least 3,000 meters (1.9 miles) long and 200-300 meters (660-980 ft) wide, which it noted is “large enough to construct a runway and apron.”

The building work flies in the face of U.S. calls for a freeze in provocative activity in the South China Sea, one of Asia’s biggest security issues. Concern is growing about an escalation in disputes even as claimants work to establish a code of conduct to resolve them.

Dredgers were also creating a harbor to the east of the reef “that would appear to be large enough to receive tankers and major surface combatants,” it said.

The land reclamation project was China’s fourth in the Spratly Islands in the last 12 to 18 months and by far the largest, IHS Jane’s said. It based its findings on images taken on Aug. 8 and Nov. 14 showing that dredgers had created a land mass almost the entire length of the reef.

It said Fiery Cross Reef was previously under water with its only habitable area a concrete platform built by China’s navy. It said that structure was home to a Chinese garrison and had a pier, air-defense guns, anti-ship defenses, communications equipment, and a greenhouse.

Beijing has rejected Washington’s call for all parties to halt activity in the disputed waters to ease tensions, saying it should whatever its wants in the South China Sea.

Hong Kong media has reported that China is planning to build an air base on Fiery Cross Reef in August, the deputy head of the Chinese Foreign Ministry’s maritime and Ocean Affairs Department said he was unaware of any such plans.
REFORM OF THE UN AND EXPANSION OF UNSC IS ESSENTIAL

UN SECURITY COUNCIL MUST REFLECT GLOBAL REALITIES

A large number of countries have supported India’s initiatives for reform of the UN Security Council as well as endorsed its candidature for permanent membership.

India believes that the United Nations (UN), especially the UN Security Council (UNSC), must reflect contemporary global realities. For this purpose the reform of the UN including the expansion of the UNSC in both permanent and non-permanent categories is essential. To this end, the Government of India has been actively working along with other like-minded countries of rebuilding support among the UN membership for a meaningful restructuring and expansion of the UNSC.

Why UNSC reform is necessary:

- UNSC still reflects the geopolitical architecture of the Second World War.
- Expanded only once in 1965 to add 4 non-permanent members.
- Since then the membership of the United Nations has increased from 113 to 193 without any change in the composition of the UNSC.
- No permanent member from Africa, despite 75% of work of the UNSC focused on Africa.
- Unable to respond effectively to situations of international conflict.

India’s credentials: The Government of India has strongly put across to the international community India’s case for permanent membership of the Security Council which is based on India’s extensive contribution to the activities of the UN particularly the maintenance of international peace and security. By any objective criteria such as population, territorial size, GDP, economic potential, civilizational legacy, cultural diversity, political system and past and on-going contributions to the activities of the UN — especially to UN peacekeeping operations - India is eminently suited for permanent membership of an expanded UNSC. India’s performance as a non-permanent member of the Security Council during 2011-2012 has also significantly strengthened India’s claim to permanent membership.


Efforts by India: India along with Brazil, Japan and Germany, (together known as the G-4) has proposed expansion of the membership of the United Nations Security Council from the current fifteen to twenty-five with the addition of six permanent and four non-permanent members. Separately, India along with Brazil and South Africa, is spearheading a group of around 42 developing countries from Asia, Africa and Latin America — called the L69 Group — which has demanded urgent action on the UNSC reform front. With a view to harness the support of the 54-member strong African Group, the L69 has engaged in discussions with the Committee of Ten (C-10) to evolve a joint position on UNSC reform.

India is also pursuing the matter through bilateral channels with our interlocutors. A large number of countries have supported India’s initiatives for reform of the UNSC as well as endorsed its candidature for permanent membership.

Year 2015: There is also broad support for the idea that there should be a concrete outcome on the issue of UNSC reform in 2015, which will mark the 70th anniversary of the UN and the 10th anniversary of the 2005 World Summit which had called for ‘early’ reform of the UNSC.

(Source: Ministry of External Affairs, UNP Division)
When world leaders chilled with a drink

German Chancellor Angela Markel was seen enjoying some down time in a pub in Brisbane, where she attended the G20 summit. Over the past years, world leaders have often been snapped enjoying some time on their own at a pub, downing a drink or two.

In the land of beer and sausage, no one shies from drinking. German Chancellor Angela Merkel drinks beer after her speech during an electoral rally in Dachau near Munich.

Prime Minister David Cameron sits with a beer as he promotes British pub week at The Bernard Arms in Great Kinsea, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, England.
US President Barack Obama gives a thumbs-up as he celebrates St Patrick’s Day with a pint of Guinness during a stop at the Dubliner Irish pub in Washington.

Chinese President Xi Jinping drinks a glass of red wine as he toasts a dinner.

Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev and President Vladimir Putin toast beer during a visit to a self-service restaurant after taking part in a march to celebrate International Workers’ Day.
PENTAGON REPORTS ON TERRORISM

The relationship between Afghanistan and Pakistan continues to pose a significant challenge to the stability of the region. Future Relations with Pakistan is Critical, militants Continue to operate from Pakistan Territory. The Indian consulate in Herat province was attacked by a group of four heavily armed militants. The US Department of State announced that the terrorist group Lashkar-e-Taiba was responsible for the attack.

5: REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT

Afghanistan shares a border with six states: Pakistan, Iran, China, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. These states, as well as Russia, India, and the Gulf Cooperation Council, have varying levels of engagement with the Afghan government, and different degrees of importance to the ongoing mission and overall stability of Afghanistan. The Afghanistan-Pakistan relationship is especially vital to the long-term peace of the region. However, this relationship has been marked by distrust and even military aggression across the shared border. Afghanistan's relationship with the rest of the region is generally positive, with most states seeking a stable and peaceful Afghanistan that can contribute to regional trade, counter terrorist networks, and limit narcotics shipments through its borders.

5.1: PAKISTAN

The United States continues to seek a constructive relationship with Pakistan that advances both U.S. and Pakistani interests. Pakistan's relationship with the United States remains constructive, and both nations continue to acknowledge the importance of maintaining bilateral cooperation in areas of mutual concern and
engaging on areas of divergence. Taliban attacks in Afghanistan launched from sanctuaries in Pakistan remain a serious problem. These sanctuaries exist primarily in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Baluchistan.

Pakistan and the United States cooperate on areas of mutual interests, including providing essential support to U.S. retrograde operations from Afghanistan. In addition, Pakistan continues to cooperate with the United States on some CT activities. Pakistan’s military made gains against the Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan and foreign fighters in the FATA and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during a major military operation. Afghan- and Indian-focused militants continue to operate from Pakistan territory to the detriment of Afghan and regional stability. Pakistan uses these proxy forces to hedge against the loss of influence in Afghanistan and to counter India’s superior military. These relationships run counter to Pakistan’s public commitment to support Afghan-led reconciliation. Such groups continue to act as the primary irritant in Afghan-Pakistan bilateral relations.

Pakistan’s government has sought to increase engagement with Afghanistan. However, suspicion has surrounded the relationship between Kabul and Islamabad, inhibiting bilateral cooperation on border security protocols. It is possible that the new Afghan President, Dr. Ghani, will seek to change this dynamic, which Pakistan is likely to welcome. Although stability in Afghanistan is in the interest of Pakistan, Pakistan also seeks sufficient Pashtun representation in the Afghan government to prevent Pashtun discontent along the Afghan-Pakistan border and limit India’s influence. Pakistan made some progress on interdicting and disrupting the

CONTINUED
CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUTURE RELATIONS WITH PAKISTAN

THE resiliency of the Afghan insurgency continues to depend on sanctuary in Pakistan, making an effective relationship between Afghanistan and Pakistan critical to long-term stability in the region. Both countries’ leaders have expressed interest in a stronger military-to-military relationship in the post-Karzai era, and Pakistan maintains a public commitment to supporting Afghan-led reconciliation. Nonetheless, Afghan-focused militants continue to operate from Pakistani territory to the detriment of Afghan and regional stability. During this reporting period, however, ongoing Pakistani military operations in North Waziristan disrupted militant networks that relied on this area for safe haven and slowed extremist attack plotting in Afghanistan. Senior Pakistani officials have publicly committed to holding this cleared territory, preventing militant attacks, and building a more cooperative relationship with Afghan counterparts along the border. The election of President Ghani and signing of the BSA appears to have created a window of opportunity for improved military-to-military relations and border coordination.
United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon announced today the appointment of Atul Khare of India as Under-Secretary-General for Field Support, Department of Field Support. He will succeed Ameera Haq of Bangladesh to whom the Secretary-General is grateful for her commitment and dedicated service to the Organization. The Secretary-General is particularly appreciative of Ms. Haq’s exemplary leadership of the Department of Field Support.

Mr. Khare brings to the position strategic management and innovative reform expertise in both headquarters and field perspective. Currently providing charitable medical advice in India, Mr. Khare has a long senior career with the United Nations, most recently as Assistant Secretary-General leading the Change Management Team (2011-2012) and Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations and Deputy Head of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in New York (2010-2011). He was previously Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste and Head of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) at the level of Under-Secretary-General (2006-2009), working earlier as Chief of Staff and Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General with the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET).

Former Director of The Nehru Centre and Minister (Culture), High Commission of India in London (2005-2006), Mr. Khare served during his tenure with the Indian Foreign Service in its diplomatic missions in France, Mauritius, Senegal, Thailand and the United Kingdom, as well as the Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations in New York.

Mr. Khare holds bachelor’s degrees in medicine and surgery from the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, as well as master’s degrees in business administration and leadership from the University of Southern Queensland, Australia.

Born in India in 1959, he is married.

Courtesy: www.un.org
who are blamed for strain on the local economy and security threats. Despite these setbacks, ISAF will continue to support the development of a constructive military-to-military relationship and provide venues for the two sides to come together with the intent of improving the poor state of their relations. However, convincing both sides to cooperate on a range of security issues will take a concerted and sustained effort by the international community.

5.2: INDIA

The Indian government continues to support GIRoA, believing a secure and stable Afghanistan will benefit the region and facilitate economic corridors into Central Asia. India and Afghanistan signed a strategic partnership declaration in 2011, which formalized cooperation on governance, economics, commerce, education, public administration, and security and law enforcement. Subsequent engagements are reinforcing the positive relationship between Afghanistan and India.

India supports a variety of high-visibility projects and initiatives in Afghanistan. These ventures are focused primarily on major infrastructure projects, including electricity generation and transmission, road construction, and mining. India has shown increased interest in Afghan security assistance, though activities in this area remain limited. India currently offers India-based training to ANSF personnel across a number of specialties, and the Indian government committed to expand this program. India does not provide direct military support or training in Afghanistan.

In May of this reporting period, the Indian consulate in Herat Province was attacked by a group of four heavily armed militants. The attack came three days prior to the swearing in of the new Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi. Prime Minister Modi is perceived as being close to Hindu nationalist groups, a fact that may have played into the timing of the attack. In June, the U.S. Department of State announced that the terrorist group Lashkar-e-Taiba was responsible for the attack. Following the attack, former Afghan President Karzai denounced the attack and made strong statements supporting relations with India.
Prominent women social activist Ranjana Kumari of Centre for Social Research, Asha Yadav of NGO Harsh, Veena Nayar of Women's Political Wing of the HPCC, Associate Professor, Lady Shri Ram College, Rukhi Bahali, Director, humanity First Service and R.K. Sujata of Central Arms Foundation of India are seen giving Dattu Torch which can be re-charged manually for distributing it in remote places through their organisation.

IFUNA Office Bearers l to r.
Pravesh Khanna, S.P.Kalra, Kaushal Khosla and Bharat Babbar.

A View of Audience.
Young Choreographers Sharanya Chandran and R. Amritha Sruthi of Natya Vrisa performing scintillating dance on women's rights.
Prime Minister Narendra Modi made a strong pitch for repatriation of black money by urging the G20 countries that close coordination is important not just for also addressing the challenge of black money but also security issues like terrorism, drug trafficking and arms smuggling. Addressing the G20 in session titled "Delivering Global Economic Resilience", the Prime Minister said: "Close coordination is important not just for also addressing the challenge of black money but also security issues like terrorism, drug trafficking, arms smuggling. I urge every jurisdiction, especially tax havens, to provide information for tax purposes in accordance with treaty obligations." I support all initiatives to facilitate exchange of information and mutual assistance in tax policy and administration," he said.

Highlights on Energy:
- Increased access to affordable, assured and clean energy supply for all should be our primary goal. It is a major economic opportunity for all countries.
- Let us make an ambitious and innovative effort to make renewable, especially solar energy, competitive with conventional energy. In Gujarat, the canal-top project worked well and saved water, too.
- Pricing of carbon, especially in mature markets with universal availability of power, can stimulate shift to renewable energy.
- Let us increase our collective R&D efforts and collaboration; and, ensure dissemination to all countries. For this, I would propose that we set up a global vir-

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nial centre for clean energy research and development, with adequate public funding, which will fund collaborative projects in diverse sources of clean energy, smart grids, energy efficiency, etc. India and the United States have built an excellent virtual centre on a bilateral basis, with matching public and private funding. We can select a team of outstanding experts to evaluate and judge research projects. The results should be available to all countries.

- We should also discuss innovative funding models to ensure rapid expansion of renewable energy in decentralised manner in rural areas.
- In countries like India, there are vast opportunities for those wishing to invest in clean coal technology, since our dependence will not reduce very soon.
- Nuclear energy can still be a safe, reliable and clean source of energy. It will be an important part of our mix.
- Energy efficiency is the best source of clean energy. In India, for example, building energy efficiency and efficiency in areas such as buildings, household appliances and industrial goods is receiving strong attention. I invite you to come and invest in this sector in India.
- I also believe that changes in lifestyle and economy in consumption will be the most enduring response to energy challenges.
- G20 can be effective in promoting an integrated the natural gas market, ensuring freer trade in gas and ensuring that the markets operate more efficiently.
Economic corridor with Pakistan
China commits $45.6 bln

The Chinese government and banks will finance Chinese companies to build $45.6 billion worth of energy and infrastructure projects in Pakistan over the next six years, according to new details of the deal as per news.

The Chinese companies will be able to operate the projects as profit-making entities, according to the deal signed by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif during a visit to China earlier this month.

At the time, officials provided few details of the projects or the financing for the deal, dubbed the China-Pak Economic Corridor (CPEC).

The deal further cements ties between Pakistan and China at a time when Pakistan is nervous about waning U.S. support as troops pull out of Afghanistan.

Pakistan and China, both nuclear-armed nations, consider each other close friends. Their ties are underpinned by common wariness of India and a desire to hedge against U.S. influence in South Asia.

Documents seen by Reuters show that China has promised to invest around $33.8 billion in various energy projects and $11.8 billion in infrastructure projects.

Two members of Pakistan’s planning commission, the focal ministry for the CPEC, and a senior official at the ministry of water and power shared the details of the projects.

The deal says the Chinese government and banks, including China Development Bank, and the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China Ltd (ICBC), one of China’s ‘Big Four’ state-owned commercial banks, will loan funds to Chinese companies, who will invest in the projects as commercial ventures.

“Pakistan will not be taking on any more debt through these projects,” said Pakistan’s minister for water and power Khawaja Asif.

Major Chinese companies investing in Pakistan’s energy sector will include China’s Three Gorges Corp, which built the world’s biggest hydro power scheme, and China Power International Development Ltd.

Sharif signed more than 20 agreements during his trip to China earlier this month, including $622 million for projects related to the deepwater, strategically important Gwadar port, which China is developing.

The port is close to the Strait of Hormuz, a key oil shipping lane. It could open up an energy and trade corridor from the Gulf across Pakistan to western China that could be used by the Chinese Navy - potentially upsetting rival India.

Pakistan sees the latest round of Chinese investments as key to its efforts to solve power shortages that have crippled its economy.

Blackouts lasting more than half a day in some areas have sparked violent protests and undermined an economy already beset by high unemployment, widespread poverty, crime and sectarian and insurgent violence.

Under the CPEC agreement, $15.5 billion worth of coal, wind, solar and hydro energy projects will come online by 2017 and add 10,400 megawatts of energy to the national grid, officials said.

An additional 6,120 megawatts will be added to the national grid at a cost of $18.2 billion by 2023.

“In total we will add 16,500 MW of electricity through coal, wind, solar and hydel plants in the next seven years and reduce power shortage by 4,000 to 7,000 megawatts,” said Asif.

“This will take care of a growing demand for power by a growing economy.”

The CPEC deal also includes $3.3 billion for road projects and $3.7 billion for railway projects, all to be developed by 2017.

A $44 million optical fibre cable between China and Pakistan is to be built.
Obama to Give Legal Status to Almost 5 Million Undocumented Immigrants

President Barack Obama announced he is granting temporary legal status and work permits to almost five million undocumented immigrants living in the country illegally, the largest single immigration action in modern American history.

More than four million undocumented immigrants who are the parents of U.S. citizen or legal permanent resident children will receive new legal status under Obama’s executive action, if they have been living in the country for at least five years, pay back taxes, and pass a criminal background check.

Obama, who will formally take the action at an event in Las Vegas, will also offer temporary status to several hundred thousand immigrants who came to the country as children, but did not qualify for his action on deferred deportations in 2012. This group includes those who were born before 1981 and those who arrived in the U.S. between June 15, 2007 and Jan. 1, 2010.

"Mass amnesty would be unfair," Obama said in an impassioned address to the nation from the East Room of the White House. "Mass deportation would be both impossible and contrary to our character. What I’m describing is accountability—a commonsense, middle ground approach: If you meet the criteria, you can come out of the shadows and get right with the law. If you’re a criminal, you’ll be deported. If you plan to enter the U.S. illegally, your chances of getting caught and sent back just went up."

A senior Obama Administration official described the action as a “pretty routine application of enforcement priorities” in a briefing for reporters. "It is not a pathway to citizenship. It is temporary and it is reversible."

The last time such a large number of undocumented immigrants got legal status was through legislation President Ronald Reagan signed in 1986, which gave a path to citizenship for about three million people. There are currently about 11 million undocumented immigrants living in the U.S.

The plan, which will be put into place by memorandum and the actions of cabinet officials, will also include new priorities and procedures for detaining and deporting those undocumented immigrants not granted special status. The new deportation priorities will focus on removing criminals, gang members, and those who have arrived in the U.S. since Jan. 1, 2014.

"Felons, not families. Criminals, not children. Gang members, not a mom who’s working hard to provide for her kids," Obama said. "We’ll prioritize, just like law enforcement does every day."

"Scripture tells us that we shall not oppress a stranger; for we know the heart of a stranger—we were strangers once, too," Obama added, quoting Exodus. "My fellow Americans, we are and always will be a nation of immigrants. We were strangers once, too."

The President and his team decided not to extend the special legal status to the parents of undocumented children, a group that could have covered several hundred thousand additional immigrants. "We made a determination that the law essentially did not support that," the official said, in a publicly-released memo, the Department of Justice Office of Legal Counsel wrote that in its opinion Obama could not justify granting deferred action to the parents of those covered by the 2012 “Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals” program.

That temporary legal status, which was granted to hundreds of thousands of child arrivals in 2012, will now have to be reviewed every three years. Obama compared his action to those taken by every Republican and Democrat for the past 30 years, telling lawmakers on Capitol Hill that if they question his authority to act, "I have one answer: Pass a bill."

In a video statement released before Obama’s speech, Speaker of the House John Boehner criticized Obama for acting unilaterally. "The President has said before that he’s not king and he’s not an emperor—but he’s sure acting like one," he said. "And he’s doing it at a time when the American people want nothing more than for us to work together."

Some Republican governors have threatened to sue to undermine Obama's action, while on Capitol Hill, GOP lawmakers have threatened to use legislation to try to block or defund the plan. Senior Administration officials said the expansion of temporary legal status would be funded through fees, and therefore could not be defunded by Congress. But Obama aides have not ruled out other legal routes to try to block the measure.
ASIAN geopolitics is undergoing a change at a time when China’s rising influence contrasts with the US’s fading footprint. The simultaneously rising powers in Asia—from India to Vietnam, Indonesia and Japan, Australia and South Korea are working harder than ever to ensure that China remains one of Asia’s giants, not its sole spokesman. Our relations with China at best is challenging; India’s Myanmar policy took a pragmatic shift from ‘shallow idealism’ after it embarked on its Look East policy; strategically it was motivated by three crucial factors—a) the search of stability in India’s Northeast region; b) the economic opportunities tendered by Myanmar and other ASEAN members; and c) an attempt to counterbalance China’s growing presence in the area.

Prime Minister Modi so far has shown himself to be extra-ordinarily sure footed in foreign policy. His recent visit to Myanmar can be termed successful in view of the fact that host President Thein Sein depicted two nations “like brothers” and calling the ties fraternal. Myanmar treated China as a cousin in the past.

Despite its historical and cultural links with South East Asia, India in its post-independence foreign policy largely tended to ignore the region. The Look East policy which originated primarily focusing on trade and economics has now attained a distinct security dimension. China is clearly too big and too powerful to be ignored by the regional states—they are now seeking to expand their strategic space by reaching out to other regional and global powers including India, being looked as a balancer. In this context, Delhi needs to assure the regional states of its reliability not only as an economical and political partner but also as a security provider. The next 20 years in this context is bound to be more challenging. A major lacuna in our Look East policy has been lack of deep engagement with Myanmar. Our political relations have lacked depth.

Indeed Indian foreign policy under PM Modi is showing signs of regaining its lost profile with neighbourhood, but with regard to winning Myanmar back, it will require New Delhi to keep certain challenges in mind—one, the China factor. Given that Myanmar shares a long border with China and one that has been a ‘friend in need,’ India at the present moment cannot afford to compete or replace the Chinese influence. India has to look beyond Beijing to consolidate its ties with Myanmar. New Delhi has to capitalise on the growing resistance to Chinese-funded projects by offering easy credit facility to Myanmar and propose joint ventures that would generate employment for the Burmese first while boost up trade between the two neighbours. Proposing better connectivity is a welcome sign, but there are a ‘number’ of sectors within Myanmar calling for India’s immediate attention like Information Technology/Telecommunications/electricity/media and entertainment/garment and beauty products/religious tourism and the health care sector, to name a few. Both public and private sector in India can play an important role in these sectors.

Two, India while acknowledging Myanmar’s military role should continue
ammunition is an important agenda. Here sectarian mobilization will further alienate India's objective to engage positively with its neighbours. Earlier, External Affairs Minister, Sushma Swaraj, during her visit to Naypyitaw, raised the issue of several North East Indian insurgent groups operating from bases inside Myanmar, drawing a response from President Thein Sein that his country "will never allow its territory to be used for anything that is inimical to India's interests." New Delhi in this connection even stressed the need to operationalise the MOU signed between the two nations on intelligence-sharing and cooperation between security forces. Mrs. Swaraj went to the extent of suggesting that Chief ministers of states bordering Myanmar participate in the Joint Consultative Committee meetings besides Union Ministers for better understanding of economic and security issues.

In the eastern tip of Arunachal Pradesh lives a small ethnic group called the Singpho who are related to the Kachin living in Myanmar's Kachin state and Yunnan province of China. The Chinese, however, have not taken this relationship very well. Of more pressing concern to China are the Kachin armed groups such as the Kachin Independence Army (KIA). The KIA is demanding autonomy for Kachin state within a federal Myanmar. Wah is said to be the biggest insurgent group with more than 30,000 men and women fully equipped and trained by the Chinese.

Bengal and Burma Connections: India's Soft Power

With its historical relations with Myanmar India enjoys a great "Soft Power" in its relationship. Bengal and Burma had a history of close contacts in all the fields. Rangoon and Judson College were affiliated to Calcutta University; Prof. Nihar Ranjan Roy was invited by the University of Rangoon to teach History in the early 1950s: Bengal revolutionaries like Trailokyamath Chakraborty, Sachin Guha and Surya Sen were in Burma in 1920s and were particularly impressed by the indomitable spirit of Burmese women and monks. Rabindranath Tagore visited Burma thrice, first in 1916, then in 1924 and 1927. The major inspiration behind Tagore's visit was to remind the people of their common Buddhist past.

The extreme popularity of Sarat Chandra, especially his political novel Pather Dabi may appear unintelligible today but there was tremendous Sarat Chandra euphoria across Burma. For proper understanding of Indo-Burma relations during the first three decades of the 20th century, Pather Dabi seems to be a very crucial source. The old Arakan-Chittagong route used by the revolutionaries of Bengal and Burma is well known. Both Anushilan and Jugantar group of revolutionaries had wide contacts in Burma. Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose was a hero in Burma since his days in the Mandalay jail. Like Netaji, Thakins leader Aung San was also a die-hard socialist and nationalist. Mutual respect between Netaji and Burmese national leaders like Dr. Ba Maw and Aung San was so deep that Netaji could shift the HQ of Azad Hind govt and some INA units to Burma in January 1944. The relation was so genuine that even after Aung San's army turned anti-Japanese (March 1945) there was no major clashes between INA and BNA. After all, Aung San and Netaji both had very clear vision about the future of their countries, Burma and India.

New Delhi looms large in Myanmar's strategic thinking is well reflected in the fragment exchange of high level visits between the two countries post Thein Sein's tenure. Prime Minister Modi's recent visit was the second by an Indian Prime Minister in one calendar year. Former Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh visited Myanmar in March 2014. India attaches highest priority to its relationship with ASEAN which constitutes a community of 1.8 billion people representing one fourth of humanity, with a combined GDP of 3.8 trillion US dollars.

THE WRITER

The writer is Vice President of IFUNA and Chairman, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies (MAKAIS), Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India. He recently visited Myanmar to participate in a Conference on "India and Myanmar: Together the Way Ahead" at Yangon.

(The views expressed are his personal).
Vietnam an important ally for India?

Vietnam is a key player in India's Act East policy under Prime Minister Narendra Modi. From India's perspective, a strategic partnership with Vietnam will only deepen political, economic, and security ties and be a bulwark against China, say Melissa S Hersh and Dr Ajey Lele.

Astonishingly exotic and utterly compelling, Vietnam is a country of breathtaking natural beauty with an incredible heritage that quickly becomes addictive.

Vietnam has been actively working to strategically engage both the United States and India to stand in its corner to counter China's territorial claims. And, as a result, Vietnam’s foreign, security, and economic policy have figured prominently in American and Indian domestic circles.

Additionally, Vietnam is courting various countries embroiled in maritime disputes with China, including the Philippines and Japan. Though Vietnam has voiced support for the Triple Action Plan proposed by the Philippines, it is not relying on due process and arbitration alone.

Consequently, Vietnam has been on a procurement spree to bolster its maritime defences, in part subsidised by generous lines of credit from the US and India and through the donation of used patrol vessels by Japan. For all of Vietnam’s rumblings, there is still a faction within the country that would like to a peaceful resolution of differences with China. It appears though, that peace through deterrence is the more immediate solution.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi with his Vietnamese counterpart during his 2-day visit to Vietnam.
Looking East

Vietnam is a key player in India’s Act East policy under Prime Minister Narendra Modi. In 2010, an ASEAN-India Trade in Goods agreement entered into force, laying the groundwork for a future free trade agreement. Furthermore, Vietnam has been a strategic advocate for India within ASEAN, and will also serve as the country coordinator for India from 2015 to 2018.

From India’s perspective, a strategic partnership with Vietnam will only deepen political, economic, and security ties. During 2013-14, trade between the two countries stood at $8 billion registering a growth of over 30 per cent over the previous year. And, as India’s trade aspirations increase, particularly with respect to its indigenous aerospace and defence exports, Modi’s administration is actively working to overturn the refusal by the previous coalition government to equip Vietnam with military hardware.

MOU SIGNED BETWEEN INDIA AND VIETNAM DURING MODI’S VISIT TO VIETNAM

Establishment of Nalanda University

Nalanda University, located in Nalanda in Nalanda District of the State of Bihar, is a non-profit, non-profit, self-governing international institution which aims to bring together the brightest and the most dedicated students from all countries for the pursuit of intellectual, philosophical, historical and spiritual studies and thus, achieve qualities of tolerance, accommodation and mutual understanding. The MoU has been earlier signed by 10 countries from the EAS and 1 non-EAS country as part of the international support to the University.

Conservation and Restoration of the World Heritage Site of My Son, Quang Nam Province, Vietnam

The MoU flows from the proposal of the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam requesting India’s expertise and assistance in restoration of Group of Temples at the World Heritage Site of My Son, Quang Nam Province of Vietnam and the subsequent ‘Initial Conservation Report and Project Plan’ of Archaeological Survey of India of May 2011. The project, estimated to be around 16 crore rupees, is to be funded by the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. The project will be implemented by Archaeological Survey of India on behalf of Government of India.

Establishing the Centre for English Language and Information Technology Training at the Telecommunications University, Ministry of Defence, Vietnam

Under the MoU, the Vietnam-India Centre for English Language and Information Technology Training will be set up at the Telecommunications University, Ministry of Defence of Vietnam. The Centre will provide a permanent venue for teaching English language and information technology for raising the general level of proficiency of trainees in these skills. It shall train and upgrade the skills of English language teachers from schools and training institutions of the armed forces and also prepare students for tests essential for tertiary education. It will strive to develop into a Centre for Excellence while at the same time, collaborate with other Centres of English and IT education set up in Vietnam with the assistance of the Government of India. The Ministry of External Affairs of the Government of India shall be entrusted with implementing the project.

Cultural Exchange Programme for 2015-17

The Cultural Exchange Programme aims to strengthen cooperation, cultural exchanges between India and Vietnam through organizing art, exhibitions, exchanging cultural and art troopes, organizing folklores, art performance activities in both countries. The Programme shall facilitate exchange of records on classical, traditional and folk music and dance, photographs, pictures and publications on performing arts. India and Vietnam shall also endeavour to share information and experience in the field of cultural heritage protection and promotion.


The MoU aims to increase cooperation in the field of broadcasting through exchange of programmes in the fields of culture, education, science, entertainment, sports and news. India and Vietnam shall also encourage mutual participation by informing each other of significant cultural, economic, political and social events, festivals and competitions taking place in their respective countries. The Heads of Agreement between OVL and PetroVietnam aims to enhance mutual cooperation between India and Vietnam in hydrocarbon sector. The Agreement underlines Vietnamese invitation to OVL to expand its presence in Vietnam and further consolidate cooperation in exploration and other areas between the two countries in energy sector.

Agreement between ONGC Videsh Limited and PetroVietnam

This MoU signifies strengthening partnership between India and Vietnam in energy sector. India welcomes PetroVietnam’s participation in blocks agreed upon in the MoU. The MoU paves way for future collaboration between the two countries in this area.
Looking East

On his third visit to India in the past seven years, Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung cemented an evolving alliance between the two South Asian countries by inking new defence and energy deals. This deal will result in India rapidly operationalising a $100 million line of credit to the Vietnamese for the purchase of four off-shore naval vessels to be used to patrol Vietnamese-claimed energy assets in the South China Sea.

In return, the Indian government signed an agreement to expand its exploration relationship with PetroVietnam. For India, the move was less about thwarting Chinese expansionism and more likely meant to foster indigenous defence sector exports and increase trade opportunities in the energy sector.

According to media speculation, India will likely be closely scrutinising an opportunity for to sell Vietnam BrahMos short range anti-ship cruise missiles. The BrahMos missiles are a joint Indian-Russian opportunity buyers when it comes to kitting out their navy. They are in the market for the Improved Kilo/Varshavyanka Class variant Russian submarines as well as for surface warfare-equipped frigates.

While chatter around this sale began shortly after China’s decision to deploy a deep-sea oil rig in Vietnamese-claimed waters, the dynamic has subsequently changed since China has opted to move the rig for obfuscated reasons.

Another area that Modi’s administration will possibly have to tackle is selling Vietnam intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance technologies. India may be able to provide an alternative to Japanese and European space-related solutions. Vietnam’s ISR requests could lead to a quid pro quo opportunity for India to establish ground-based satellite operations in Ho Chi Minh City.

Since 2006, the US has been working with India on a Framework for Maritime Security Cooperation. As part of the American commitment to the Asia-Pacific region, and to the growing ties between India and the US, third-party camaraderie is as an asset. Enhancing maritime domain awareness is consistent with US doctrine in India and increasingly, with Vietnam.

This is a multi-pronged approach that addresses administrative and organisational capacity-building in exclusive economic zones but also operational capacity building to counter growing amphibious threats ranging from piracy to terrorism. Both India and Vietnam have been victims of piracy, and the 2008 terrorist attacks in Mumbai began as an amphibious operation.

The United States and Vietnam are celebrating the rapprochement between the two nations that fought a bloody conflict 50 years ago. This anniversary only serves to strengthen a 2013 bilateral comprehensive partnership agreement. As the US and Vietnam work to address issues related to trade, environment and climate change, human rights, education, and building maritime capacity, there are two other noteworthy bilateral engagements: an agreement on civil nuclear energy and a seismic shift in defence policy resulting in the partial lifting of a decades-old arms embargo with respect to lethal military assistance — specifically referring to maritime defence and security.

Under the US-Vietnam comprehensive partnership, building maritime capacity has a two-pronged goal: to enhance Vietnam’s third-party logistics competencies, reduce trans-shipment needs through building larger and more modern ports to manage greater throughput, and strengthen MDA generally. Building Vietnam’s off-shore patrol capabilities also strengthens Vietnam’s maritime defenses while leveraging sentinels in the South China Seas for the US.

An enhanced trade and security relationship between the US and Vietnam has not been without reservations on both sides; Washington has voiced its disapproval of heavy-handed state-owned enterprises and a lacklustre human rights portfolio so Hanoi. The effect on internal politics within Vietnam has not gone unnoticed.

Doi Moi reformists are eager to adopt more Western commercial standards while the conservatives remain reluctant to lessen their grip on national assets which they believe would disrupt the security balance. Negotiations on the Trans-Pacific Economic Partnership Agreement are framed by the US as a gateway for American businesses to gain access to some of the world’s fastest growing markets.

While China may be moving towards a post-American narrative where the sphere of influence lies outside of Washington, the US continues to strengthen its alliances in South East and Southern Asia. Whether the US can offer attractive alternatives to those being offered by China through BRIC and SCO forum is unknown.

It remains to be seen if the US, India, Vietnam, and others, such as Japan, the Philippines, and Singapore will agree on a common operating picture for how to peacefully resolve disputed territory in the South China Seas. Recent gatherings of world leaders in the Asia-Pacific region have highlighted these issues.

For the US, lifting a partial ban on arms trade to Vietnam, so it can enhance its MDA and by proxy that of the US, through strengthening defence, security, and interdiction capabilities, has added an international dimension to what was a regional matter.

Mrs. Kiran Mehra - Kerpelman, Director, United Nations Information Centre for India and Bhutan, was the Chief Guest.

Mr. Z.A. Bandukwala - President of the Indo - Arab Society, welcomes the guest and the speakers. He highlighted the Indo - Arab Society's activities for the last 60 years for promoting cultural relations between India and the Arab countries. Mr. Bandukwala highly appreciated Mrs. Kiran Mehra - Kerpelman who is travelling extensively in all the states of India, meeting the United Nations NGOs and supporting them to spread the ideals of the United Nations for peace and harmony.

H.E. Mr. Masood E. Khaleghi - Consul General of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Mumbai was another distinguished guest on the occasion. H.E. Masood E. Khaleghi, and Rajiv Dada, Senior Advocate and former Additional Solicitor General of India, spoke about the formation of Palestine State and the U.N. Resolutions pertaining to the issue.

UNSC rejects Palestinian resolution

A Palestinian bid to secure a U.N. resolution setting an end date for the occupation failed to pass a Security Council vote in a move Israel hailed on Wednesday as a victory. The Palestine-drafted resolution, which was backed by Arab states, would have paved the way for an independent Palestinian State with east Jerusalem as its capital.

China, France and Russia were among the eight countries that voted in favour of the text, but the resolution fell short of winning the nine “yes” votes necessary for adoption within the 15-member council. Australia and the United States voted against, and five other countries abstained, including Britain.

The failure to win nine votes also spared Washington from having to wield its veto in a move which would have caused it major embarrassment with its Arab allies. It set a 12-month deadline for Israel to reach a final peace deal with the Palestinians and called for a full withdrawal of Israeli troops from the Palestinian territories by the end of 2017. The council's rejection of the resolution was hailed by Israel, which said the Palestinians would achieve their dream of statehood only through bilateral negotiations, rather than through “unilateral” moves at the U.N.

Mrs. Kiran Mehra - Kerpelman, Director, United Nations Information Centre for India and Bhutan, addressing the audience.

Mrs. Kiran Mehra - Kerpelman, Director, United Nations Information Centre for India and Bhutan, New Delhi... in her keynote address explained in detail about the U.N. Resolution on Palestine.

Mrs. Mohini Mathur, Executive chairperson of Maharashtra UN Association (MUJA) presented details of the activities of MUJA. Mr. Syed A.A. Syed - Secretary General of MUJA, introduced the Guest Speakers and also Mr. Charles Kerpelman the respected husband of Mrs. Kiran Mehra - Kerpelman to the audience. Ashraf Ahmed Shaikh, Hon. Secretary, MUJA compered the programme.

Nasir Pathan, General Secretary of the Indo - Arab Society while proposing a vote of thanks gave special thanks to Mrs. Kiran Mehra Kerpelman for sending 12 posters of the large self-stand type. They were exhibited inside the Hall and a few were outside in the lobby. These posters depicted different images depicting the pathetic condition of Palestinian people due to continued war in their stricken country.

At the end of the programme, as a gesture of good will, Mrs. Kiran Mehra Kerpelman, gifted the photo posters to the Indo - Arab Society.
Trends and Solutions in Combating Global Food Fraud

United Nations establishes a Committee on World Food Security (CFS) in 1974 as an intergovernmental body to serve as a forum for review and follow-up of policies concerning world food security including production and physical and economic access to food. CFS is the most inclusive international and intergovernmental platform of all relevant stakeholders to work together to ensure food security and nutrition. CFS held its 41st session from 13 to 18 October 2014. Nearly 800 representatives of CFS stakeholder groups (governments, civil society, private sector, international and regional organizations and observers), including 11 ministers and 2 vice-ministers, registered for CFS 41, developing policies and recommendations based on report prepared by HLPE on “Food Losses and Waste in the Context of Sustainable Food Systems”

As the global food supply chain widens, the challenges of safeguarding our food supply have increased and more advanced fraud detection procedures are needed. Food fraud is costing $49 billion annually.

The Global Food Fraud Situation

Increasingly globalized food supply chains and the economic motivation to provide cheaper food products have contributed to the food fraud issue. What we’re seeing today is an increasingly complex and fragmented food supply chain. Due to both its global nature and the fact that most food today no longer follows a straight line from source to fork, it is more like a supply ‘network,’ and tracing an ingredient back to its source has become challenging due to this increasing network of handlers, suppliers and middlemen globally. In addition to the globalization of the supply network making detection harder and adulteration easier, other trends influencing the rise in food fraud include cost cutting as the food industry is under constant pressure to keep prices down, and that leads to the temptation to substitute, sometimes at the cost of safety and certainly at the cost of provenance and integrity.

Types of Food Fraud

Food fraud, or Economically Motivated Adulteration, is defined as “a collective term used to encompass the deliberate and intentional substitution, addition, tampering, or misrepresentation of food, food ingredients or food packaging; or false or misleading statements made about a product, for economic gain”. EMA is a food defense issue because, by definition, it is an intentional act. More significantly, it is a criminal act, because it is perpetrated by individuals who defraud the public for economic gain.

Broadly seven distinct kinds of food fraud are:

- Adulteration: A component of the finished product is fraudulent.
- Tampering: Legitimate product and packaging are used in a fraudulent way.
- Overdraw: Legitimate product is made in excess of production agreements.
- Theft: Legitimate product is stolen and passed off as legitimately procured.
- Diversion: The sale or distribution of legitimate products outside of intended markets.
- Simulation: Illegitimate product is designed to look like, but not exactly copy, the legitimate product.
- Counterfeit: All aspects of the fraudulent product and packaging are fully replicated.

Who’s Responsible?

Everyone has a role in addressing the threat of food fraud. Suppliers play a crucial role in deterrence and detection of economic adulteration.
For the retailer, it’s very important to partner with reputable suppliers and manufacturers that utilize the highest standards in terms of deterrence and detection and to monitor their activities on an ongoing basis. For standards in food and product safety to rise to the next level, consumers need to demand higher food safety standards. Manufacturers can support this effort by helping consumers identify issues, giving them the resource to identify fraudulent products so they know what to look for to avoid these products.

The role of the government is to ensure certain rights and safeguards are in place and to enforce them. Governments can support legitimate businesses through the protection of property rights and by reducing the number of illegal businesses.

Because of its complexity and worldwide reach, reining in food fraud requires a collaborative effort between industry and government agencies. It will also demand a dedicated effort across the food supply chain, from producers and distributors to consumers.

**Potential Solutions**

In addition to identifying the roles manufacturers, suppliers, consumers and the government play in reducing fraudulent activity, the three fundamental guidelines to improve how the industry detects and deters fraud:

- Become more proactive in addressing economic adulteration: Many companies have already implemented ways to counter global fraud threats, but more needs to be done.

- Find new ways to share information and promote collaboration: Identify a formal way to collaborate with industry, government, academia and nongovernmental organizations and increase global engagement.

- Engage government as a facilitator: Governments can establish global standards and share intelligence on emerging threats, which is crucial to addressing threats that are further magnified by globalization, more integrated supply chains and a global consumer base with similar requirements.

**Food Defense Plans**

Implementing a strong food defense plan is another way for food processors, packagers and distributors to limit intentional and malicious food tampering. Food defense plans are also increasingly required for food safety certification and vendor qualification, as well as by Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA), which requires facilities to identify and evaluate food hazards, including those introduced intentionally, and implement and document preventive controls to provide assurance that food is not adulterated. Food companies at all levels of the supply chain can assess their level of food defense preparedness through a food defense audit by an independent third party.

Finally, to achieve food security and to combat food fraudulent cases, retailers, manufacturers, government bodies have to collaborate and develop more stringent laws and follow global standards like Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) along with more comprehensive knowledge about global fraud threats involving industry experts, academicians, non governmental institutions etc and imparting knowledge about the same to the end user.

*Meenakshi Verma*
Art Talk

by CHANDER P MAHAJAN

The Roerichs, father & son, lived in India at a time when political, social & cultural upheavals were being engineered. They believed in replacing Western influence into a romantic indigenous style from the past traditions. 'Let us always strive towards the beautiful' was their pursuit. Art galleries at Naggar (Kullu) & Bangalore (Karnataka), are their creations.

Nicholas Roerich was Russian by birth, but universal by inclination who firmly believed "It is beauty that will save the world". He had created in a few years, a vast body of work that contained in the form of paintings a new vision: drenched in color landscapes, sweeping Himalayan vistas, jagged mountain peaks piercing the sky, everything bathed in mysterious light.

Svetoslav Roerich, the younger son of eminent artist & scholar Nicholas Roerich, had from the young age shown great talent of a brilliant portraitist with a unique ability to penetrate in to the inner world of people. He was a painter in the manner of his father, yet had held his own individuality and uniqueness because of which his paintings are known as 'Yoga of Beauty'. His Himalayan landscapes, designed in monumental systems open a fantastic world almost unbelievable to one who has never seen them himself.

The artist adored sensuous beauty of women. Much of grace of face he captured was through her spirit of shyness and innocence. In 1945, he married Devika Rani, the first lady of Indian Cinema, granddaughter of Rabindranath Tagore. She was a sublime beauty of beauty. All 365 gods of Kullu valley sent their representatives to meet Devika.

Who comes across in many of his paintings depicted invisibly with flowers in her hands. Together with his wife, he collected rare items of folklore and became acquainted with local culture, & founded the 'Karnataka Chitrakala Parishad' in Bangalore. For his contribution in the field of art and culture, Svetoslav has been honored with the prestigious Padma Shri Award. Today his paintings adorn many art galleries in many countries. Nicholas Roerich was a mystic in every sense who had dedicated himself to the Himalayas. No one has painted Himalaya..
as he has, whereas Seirad was a romanticist to the core. He painted the valleys of India & the people. His landscapes offered glimpses of magnificence of poetic India, of spring in the KulluValley, autumnal trees, rosy calligraphy of clouds and murmuring rivers: all as visions of joy.

He believed that portraits bring out the best of human characteristics. He has done several portraits of Nehru. His portrait of Indira Gandhi was unveiled in the central Hall of Parliament in 1987. Incidentally he is the only one whose three paintings adorn the Parliament Hall As Dr. S.Radhakrishansaid, ‘... ‘His landscapes are poems of colour.’

Writer: Vice President of IFJHA, is a freelance journalist and an art critic.

(With inputs from Shakti S Chandel IAS, life trustee of Roerich Memorial Trust (Naggar;Kullu)

(The views expressed are his personal.)
Speakers at the Seminar on “Human Rights 365 (means that rights need focus and protection round the year) which was the theme of the UN Day this year, stressed on the need of more teeth to the National and State Human Rights Commissions. The Seminar was organized by West Bengal Federation of United Nations Associations and supported by FACES and Bhawanipore Education Society on 10 December, 2014.

Inaugurating the Seminar, Mr Justice Altamas Kabir, Former Chief Justice of India said “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights”. Judiciary has played an important role in safeguarding and enforcement of human rights. Referring to India’s commitment, Justice Kabir said “Our Constitution drew inspiration from both the Preamble of the UN Charter and the Human Rights Declaration”.

Mr Justice Chittatosh Mukherjee, former Chief Justice of Calcutta and Bombay High Courts in his keynote address lauded the role of the UN and said the Member States have committed themselves legally to respect and defend the human rights.

Earlier Mr Sitaram Sharma, Chairman WEBFUNA in his Presidential address said that “there is no consensus on what is or is not human rights as there is no agreed upon definition of human rights.” Nevertheless, violations of human rights are one of the most pressing problems of the world today and one of the greatest causes of human sufferings. Human Rights Day was proclaimed more than six decades ago, but as we observe today, this is no reason for celebration. Human Rights are violated in a great number of ways all over the world. The ideal of attainment of human rights needs to be pursued relentlessly. We must realize the need to keep watch round the clock and every day Ambassador Krishnan Srinivasan, Former Foreign Secretary of India observed that “the west promotes human rights in an absolute sense, whereas the Asian wish to reserve their position to each situational context and lay more stress on the greatest good for the greatest number. Europe spent 100 years fixing its politics and then 100 years fixing its economics and is now busy fixing its society, but they want the rest of the world to do so in 60 years after independence”. China takes the blunt view that human right promotion by the west is designed to westernize and disintegrate. India has taken something of a middle position, endorsing the Declaration while reserving its position on inter-governmental criticism and from NGOs like Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch.

Dr. Brikram Sarkar Ex-MP and Spokesman of West Bengal State BJP said “What is needed is the proper implementation of laws for protection of human rights. The biggest violation is the state and its machineries and, therefore, it is a constant tug of war between the civil society and the state.”

Mr Rajeev Maheshwari, Secretary General of WEBFUNA read out the messages of UN Secretary-General Mr. Ban Ki Moon and Mr Keshari Nath Tripathi, Governor of West Bengal and said that “People who experience violence are not aware of remedies. Information and education about Human Rights can play a major role in empowering people and building the foundation for 365-day watch on Human Rights”. Mr. Imran Zailani, President, FACES, proposed Vote of Thanks. An interesting Question & Answer session followed.
Spiritual Talk

Inner and Outer Peace

Throughout the world, we find people have many ways of expressing their desire for peace. We hear phrases such as "peace be with you." At Christmas, people send greeting cards or sing songs about "peace on Earth." We find that people will hold up two fingers in the form of a "V" which symbolizes "peace." When someone dies, we pray that he or she "rests in peace."

Nations meet continually to search for ways to make peace with each other. Organizations dedicated to peace have sprung up in many countries. There is even a Nobel Peace Prize for individual contributions to this noble cause.

The quest for peace is universal. In every age and in every country, people have been trying to find peace within their environment, within their societies, and within the world. It is strange that this search has been going on for so long and has been sought by so many people, yet its attainment remains elusive. Few find peace for themselves. Nothing on earth seems to provide us with a true and lasting peace. We start to wonder why peace is so hard to achieve.

A dictionary defines it as freedom from strife, and a state of serenity and calmness. Inherent in this definition is the answer to why peace is so difficult to find. Life and strife seem to go hand in hand. Whether one is rich or poor, a king or a peasant, one's life is always beset with one problem or another.

There is a story from the life of Lord Buddha which aptly illustrates this truth. A woman whose young son had died approached Lord Buddha. She was shedding copious tears over the loss of her child. She asked Buddha to help bring her son back to life and ease the terrible pain in her heart. Buddha, in his wisdom, told her he would help her if she could first bring back the mustard seed from a household in which no one ever died. The lady followed his instructions and moved from one home to the next. Yet, at each door, she received the same reply. She realized that there wasn't any family that could pass through life escaping the loss of one of its members.

Death is the one inevitable fact of life. Sickness and disease are yet others. We need only examine our own life to see how difficult it is to go through one's existence without any mishap, accident, or illness. Medical books are filled with numerous diseases that can afflict human beings. There is no dearth of accidents that could befall us as we move through life's highways and byways. With death or illness hanging over our heads, it is difficult to live in perpetual, uninterrupted peace.

Even if our physical body is fairly healthy, few can pass through life without any strife. There are many occurrences that produce stress. If we have a family, we know that the illness, unhappiness, or misfortune of any member causes the others to be distressed. Whenever any two people live or work together, there are bound to be tensions due to differences of opinions or differing viewpoints. There are a host of other problems that afflict our lives. If we search for peace in our outer life, at best we can find transitory moments. We certainly do have times in which we enjoy the warmth of being with our loved ones, or we have moments of happiness from some gain or achievement. But these moments are fleeting.

Inevitably, life again comes with its panorama of problems. The great mystic-poet saint, Sant Bani Singh, expressed this beautifully in one of his verses:

Whenever your devotee's condition alters but a little, Life presents itself to you with another cup of sorrow.

It seems as if lasting peace in this life is virtually impossible. Life is more like a pendulum in which we swing back and forth from moments of joy to moments of sorrow.

But true peace can be attained in this lifetime. We only need to undergo a paradigm shift. Our angle of vision needs to be changed. We normally look for peace in the outer world. We hope to find it in our possessions, positions, and relationships. But the loss of any of these causes us to become agitated and distraught. Our peace of mind is disturbed. There is a way to have true peace. Just as Birbal shortened Akbar's line by drawing a longer line next to it, the solution to finding peace can be found in a similar way. We cannot change the nature of the world and its problems. But we can add a new dimension to life that will give us peace.

Peace can be found within us. Many people believe the outer world is the only reality. But the enlightened luminaries throughout history have had mystical experiences which verified for them the existence of inner spiritual regions.

Buddha found enlightenment by inverting within himself. Christ has said, "The kingdom of heaven is within you." The Muslim and the Judeo-Christian scriptures speak of the contact that the prophets had with God. Mystics in every religion have described their inner spiritual experiences. These higher realms co-exist simultaneously with us in the physical world. They are realms of eternal peace and bliss. We cannot change the world, but we can tune into those realms lying within us. By doing so we will change our perspective in our life.

The way to reach this inner world is through meditation. We may not be able to change our life or eliminate its problems, but through meditation we can look at it differently. Through meditation we can face life because we understand it better. We have the knowledge to help us face up to what happens to us with strength.

We will have gained the inner peace that comes from spiritual consciousness and we will be a source of peace to all around us.

The more we come in contact with the inner Light and Sound, the more bliss we experience. The soul experiences pure joy and happiness. This bliss stays with the soul throughout the day and night, and we experience peace and contentment.
আমাদের যাত্রা পথে আমি লাভ করিয়েছি কিছু চমৎকার সফলতা। "প্লেটফোম টপ ২৫০ বেংকিং ২০১০" অনুসারে আইএনজিটি ক্ষেত্রে অন্যতম বিশেষ অংশ আন্দোলন কোম্পানী হিসেবে স্বীকৃত। বাজার ব্যবস্থাপনা এই কোম্পানীর প্রতিদিনে ১.২৪ মিলিয়ন বেসেল খাকরা তেল আকৃষ্ট সম্পূর্ণ উৎপাদন করে। সময়ে স্থানে গোল মিলাই কোম্পানীর বিকাশ শিক্ষা আহ্বানে সফল হয়েছে। দেশের শিক্ষা সম্প্রসারণ করার লক্ষ্য আইএনজিটি অঙ্গীভূত হয়।

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