

Nepal : Summary failure of India's Neighborhood First Policy

N. P. Upadhyaya (Aryal)

When India is around, one doesn't need an enemy. It is so believed across the Nepal and by extension South Asian popular maxim applies apparently to the entire smaller countries in South Asia that border India born in 1947 as the pains are almost the same. A close look at India's bilateral relations, at a given time, with individual countries gives a feeling that India is an enemy to these smaller nations.

All countries in this part of the world, the South Asian landmass, have at one time or regularly have experienced Indian expansionist and coercive behavior.

Why Bangladesh was fractured or say calculatedly split is not a guarded secret now. And why the last popular agitation erupted in Sri Lanka and the turmoil in the Maldives since two years or so needs no sharp brain to understand.

Bangladesh though has economically developed in a miraculous manner must be appreciated. Even a subjugated country can achieve such incredible economic success is certainly a matter of pride for others in South Asian countries.

By this time, perhaps it is B'desh alone in the entire South Asia that is on the path of becoming a sizable regional economic power after India. India lags behind B'desh.

However, if the Bangladeshi economy is at the top then, unfortunately, its core politics in Dhaka is being presumably controlled by New Delhi.

While talking of Delhi's visible interference in Dhaka's internal politics was best explained by a Bangladeshi scholar Zainal Abedin who in June 2020 at an international webinar held in Islamabad told straight that his country of late was plagued by the RAW menace and to do away with the so called hazard, Zainal demanded, that an effective coalition of some Muslim countries must be formed in order to curb the treat of the RAW spy agency of India.

Yes! On some opposite moments, Bangladesh appears close to Beijing; however, as and when coerced by New Delhi, Dhaka fears proximity with Beijing.

Yet Beijing has not lost its hope and, let's presume, and cares less of New Delhi's obstruction, it has already made considerable inroads inside Bangladesh through different development projects. Dhaka's fear is surfacial and Dhaka prefers Beijing over New Delhi.

Dhaka in effect prefers economic development of the country through the support of Beijing and the latter in turn with the tacit help of the Dhaka wants to expand the net works of its signature project coined as Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

The Chinese envoy in Dhaka is comparatively active and smart.

China though worked hard to influence Nepal, however, because of the excessive Indian presence (influence), China has so far not been able to influence the Nepali leadership in a desired manner. It is simply because the Nepali leadership has a clear India bend and thus China fears of the "possible leak" of its bilateral conversation approaching Delhi the next moment.

Yet China has not lost its optimism in seducing Nepal. Very soon the sitting Nepali Prime Minister Prachanda is all set to land in Beijing. The Indian moles are everywhere who even control media organizations claimed to be close to Beijing.

In effect, it is these vibrant media men who play double and ditching mini China in Nepal.

Back to the point:

The Sri Lankan bloody tumult ended up with Indian Prime Minister Modi pressurizing the India bend (it is so believed in Nepal) newly appointed Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe to award power projects to his Gujarati entrepreneur Gautam Adani — the most repulsive businessman of India whose intimate ties with Gujarati Prime Minister Modi has already become a curse, as laymen in India openly claim, to the entire countrymen.

Ranil is rumored to have been the Indian preference. However, this remains yet to be substantiated.

Highly placed sources in South Asia claim that PM Modi while meeting with the Sri Lankan President Ranil almost threatened him and instructed later to look into the problems of the so-called "ignored" Sri Lankan Tamils or else the country may again see the previous political turbulence which summarily deposed the Gotabaya Brothers.

For India, creating problems in the countries in the neighborhood is its habit. To recall, the Tamil Tiger militant issue that plagued the Island nation for three decades was the brain child of Mrs. India Gandhi and her son Rajiv Gandhi. The LTTE terror devastated Sri Lanka and yet the Sri Lankan economy showed rising trend against all the odds.

Nepal knows how India creates issues and problems and as a clever quack enters into the mayhem as an arbitrator and exploits the country for its political and security benefits.

The 12-point agreement signed in Delhi by Nepali leaders around 2006 is the root cause of Nepal's perennial political glitches. The 12-point agreement skillfully allowed India to overwhelm Nepali polities to be governed by India's trusted and tested' men since the ouster of the Nepali King.

Back to Sri Lanka.

President Mahinda Rajapaksa, to recall, had with the tacit support of China and Pakistan "eliminated" the three decades-long India-sponsored Tamil Tigers' demand for a separate Tamil land.

The LTTE leader Prabhakaran was, informed sources say, the brainchild of Rajiv Gandhi who was entrusted with the job of keeping Sri Lanka in perpetual instability.

The three decades-long LTTE terror in Sri Lanka ended in 2009 when China and Pakistan assisted President Mahinda.

To celebrate the event, the Kathmandu based Sri Lankan Ambassador ...Hewage... organized a brief press conference wherein the Sri Lankan envoy expressed his happiness on the end of the terror once and for all.

Talking with this scribe some decades back in Kathmandu's Annapurna Hotel, the former Foreign Secretary of India Jyotindra Nath Dixit (late J. N. Dixit) had admitted that "sending the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) by New Delhi to Colombo was a historical blunder of India.

India has committed many such blunders after gaining independence that have disturbed the political stability of the countries that unfortunately border with India.

What PM Modi is in the eyes of senior congress leader Mani Shankar Iyer was best made known to the entire world when he talking to a media man in Delhi said briskly that "PM Modi is nothing but a fool of the highest Order".

A small visual strip is making several rounds in social media including Twitter, both in Nepal and India, which has the insulting statement of Mani Iyer on PM Modi.

PM Modi may be of high importance to the countries in the Quad plus France but the dream of Modi or for that matter of India to become a regional/world power will eventually be a distant dream as long as India is taken as a rogue regional power whose collective or even bilateral ties with individual countries in South Asia is as bad as could be registered.

In many more ways than one thus, India's fake "neighborhood first policy" will be a misnomer and nothing more than that.

Take, for example, the Maldives wherein India rules presumably through its High Commissioner who was being accused sometime earlier that the Indian High Commissioner as a politico-diplomatic person prevails over the key political decisions of the Archipelago. Some time earlier there were reports that a sizeable section of common Maldivians came to the streets asking the Maldivian regime to halt the India's HC's excesses in an alien country's internal affairs. Abdulla Yameen, the former Maldivian President knows better what India means to the common Maldivians. To recall, some two years ago, the sensitive Maldivian nationals came out to the streets and chanted slogans like, "Indian Military Out" and the like.

This explains the Maldivians' wrath/hatred against India.

A Gujarati businessman Gautam Adani is so close to PM Modi that prompted even personality like George Soros, an American billionaire investor, to openly make a decisive statement stating that "Indian business tycoon Gautam Adani's recent troubles in the stock market would spur 'democratic revolution in India' and Prime Minister Narendra Modi will 'have to answer questions'."

Soros, in a speech at the Munich Security Conference, held February 7-19, 2023, said Modi would "have to answer questions from foreign investors and Parliament on allegations the Adani group is facing".

Taking a jibe at PM Modi-Adani nexus, a Pakistan Observer wrote, February 22, 2023, that prominent financial investor George Soros while addressing the Munich Security Conference took up the issue of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's secret relationship with his close ally and business tycoon Gautam Adani who was accused of stock manipulation and his stock collapsed into a house of cards." For the record, billionaire Soros, who has Jewish roots is a Hungarian-American national who recently accused that PM Modi and Adani were close allies and that PM Modi has been silent ever since Adani Enterprises was accused of financial irregularities." India's Godi media have been pouncing this group is facing.

Several international agencies reported then that George Soros talked at the Munich Security Conference that the Modi-Adani nexus eventually will "significantly weaken Modi's stranglehold on India's federal government" and open the door to push for much-needed institutional reforms. "I may be naive, but I expect a democratic revival in India," said Soros.

In plain words, Soros, the founder of Open Society, hints that India is not even a democracy worth the name.

If Soros is to be believed then the Modi-Adani tie-up shall prove advantageous to Modi's immediate rival-Rahul Gandhi-the Indian Congress leader at the time of the approaching parliamentary elections in India.

So much so that, over these months and with Rahul Gandhi's solo campaign of "Unite India", Rahul's popularity across India has gone up as much as PM Modi's prestige has gone down.

Rahul is also popular in Nepal though the Nepali population still recall how Pilar turned India's Prime Minister has had damaged Nepal had imposed Economic Blockade on Nepal on March 23, 1989 ostensibly to teach a befitting lesson to sit Nepal King Birendra who had summarily rejected the idea of Gandhi in Islamabad for the formation of a mini SAARC within the seven-member SAARC itself.

PM Rajiv Gandhi was also annoyed with King Birendra for not allowing the Italy-born Mrs. Sonia Gandhi to enter the Lord Pashupatinath Temple.

The Temple of Lord Shiva is restricted to the entrance of men of other faiths and beliefs other than the Hindus.

However, save for a few tilted and bent political personalities for whom India is the source of their inspiration and a model to copy in their lives, India is simply great for these traitors.

The men who love and honor India from the core of their hearts and more often than not hate Nepal comparatively forget the fact that entire worldly evils are being exported to Nepal through deliberately kept open international borders.

Not so many people may have noticed, however, the fact is that Indias has been exporting its nationals and we in Nepal willingly importing those Indian nationals who in due course of time shall rule Nepal as bona fide Nepali citizens.

And this is what India wants ultimately.

It is this open border phenomenon which has over these recent decades swelled Nepal with illegal Indian immigrants who upon bribing some Chief District Officers in Nepal. Mostly the corrupt belong to the Brahminic tribe, who against a few thousand Nepali rupees award the "birth Citizenship Certificates" to the immigrants who later within a short span of some years overwhelm the population thereby scaling down the number of Nepali population.

This way, beginning in 1950 and with the borders kept open, a great demographic disaster has already approached Nepal which if not checked on time, would enhance or say speed up the Sikkimisation bid of India in no time.

India's target is gulping Nepal when Nepal is being run by India's elevated rulers.

Our own prediction, stated many times in our previous issues, is that Nepal shall be declared a province of India by the early 2030s.

Smash And Grab

By Sunanda Datta Ray

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The Dorji position was later to be further consolidated when Raja Sonam's beautiful younger daughter Ashi Kesar married King Jigme Dorji Wangchuck, the third Druk Gyalpo, and her brother-to-be cruelly assassinated in 1964-became Bhutan's prime minister.

The British had styled the Bhutanese ruler Maharaja and granted him a 15-gun salute. When the treaty of Punakha was executed in 1910, Sir Charles Bell, then PO, informed London. "By one o'clock the signing and sealing of the treaty was over and Bhutan was incorporated in the British empire." Sir Edward Grey, then British foreign secretary, confirmed three weeks later: "That treaty puts Bhutan, as far as the conduct of its foreign relations is concerned, on the same footing with Sikkim, whose status is recognized by the wai-wu pu [as the Chinese foreign office was called after its reconstitution in 1900]." Right up to 1940, the Memorandum on Indian States listed Bhutan with such minor principalities as Alwar, Dewas, and Jaisalmer. Ten years later, Sir Bengal Narasing Rau admitted in India's Constitution in the Making that "the precise status of the territory may be said to be left undetermined". We know that Nehru always bracketed together the two Himalayan kingdoms. But his successors recognized His Highness as His Majesty and posted a special officer in Thimpu in 1968.

The Chogyal knew that Bhutan's path had not been easy. New Delhi had not been amused when the kingdom's national assembly, the Tsongdu, met in May 1960 to express reservations about Article 2 of the 1949 treaty which stipulated that "the government of Bhutan agrees to be guided by the advice of the government of India in regard to its external relations". The Dorjis had obtained assurances from several countries that they would recognize Bhutanese passports and stamps before India would yield to the fair accomplish. The Chogyal's friend and cousin, Jigmé Dorji, was killed under circumstances that were never fully explained. His younger brother, Lendup, and sister, the indomitable Ashi Tashi, were forced to flee to Nepal; and Queen Kesar was all but supplanted "by the king's Tibetan mistress whom the Indian authorities inexplicably treated to royal honours. Bhutan's emergence to full sovereignty was not without travail.

New Delhi's tepid support for the 1965 international convention on the transit trade of landlocked countries was explained by fears of the benefits that might be demanded by the three Himalayan kingdoms. Considerable pressure was exerted three years later to exclude Bhutan from the Vienna conference on the law on treaties. Among the topics on the agenda was the Vienna convention's provisions for the denunciation, suspension, and termination of unequal agreements. If knowledge of this right had carefully to be kept from the Bhutanese, it had to be concealed no less scrupulously from the Sikkimese.

The durbar learnt during the Kagyet dances that India and Bhutan were about to exchange accredited envoys, and that the PO, already bereft of Tibet, would now lose jurisdiction in Bhutan. It had heard only two weeks earlier of Thimpu's application to the UN secretary-general. The effect was electric. Jigmal Densapa had studied international law at Exeter. An Australian diplomat once described him as the only modern man in Gangtok. Meticulous in speech, punctilious, even cautious, to a fault, the Chogyal's bachelor secretary was entirely dedicated to his master's cause. With a thorough grasp of diplomatic etiquette, he understood the implications of the agreement on envoys. The Sikkimese could not but contrast this concession to Bhutan's status with the ungraciousness with which their own king was treated a few months earlier when King Birendra of Nepal was married. The Chogyal refused to go because, acting on New Delhi's advice, Kathmandu decided to seat him with heads of government and not of state. Three Sikkimese councillors were given ministerial rank and sent instead, but as an India House official caustically pointed out, the elevation could not mean anything since Sikkim did not have a ministry, to be continued...

It may appear ridiculous and exaggerated, however, if one looks into the streets of Nepal across the country, hordes of Indian beggars/kawadi wallahs/poverty-stricken families, the barbers, the carpenters, the plumbers and the men involved in building road constructions, all were from Indian cities who have almost taken over Nepali cities. It is no exaggeration. There is nothing to hide.

Add to this the unrestricted inflow of the Indian films which is draining billions and billions of dollars each year.

And yet Indians say Nepal is poor!

Yes, I must admit that a few hundred thousands Nepali nationals reside in India but this figure has no impact on India's demographic structure. Indian population today runs in Billions plus.

Rough estimate is that the Indian illegal immigrants drain some 20 billion dollars annually from Nepal.

Visit the Temple of Lord Shiva in the morning, and look at how the Indian beggars terrorize Nepali nationals.

It is high time for India to give a real meaning and spirit to its neighborhood first policy so that the terrified neighbors could feel that what India says also brings into practice.

A word of deep appreciation to India and its fridly people:

Unless neighbors are contented, India's objective of becoming a global power will be just a day dreaming exercise.

Hearty Congratulations India: The Telegraph Nepal editorial team sends congratulations to the friendly people and the government of India for the remarkable success of India's Chandrayaan Lunar Mission. As a close neighbor Nepal highly evaluates the strenuous efforts made by the Indian scientists at the ISRO-Indian Space Research Organization. With this success, friendly India is now the fourth nation to land on the Moon and the first to land near its south pole. India is now a recognized space power as Nepal's neighbor becomes the fourth nation to successfully land a spacecraft on the moon after the United States, China and Russia.

Anusuya Datta the Space news dated August 23, 2023, that "the flawless soft landing makes Chandrayaan-3 the first spacecraft to touch down on the moon's South Polar Region. The exemplary Indian high scientific achievement comes close on the heels of Luna-25 space experiencing loss of control and subsequently crashing onto the lunar surface".

Congratulations India and Indian friends. Entire South Asia is proud of the miraculous achievement. It is now the turn of Pakistan to energise the neighboring South Asians through such a similar achievements that India has freshly bagged for itself. That's all.

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