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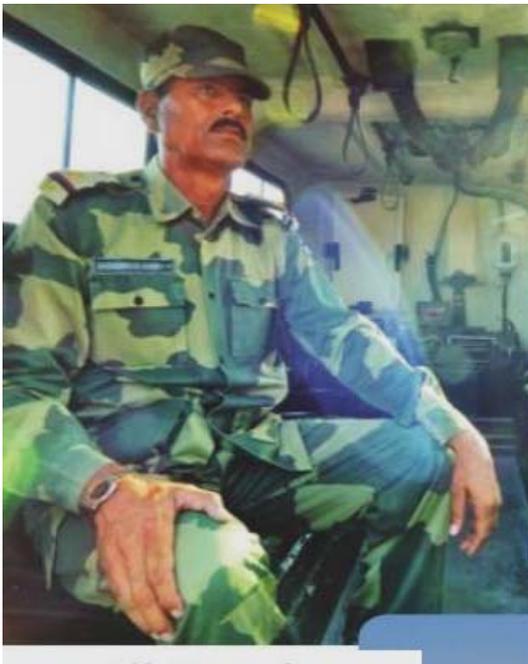
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Meanwhile, Away from the LoC...

By Shantanu Nandan Sharma

How, in the eight years since the 2611 Mumbai attacks, the BSF has secured the natural border between Gujarat and Pakistan's Sindh province. But since the recent tensions on the Line of Control, it is a security threat like never before

Standing behind Pillar No. 1175 of India-Pakistan border on the marshy land of a creek, not far from the Arabian Sea, you will need a little help from a jawan on duty to make sure that you don't accidentally cross over to Pakistani soil.



All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV)

Apart from speedboats and mud-walking by soldiers, the BSF uses imported ATVs to guard the area

Imported from Italy, this vehicle is used by the BSF to guard sensitive parts of the creek area

It has a speed of 60 km per hour cross-country. On metal road, its speed may go up to 100 km/hr. In water, it is like a boat with a speed of 3 km/hr

Life of a Soldier in Creek Areas

It is a rough terrain of marshy land with two high tides and two low tides every 24 hours

No phone connectivity on the border posts. Calls through satellite phones cost about ₹6 per minute (BSNL rate), which is quite a price to pay for jawans to keep in touch with the family

As salt content in the creek areas is higher than in an open sea, soldiers suffer from eyeburn and bone pains

Creek Crocodile Commandos, specialised BSF soldiers, undertake mud-walking to patrol the difficult terrain

Bandi snakes (saw-scaled vipers) and scorpions often trouble the soldiers. Two BSF jawans had to be evacuated from the area in the last three months after snakebites



There's no border fencing on the marshland that acts as the natural boundary between Gujarat and Pakistan's Sindh province. The Border Security Force (BSF) personnel, who guard the 85-km-long creek coastline, use all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) -ones that function like boats in water-and deploy Creek Crocodile Commandos specially trained for patrolling the difficult to-manoeuvre place.

On full moon days, the entire creek area is submerged in the high tide, forcing the BSF personnel to take refuge in the Sawalapur border outpost (BOP) -the only highland amid the creeks. But bandi snakes (saw-scaled vipers), which are common in the marshland, also move up to the highland, turning the area into a man-snake battlefield. In the last three months, two BSF jawans had to be evacuated after snakebites. Following India's surgical strikes on the launch pads of Pakistani terrorists across the Line of Control (LoC) on September 29, the creek area has been on high alert. There is no physical barrier in this area (unlike some 2,035 km of the 2,290 km India-Pakistan border that has barriers, including fencing).Here water channels flow to Pakistan, re-enter Indian territory and meander

back to Pakistan, making it highly challenging from the strategic perspective. Further, Pakistan has been

claiming Sir Creek, one of the five main creeks in the area, as its own, thereby turning this geography into a “disputed“ zone -this is the only border except Kashmir where lines on the maps differ from the actual demarcation on the ground.



Vigil by the Creek

After the 2611 attack -when Pakistani terrorists seized an Indian fishing boat not far from the creek area to venture into Mumbai -the strategic importance of the creeks has increased manifold. After the recent surgical strikes, there is a suspicion that Pakistani terrorists in the garb of fishermen, perhaps with covert support of their armed forces, might use a creek to stealthily enter the mainland of Gujarat. The city of Bhuj, for example, is about 160 km from the border and there are localities like Dayapar, Narayan Sarovar and Lakhpat that fall within 75 km of the border.

The BSF has not been taking any chances after the surgical strikes. On October 5, a week after the strikes, a single-engine, wooden fishing boat with nine Pakistani men was captured in Chauhan Nala, well in the Indian waters near border pillar G-43. Indian forces have seized 14 Pakistani fishing boats since January 2016, and many of the Pakistani “fishermen“ are in Indian jails.

“Now we have become much more vigilant. After all, there are thousands of fishing boats in the sea close to the IMBL (International Maritime Boundary Line), and they are not very far from the creeks. On the face of it, they seem to be fishermen, but you never know. They may have a different motive. Terrorists may enter in the garb of fishermen,“ says Ajay Kumar Tomar, BSF's inspector general of police and head of Gujarat frontier.

Tomar makes it clear that his forces on the ground don't acknowledge Pakistan's claim over Sir Creek, an issue which Islamabad took to the United Nations in the 1960s. “We are managing our border area with a very clear mind that India's boundary with Pakistan extends up to the midstream of Sir Creek,“ he clarifies. From the Indian side, Sir Creek -a 96-km-long estuary -is located in the northern most part of the creek area, the other creeks being Kori, Padala, Pabevari and Pir Sanai, on which India has undisputed control. Pakistani fishing boats, however, tend to enter Indian waters, in some cases lured by the prospect of a catch, disrupting normalcy in the region.

Pakistan cites a 1914 Bombay government verdict of a dispute between the Rao of the princely state of Kutch and the then chief commissioner of Sindh province, to claim the entire Sir Creek as its own; paragraph 10 of

the same verdict, however, terms Sir Creek a navigational channel. According to the thalweg principle of international law, the middle of a navigation channel between two nations automatically becomes the boundary. Tomar's men on the ground are simply following the thalweg principle and guarding up to the midstream of Sir Creek by using floating BoPs, speedboats and other modes of patrolling, including mudwalking by Creek Crocodile Commandos.

This writer visited two border outposts, including a floating one, and also trudged across the marshland to get a sense of the difficult environment in which BSF jawans have been manning the border. (ET Maga zine has refrained from asking BSF person nel on the ground questions about the loca tion of the floating outposts and the strength of the forces and reinforcements de ployed in the region; photo graphs too have not been shot inside any of the outposts.)

Up the Creek

The BSF guards 85 km of coastline along the creeks on the India-Pakistan border, near the Arabian sea



Salt pans near the border

The uninhabited marshland serves as a natural border

The five big creeks in the area are: **Kori, Padala, Pabevari, Pir Sanai and Sir Creek**

Pakistan claims Sir Creek as its own, whereas India considers the international border at the midstream of the 6-8-km-wide Sir Creek, following the thalweg principle of international law

India has a clear domination in the area, but there is always a **fear that Pakistan may send terrorists through the creeks** to Gujarat's Kutch region



Pillar G-1 to G-46
The BSF has total control of the area, but Pakistan does not officially recognise these 46 pillars

Pillar G-43
The BSF caught an engine-fitted wooden fishing boat with nine Pakistani men near Pillar No. G-43 on October 5, the first such incident after India's surgical strike across the LoC a week earlier. 14 such Pakistani boats have been seized since January 2016

Men in the Marshland - A day in the marshland, however, is adequate to make one aware of the hardships the jawans face every day. Apart from snakes, scorpions and the illegal entry of Paki stani boats, what the BSF person nel face all the time are strong winds with high salt content, which leads to eyeburn and bone pains. Also, the phone connectivity in the border area is nil and the jawans are forced to shell out `6 per minute when using the official satellite phones to connect with their families. The Creek Crocodile Commandos, who need to undertake mud-walking, feel the govern ment must give them additional allowances for the tasks they perform. What has made the task of the BSF personnel even more difficult is a channel named -derogatorily but perhaps aptly -Harami Nala. Vian Wari, a channel on the Indian side, moves northward and enters Pakistan, where it transforms into Harami Dhoro. It then turns towards east and reenters the Indi an side, to once again become Harami Nala. On the Indian side, it then forks into two channels, one goes further up north, and a part of which reenters Pakistan. And that's where the strategic challenge lies: what if a boat comes from Pakistan, offloads terrorists and then moves back into its territory?

Beyond Harami Dhoro in the north, there's Bondho Dhoro, located in the Sujawal district of Sindh province of southeast Pakistan. The other Pakistani district that borders Indian territory in the creeks is Badin. Sindh is bordered by Balochistan to the west and Pakistan's Punjab province to the north.

It's a region where China has harboured its interests too. For instance, there is an embankment named China Bund, reportedly financed by China, just north of Bondho Dhoro. For now, India's objective is straight and simple: guard the area till midstream of Sir Creek and plug the loopholes in the creeks, which could be exploited to send terrorists into Gujarat. And beyond.

“We are Dominating the Creek Area“

After India's surgical strike across the LoC on September 29, guarding the creek area that separates India's Rann of Kutch from Pakistan's Sindh province has not been the same. While talking to Shantanu Nandan Sharma, BSF's Inspector General of Police and head of Gujarat frontier Ajay Kumar Tomar said his force has taken a number of steps in the area, apart from becoming much more vigilant post surgical strikes. Excerpts from the interview:

Has there been any recent instance of an infiltration bid from the Pakistani side in the creek area?

There has not been any problem in the creek areas till now. We do see them (Pakistani forces) patrolling their side of the creek. Whenever we see any Pakistani boat crossing over to the Indian waters in any of the creeks, we catch them. This year we have captured 14 such boats. On the face of it, they seem to be fishermen, but you never know. They may have a different motive. Terrorists may enter in the garb of fishermen. They may come to get familiar with the geography of this area. First we question them and then hand them over to the local police. Then, the law takes its own course. Many such Pakistani men are in Indian jails. We are managing our border area with a very clear mind that India's boundary with Pakistan extends up to the midstream of Sir Creek. We are patrolling the area and there is no confusion in our minds that we are dominating the area under our responsibility.

Has India changed its strategy in the creek area after the 2611 Mumbai attack?

The maritime boundary between India and Pakistan is not very far from this creek area. The terrorists who attacked Mumbai in 2008 came by boat. They caught hold of an Indian boat, Kuber, off the coast, not very far away from this area, and went all the way to Mumbai. After the Mumbai attack, we have built up more infrastructure in the area. Some decisions were also taken. Earlier, the BSF had no role in the coastal security of this area. In March 2012, the BSF took over the responsibility of coastal security along the creeks. We have deployed speedboats in the area. Our floating BOPs (border outposts) are in place. For us, day or night does not make any difference. The enemy may come anytime. However, beyond the creeks in the Arabian Sea, the Coast Guard and the navy keep vigil.

Why is Pakistan eyeing the entire Sir Creek for which they had earlier approached the United Nations too?

I don't want to speculate on their motives. But we are very clear on this. We are guarding India's boundary up to the midstream of Sir Creek.

How difficult is it for the BSF to guard the creek area on the Indo-Pak border?

It's a very difficult terrain to operate for several reasons. First, most of the creek areas go under water during the high tide. During the low tide, the marshy land emerges with snakes, scorpions and the like. Walking in that area is not easy. Also, the whole landscape changes during the high and low tides that occur twice a day. So, the view in the evening changes from that in the morning. Then, the turbulence in the creek area is more than that of an open sea. Also, the humid climate and the salty terrain take a toll on the health of the jawans. So, it's a challenging environment.

Harami Nala

How it got its name and why it is strategically important

Vian Wari Creek of India enters Pakistan where it takes the name Harami Dhoro

Harami Dhoro flows back into India and becomes Harami Nala

It then turns into two channels, one goes up vertically before turning left to flow back to Pakistan

Since it is a good place to catch shrimp and other fish, Pakistani fishing boats used to frequent Harami Nala till the Mumbai attack of 2008

BSF now controls the area by using speedboats and ATVs

The building of an 8-km-long road from Pillar No. 1175 to Harami Nala has helped India dominate the area

After the Uri attack and the subsequent surgical strike by India, tensions on the border have increased manifold. How is the situation in the creek area post surgical strike?

We have taken a number of steps (after surgical strikes) which I won't like to spell out. Yes, we have become much more vigilant. After all, there are thousands of fishing boats in the sea close to the IMBL (International Maritime Boundary Line), and they are not very far from the creeks. A very important geographical feature in the creek area is a channel known by the name of Harami Nala. Starting from Indian side, it enters Pakistan and then comes back to India. So, it's fraught with many possibilities. A channel coming from India to Pakistan and Pakistan to India and then again to Pakistan presents opportunities for miscreants. We have to be constantly on high alert around that channel.

Are you prepared if Indo-Pak tensions escalate further?

We are continuously on alert. But, let me tell you, we are effectively dominating the creek area. Our morale is high.

Business Standard

Sun, 13 Nov, 2016

OZ Enthused About Super Hornet; But CISMOA Essential for Buying

There is a remarkable commonality between the Australian and Indian militaries in the high-tech US aircraft they have chosen. Both operate the C-17 Globemaster III and the C130J Super Hercules transport aircraft. Both are users of the CH-47F Chinook heavy lift helicopter. India was a launch customer for the P-8I Poseidon multi-mission maritime aircraft (MMA), and now Australia has followed the suit. The first Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) Poseidon will land here on Wednesday.

Now, with the Indian Air Force (IAF) initiating the international procurement of twinengine fighters, airpower experts are waiting to see if New Delhi buys the F/A-18E/F Super Hornet, which is already the mainstay of the RAAF. The F/A18 — an earlier version called the Hornet and the new, redesigned and upgraded Super Hornet — was developed by Boeing to operate off US Navy aircraft carriers. The RAAF, however, operates them off land bases. The IAF will do the same if it chooses the Super Hornet over its rivals — the Rafale, produced by Dassault of France, and the Typhoon, offered by Eurofighter. The Indian Navy would consider the Super Hornet only much later, when its second indigenous aircraft carrier, INS Vishal, is being built in the 2020s.

Boeing, keen to dispel the impression that the Super Hornet is primarily a naval fighter, has invited Business Standard to interact with the RAAF about their Super Hornet fleet. We enter the RAAF base of Amberley after an hour-long drive from Brisbane. Group Captain Glen Braz receives us. Braz commands 82 Wing, which includes all of Australia's 24 Super Hornets; from next year, he will also get a dozen F/A-18G Growlers — an electronically amped-up variant of the Super Hornet that accompanies fighters into combat to blind and confuse enemy radars and sensors.

Braz explains that the RAAF, which is in line to receive the fifth-generation Lockheed Martin F-35 Lightning II fighter, was constrained to buy Super Hornets. Given the F-35's continuing developmental delays, Canberra assessed it needed a stopgap to “de-risk” the current decade. The decision was taken to buy 24 Super Hornets to supplement the RAAF's 71 older Hornets. “I was lucky enough to land the first Super Hornet on Australian soil in early 2010,” says Braz.

The group commander says the RAAF quickly realised that they had not bought a mere upgrade of the Hornet, but an entirely new, significantly more capable “Generation 4.5” fighter that was only a little short of the F-35. “While the Super Hornet looks like a [older version] Hornet, smells like a Hornet and flies a bit like a Hornet, the capability inherent in this aircraft is very remarkable and very different in that of the classic Hornet,” explains Braz. The RAAF promptly decided to extend the Hornet's service life into the 2030s.

Braz believes the crucial differentiator between the Super Hornet and other fighters is its airborne electronically scanned array (AESA) radar — Raytheon's APG-79. This is a multi-tasking radar, with one segment tracking enemy fighters and directing missiles onto them; another focused on identifying and striking ground targets; and a third part jamming enemy sensors. "You can switch instantly between air-to-air and air-to-ground mode; or between different weapons systems in the air-to-air mode. You can have four different weapons solutions on the same aircraft in seconds. It is a versatile and highly efficient fighting system," enthuses Braz. The game, he explains, is all about seeing the enemy first and striking him at long ranges.

To achieve this, the RAAF has twin-seat Super Hornets, the pilot in the front seat flying the aircraft, while the weapons systems officer in the rear seat engages targets and exchanges data with other friendly aircraft through a coded digital link that connects every element in the battle-space. The IAF uses a similar two-pilot system in the Sukhoi-30MKI, but without such an effective data link, or an AESA radar. Other countries are now bringing AESA radars into service, but the US still enjoys a technological lead of a decade.

The RAAF also likes the Super Hornet's capability to mount fuel tanks, and act as a mid-air refueller. In a battlespace infested with enemy fighters, where an unarmed refueller aircraft could not survive, an armed Super Hornet can do the refuelling, extending the range of other fighters in a deep strike mission.

The induction of the Growlers next year is poised to multiply the Super Hornets' effectiveness with formidable electronic warfare capability. The RAAF's E-7A Wedgetail airborne early warning and control (AEW&C) aircraft would control the aerial battle, datalinking the Super Hornets, Growlers, Poseidons and, when they enter service, the F-35s. Braz is particularly pleased about the Super Hornet's "spiral upgrade programme" with the US Navy, for which the RAAF pays a share. This ensures that avionics and hardware upgrades carried out on US Navy Super Hornets are immediately shared with the RAAF.

For India, a decision to buy the Super Hornet would involve signing the Communications Interface and Security Memorandum of Understanding (CISMOA), an equipment security agreement with the US that New Delhi has steadfastly resisted. The US law requires key elements of the data networks to be protected by CISMOA. Asked whether Australia accepted US safeguards on CISMOA-protected equipment, such as the positioning of US inspectors on Australian fighter bases, Glen Ferguson, Boeing's maintenance manager, accepted that was essential.

"We comply with all the US requirements for safeguarding sensitive equipment. In many cases, we exceed the US requirements. It is in our own interest to do so," Ferguson said.



Sun, 13 Nov, 2016

Now, Class XII marks won't be considered for entry into Navy

The Navy is going hi-tech with a vengeance. With state-of-the-art warships, weapons and sensors being progressively inducted by the force, it wants "sea warriors" capable of handling the intricate challenges of the massive technological revolution under way. First, the Navy implemented plans to ensure virtually all its new officers have B Tech degrees, apart from the traditional military and leadership skills, when they graduate from the Indian Naval Academy in Kerala. And now, it has been decided that the short-listing of candidates aspiring to join the force through the 10+2 B Tech cadet entry scheme will be based "only on JEE (Main) ranks" achieved in the all-India joint entrance exam conducted for admission into different engineering colleges. Consequently, PCM (physics, chemistry, maths) percentage obtained in the Class XII board exams will not be valid for this scheme any longer. "Different state examination boards have gone berserk in awarding high marks in Class XII. We were finding the quality of candidates coming for the SSB (services selection board) interview or training very uneven," said a senior officer.

"The JEE (Main) ranks, which the CBSE has agreed to share with us, will be a better benchmark. With the government approving the move, youngsters will have to appear for the JEE (Main) in 2017 to be eligible for the January 2018 course at INA," he added.

As was earlier reported by TOI, the first direct-entry batch of B Tech officers passed out from the INA in May 2013. Since then, the Navy has been tweaking the three officer entry schemes.

MARITIME SECURITY & POWER PROJECTION

<p>Aim India wants powerful three-dimensional Navy to guard huge maritime interests from Persian Gulf to Malacca Strait, and beyond</p> <p>Plan India plans a 212-warship (198 capital ships & 14 small ships) & 458-aircraft Navy by 2027 as per maritime capability perspective plan</p> <p>Current Force Navy has 138 warships as well as 235 aircraft and helicopters. But many slated for progressive retirement in coming years</p> <p>Under-Construction 45 warships (including 1 aircraft carrier, 4 destroyers, 6 submarines and 7 stealth frigates) on order in domestic shipyards for around ₹3 lakh crore</p>	<p>Major Operational Gaps</p> <p>SUBMARINES »</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Just 13 old diesel-electric subs & 1 nuclear-powered INS Chakra leased from Russia without nuclear missiles. Indigenous nuclear submarine INS Arihant recently commissioned ➤ India needs at least 18 conventional subs, 6 SSNs (nuclear attack subs) & 3 SSBNs (nuclear subs with long-range missiles)  <p>MINESWEEPERS »</p> <p>Navy down to to 6 old minesweepers when 24 new mine countermeasure vessels (MCMVs) required</p>
	<p>AIRCRAFT CARRIERS »</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ India has only 1 aircraft carrier, 45,000-tonne INS Vikramaditya ➤ Indigenous carrier, 40,000-tonne INS Vikrant, to be ready only by 2019 at earliest ➤ India requires 3 carriers, 1 each for the western & eastern seaboard, & 1 in reserve 
	<p>PERSONNEL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 9,866 officers (shortage of 1,518 from authorised strength) ➤ Includes 530 women officers (cannot serve on board warships yet) ➤ 57,999 sailors (shortage of 9,640 from authorised strength) <p>HELICOPTERS »</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Warships largely bereft of multi-role/anti-submarine warfare helicopters. 147 such choppers required ➤ Navy also needs over 100 light utility helicopters

First are the naval cadets who undergo the three-year course at the tri-service National Defence Academy (NDA) at Kadakwasla (Pune) after clearing the UPSC exam and SSB interview. These cadets, who number 78 every year, get commissioned as officers with B Tech degrees after another year of intensive training at the INA. Then, there are the around cadets who directly joint 110 cadets who directly joint the INA for the four-year B Tech programme after clearing UPSC exams in two batches every year. Under the third and largest scheme, around 120 cadets will now be shortlisted for the SSB interview only on the basis of their JEE (Mains) ranks. All this has become necessary because the Navy needs a strong cadre of officers with

advanced technical expertise to handle the sophisticated “platforms“, weapon systems and sensors in the pipeline.



Sun, 13 Nov, 2016

India agrees to link N-testing to termination of deal with Japan

The move marks a significant departure in India’s nuclear diplomacy and there is apprehension that it may open the floodgates for renegotiation with other countries, with whom Delhi has signed nuclear pacts in the past.

India has agreed to link nuclear testing with termination of the civilian nuclear agreement that it signed with Japan on Friday. This has been done through a separate two-page “note on views and understanding” so that Japan could make an exception for India – the deal was the first Japan had signed with a non-NPT signatory. The move marks a significant departure in India’s nuclear diplomacy and there is apprehension that it may open the floodgates for renegotiation with other countries, with whom Delhi has signed nuclear pacts in the past.

While the civil nuclear agreement was publicly signed on Friday — in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Japanese PM Shinzo Abe — between Foreign Secretary S Jaishankar and Japan’s

Ambassador to India, Kenji Hiramatsu, the two-page note, between India's top nuclear negotiator Amandeep Singh Gill and his Japanese counterpart, was not announced. The Sunday Express has, however, seen both the Japanese and the English versions.

The note also has a clause that says that if Japan scraps the deal in the event of India conducting nuclear tests, India cannot claim compensation for disruption of electricity from a nuclear power plant and the consequent economic losses.

This substantive shift in India's nuclear diplomacy comes eight years after India signed the 123 agreement with the US, a template it has stuck to ever since.

The two-page note has five clauses and begins by recalling then External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee's statement to the Nuclear Suppliers' Group in September 2008 and describes it as an "essential basis" for the deal. "The representative of the Japanese delegation stated that the Statement delivered by Pranab Mukherjee, then External Affairs Minister of India, on September 5, 2008 (hereinafter referred to as 'the September 5 statement'), constitutes an essential basis for cooperation between the two States under the Agreement."

Mukherjee's statement, which has not been recorded in the two-page statement, had said, "We remain committed to a voluntary, unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing... We affirm our policy of no-first-use of nuclear weapons."

Interestingly, this note and the agreement was signed a day after Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar's controversial comments on the no-first-use policy, which he claimed was his "personal opinion".

The second clause in the note says that in implementing the provisions of Article 14 of the deal, which deals with the termination and cessation of the agreement, Japan may exercise its rights and initiate the procedures "where there is any change in this basis". The note goes on to say that the representative of the Japanese delegation stated that "an Indian action in violation of the September 5 statement could be viewed as a serious departure from the prevailing situation" – which is a clear reference to nuclear testing and no-first use. "In that situation, reprocessing of nuclear material subject to the agreement will be suspended in accordance with paragraph 9 of Article 14 of the Agreement", it said.

Article 14 in the main text of the India-Japan deal makes no reference to the nuclear tests. Article 14(9) of the deal says any decision to seek 'suspension' will be taken after consultations between the two countries that will be aimed at reaching "mutually acceptable resolution of outstanding issues". The suspension, it says, will be for three months.

"In case the suspension extends beyond a period of six months, both countries shall enter into consultations on compensation for the adverse impact on the Indian economy due to disruption in electricity generation and loss on account of disruption of contractual obligations," it says.

However, in the additional note, the Japanese interlocutor has put in a caveat. "The representative of the Japanese delegation... stated that in such a situation, Japan reserves the right to contest India's claim of compensation for the adverse impact on the Indian economy due to disruption in electricity generation and loss on account of disruption of contractual obligations," the fourth clause in the note said.

What this means is that India cannot ask for any compensation owing to power disruption and loss of business.

While the Indian interlocutor, Amandeep Singh Gill, had reiterated Delhi's commitment to Mukherjee's statement of September 5, 2008, the deviation from the previous agreements, including the US and the French ones, is expected to raise eyebrows in Delhi.

"India went an extra mile for the Japanese government, since they have a very strong anti-nuclear lobby in the Diet. This is expected to facilitate the passage of the nuclear agreement in the Japanese parliament," a government source said.

On Friday, Foreign Secretary Jaishankar had said that the agreement with Japan was "broadly in line with the agreements that India had done with other countries". When asked about the termination clause, Jaishankar had said that the pact with Japan had a clause for ending the agreement, "which is quite similar to the US one".

“I am not very clear about releasing the status of the agreement. But when it is released, you will find that there is a striking similarity,” he had said.

Commenting on the termination clause, Takako Hirose, professor at Senshu University and an expert on nuclear issues and South Asia, told *The Indian Express*, “I am not sure how important the termination clause is, because in practice, what can you do? Can you take back the reactor you have supplied? How? Can you refuse to provide maintenance service knowing it might lead to a disaster? But the Japanese government has to show its nuclear-allergic nation has sent an important message to India.”



Sun, 13 Nov, 2016

India, Japan differ on nuclear tests

By Suhasini Haidar

Tokyo wants New Delhi to maintain its commitment to voluntary unilateral moratorium

In signing the civil nuclear agreement with India, Japan made a major exception for a non-signatory to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), based on India's impeccable nuclear record.

But sources say India, too, may have given exceptional commitments on its nuclear sovereignty and right to conduct nuclear tests in order to bag the deal.

According to officials, while the Nuclear Cooperation Agreement (NCA) signed in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on Friday followed the template set in the India-U.S. civilian nuclear agreement of 2008, a text signed in addition to it is a departure from the past.

In the additional document, called the “Note on Views and Understanding” signed by Indian and Japanese nuclear negotiators after the meeting, Article I (iii) says: “The representative of the Japanese delegation stated that an Indian action in violation of the September 5 statement could be viewed as a serious departure from the prevailing situation. In that situation, reprocessing of nuclear material subject to the Agreement will be suspended in accordance with paragraph 9 of Article 14 of the Agreement,” invoking a section on emergency suspension of nuclear parts or fuel supply. (The reference to the ‘September 5’ statement was India's voluntary moratorium on nuclear testing made for the Nuclear Suppliers Group in 2008.)

Binding provisions

When contacted by *The Hindu*, Indian and Japanese officials seemed to differ on how binding the additional note actually was. A senior MEA official privy to the negotiations said that the only “binding provisions are in the bilateral agreement (NCA).” However, in written replies to *The Hindu*, Japan's Foreign Ministry Press secretary Yasuhisa Kawamura said Japan had made its intentions clear. “[If India conducts a nuclear test] Japan will give notice notify India of its intension of termination of the treaty and will cease its cooperation based on the treaty.

India also understands this, which is confirmed in the official document, “Note on Views and Understanding”, attached to the Treaty,” he said.

According to officials present at the bilateral meetings in Tokyo, Mr. Abe went further, saying frankly that Japan's cooperation with India was “on the premise that India maintains its commitment to the unilateral and voluntary moratorium on nuclear test,” and urged India to sign the Non- Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), that India has resisted for decades.

Striking similarities

At a press conference in Tokyo on Friday, Foreign Secretary S.Jaishankar said there were “striking similiarities” in the Japan deal with those of other countries. However, former nuclear envoys say the text

signifies India has gone “much further” in commitments to Japan than ever before. In the past, India had rejected direct references to nuclear tests as a trigger for cancelling the deal from the U.S., Canada, and Australia, amongst a dozen countries India has signed nuclear agreements with.

Next, India has allowed Japan to include the “emergency suspension” clause, which could mean a major shutdown of its nuclear power capabilities given that Japanese companies and spare parts are expected to be a crucial part of all future reactors in India. With the exception of Russian reactors, all the suppliers in negotiation with India at present: GE, Westinghouse and Areva have considerable ownership by Japanese companies Hitachi, Toshiba and Mitsubishi.

Finally, the additional note states that Japan can contest the claims by India for compensation if it suspends its nuclear cooperation with India. “Japan reserves the right to contest India’s claim of compensation for the adverse impact on the Indian economy due to disruption in electricity generation and loss on account of disruption of contractual obligations through the consultations provided for in paragraph 9 of Article 14 of the Agreement,” reads Article I(iv) of the document, available on the Japanese Foreign Ministry website.

The difference in perceptions between the MEA and Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Japan will be significant, given that the Japanese Parliament, Diet, is yet to approve the Nuclear cooperation Agreement. In India, the debate over nuclear sovereignty will be key, akin to the criticism the government faced over curtailing liability of foreign suppliers in the India-U.S. civil nuclear agreement resolution between PM Modi and US President Obama in January 2015.

THE ASIAN AGE

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India and Japan forge strategic bonds

India now becomes the only non-NPT signatory with which Japan has reached an agreement to transfer nuclear supplies.

The geostrategic map of Asia changed on Friday with Japan and India signing a civil nuclear agreement on the lines of the India-US agreement concluded in 2008, which had permitted India to break out of the nuclear straightjacket and engage in trade in nuclear materials — such as reactors and nuclear fuel — without being a signatory to the nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT), which India has long held to be discriminatory.

The warming of India’s ties with Japan since the days of Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee, which gained particular intensity under PM Manmohan Singh, helped lay out the strategic dimensions of the India-Japan discourse in the post-Soviet period, but Tokyo had remained firm on not selling nuclear materials to India on account of its strong pacifist record since Japan is the world’s only country to have suffered a nuclear attack in 1945 (at the hands of the US).

Years of engagement bore fruit with Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Tokyo inking the deal with his counterpart Shinzo Abe on Friday. India now becomes the only non-NPT signatory with which Japan has reached an agreement to transfer nuclear supplies.

Of course, this is strictly for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and for clean power generation in the context of the wider discussion on climate change. India’s agreement with the US had remained non-functional because, among other reasons, the Westinghouse reactors that the US would supply were built in collaboration with the Japanese firm Hitachi. That roadblock has now been removed.

Under this pact, as in the case with the civil nuclear compact with America, Japan can terminate the agreement if India tests nuclear weapons. But this assurance had long been supplied by New Delhi right through its nuclear discussion with Japan dating back to 2010. Tokyo has also long been aware of India’s impeccable non-proliferation record, which ought to be the envy of NPT countries. What’s turned the discussion now is the closer strategic bonding between the two countries.

It appears evident that the India-Japan agreement has come with the understanding that the rise of China in a forceful, thrusting manner, which has raised concerns all round in China's neighbourhood — Japan and India included — is the elephant in the room for both countries, and New Delhi and Tokyo are seeking to cooperate and taking defensive action.

Before Mr Modi landed in Tokyo, Beijing let it be known that a common understanding between India and Japan on China's hectoring attitude in the South China Sea would hurt India — a veiled warning to New Delhi not to forge strategic links with Tokyo. This has not worked. Indeed, as the joint statement shows, the two partners indirectly ticked off China for not doing enough to contain cross-border terrorism in South Asia.



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India and Ukraine to close gap in ties

By Kallol Bhattacharjee

After a gap of four years, India and Ukraine are set to begin a new phase of exchanges which is likely to warm up political, military and diplomatic ties. Speaking to *The Hindu*, senior Ukrainian diplomatic sources confirmed that Foreign Minister Pavlo Klimkin is likely to visit India soon even as the Heavy Industries Minister Anant Geete undertook a visit to the country last week.

“Mr. Geete, who was accompanied by representatives of Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited, Heavy Engineering Corporation Ltd., Hindustan Machine Tools, held wideranging talks covering trade, economic, investment and industrial cooperation,” the diplomat said.

The visit of the Indian Minister breaks a gap in bilateral exchanges that had formed due to the ongoing violence in eastern Ukraine. India had evacuated citizens from Ukraine in 2014 as the disturbance intensified in the region. The last major visit from Ukraine was by President Viktor Yanukovich who visited Delhi and met Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in 2012. However, another problem in bilateral ties was Ukraine's military ties with Pakistan. Despite the hurdles, an initial dialogue was held in June when Ukraine's First Deputy Secretary of the Council for National Security and Defence met with senior officials on the sidelines of March 28-31 “DefExpo-India 2016” in Goa.

Military modernisation

The diplomat said the ongoing round of exchanges were explored during the visit of Secretary (West) Sujata Mehta who was in Kyiv in June.

Ukraine's diplomatic importance had been growing also due to the rising profile of the country in multilateral platforms. Ukraine is a member of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) and a non-permanent member with two-year term at the U.N. Security Council.

The diplomat indicated that Ukraine is interested in supporting India's military modernisation plans and the visit of Mr. Klimkin is likely to take up several key projects in aviation and space research.