

How India Is The Single Greatest Loser Among Third Parties In The Wake Of Ukrainian Crisis

By Gautam Sen

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The derisive coordinated onslaught by the global media and academic social scientists against India and the government of Narendra Modi indicates a mood in Washington to engineer regime change.

India is facing particularly complex and intensifying dilemmas in the current and rapidly evolving geopolitical situation, owing to the ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine. It is the single greatest loser among third parties as a result of the outbreak of the conflict. The near-total isolation of Russia and significant vulnerability owing to swingeing Western sanctions have delivered it, and not just metaphorically, hogtied into the hands of China. How Russia will now balance its historic relationship with India while finding itself deeply obligated to and dependent on China is a question that should cause serious concern to Indian policymakers.

India may have truly lost a friend whose appreciation of India's neutrality and arms purchases cannot equal the suddenly increased material value that close relations with China affords. Already, the even more unwelcome threat of CAATSA is looming for India as a direct consequence of the war in Ukraine and deepening US sanctions against Russia. A worse outcome may follow if the price of China's support compels Russia to share high-end military technology while American hubris makes it oblivious to the implications.

The war in Ukraine is highlighting the essential contours of contemporary international relations. The US emerged victorious in the Cold War in 1991 but continued to facilitate the economic and military rise of the Peoples' Republic of China, initially justified to counter the USSR. Although this policy had begun with President Nixon's historic visit to China in 1972, US support expanded despite the Soviet defeat in 1991, owing to boundless conceit. It was a policy apparently predicated on ensuring the complete and permanent prostration of Russia, without paying heed to the problem the PRC might pose one day.

Indeed, the US espoused a policy of benign indifference to China's violating international trade norms, effectively suspending the rules of a level-playing field. China used this freedom to the hilt by outright theft of intellectual property and became the centre of global counterfeit trade, copying any product that took its fancy. In fact, the US went one step further by encouraging American firms to enhance profits by relocating to the low-wage PRC and making prodigious quantities of investment capital available to Chinese firms from Wall Street. The writing on the wall was not read by Washington policymakers. The US in its supreme racial self-confidence, despite not having won a single war since the Korean stalemate, decided it could take on all-comers and establish itself as the sole hegemonic power, the one exceptional power.

The overall US policy stance was the determination to enduringly outmatch its erstwhile principal competitor, Russia, and it remained confident of retaining primacy over any other potential rival, like China too. Like great powers in history, it has sought to systematically subdue lesser states to its own political and economic purposes as well. Subversion, assassinations, and outright invasion, with whatever necessary subterfuges without even any concern about being exposed as a predator, have been its hallmark.

The post-war antecedents of such a policy date back to the early days of the Cold War and examples are too numerous to mention, not least the brutal murder of Patrice Lumumba of the Congo, the overthrow of regimes in the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Chile, Nicaragua, and so on. More recently, it has waged devastating genocidal unilateral wars in the Middle East, with flimsy justifications. The US is currently attempting to seize Venezuela's sizeable oil resources to replace dependence on the Middle East.

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Global Warming And The Human Greed

By Uday Kumar Varma

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The Environmental Blind-spot of Prevailing Development Paradigm

The one inconvenience currently affecting everyone is the unprecedented heat prevailing over the whole of north India this summer season. The mercury has been hovering around 45 degrees. The oppressive heat has deranged life as never before.

Media-print and electronic- and above all the social media, are flooded with information and misinformation about this unusually hot summer.

One newspaper referring to experts and meteorologist claims that the global temperature has already risen over 2 degrees. There was a fear that if global temperature rises by 1.5 to 2 degrees, the apocalypse will take place. These days the earth is receiving 2 watts of solar energy per square meter, turning the earth into an inferno. The apocalypse is round the corner.

India is the most affected. The intensity of heat wave in India is the highest, the ozone layer over her skies the thinnest and the most fragile. The Himalayan glaciers that were covered with snow till April of the year ten years ago, have no snow in March now. India is likely to be the epicenter of an impending apocalypse.

The same newspaper just a day before claimed that according to a study, the Himalayan glaciers are not melting because of global warming. Negating the 2007 IPCC warning that Himalayan glaciers will simply vanish by 2035, the report claims that glaciers will be intact and the flow in the Ganga and other Himalayan rivers will remain as full of water. It asserts that the melting of glaciers is not a recent phenomenon but has been happening since over 10,000 years. The study also claims that the share of glacial waters in the flow of Ganga is merely 1%, the remaining waters coming from rains and snow fall.

What is the truth then? The experts have a field day while the earth and her denizens roast under sweltering sun.

They all, however, unanimously lament and warn against the depletion of natural resources, of shrinking forests, of diminishing tree cover, of overuse of finite bounties of Elements.

But one truth is pushed under the carpet. The truth of faulty development strategies and policies. No one talks about the flaws of development strategies that may be responsible for excessive use of earth's resources. No one talks about reducing our requirements of energy, fuel, timber, of water and air to ease pressure on these resources by ensuring its equitable distribution. Because it serves the interests of wealthy, the powerful, the arbiters of earth's fate, the large businesses, even the state.

The per capita consumption of earth's resources by rich and powerful seen against the poor should open our eyes. Paradoxically, they in the same vein, also talk about reducing poverty because that will ensure the increasing demands for goods and services that will make the rich richer. That development means more and more consumption and therefore greater depletion of resources; everyone accepts but is unwilling to talk about it. Because it will upset the world order, and will upset the comfort levels that the developed in the world have become used to and which they are most unwilling to give up.

Even the notion of generational equity does not find favour. While lot of lip service is paid to conserving resources for the future generations, reducing the consumption by the present generation is not on offer. The strategies are better technologies, better harnessing of resources but unmitigated consumption of resources. If the resources are finite, which they are, how would a better harnessing solve the issue of depletion, particularly when their demand is ever on increase? Containing the greed, in excess of our needs is never an argument, much less our objective.

Take for example the Air Conditioners. In India alone, the number of Air Conditioners has exploded to over 300 million, and given its two-digit annual growth in last 10 years, this number may exceed 1 billion in next 15 to 20 years. making us the planet's top user of electricity for cooling. The projected increase in the number of ACs will also result in tripling our energy requirement. With two thirds of energy being produced from fossil fuels, imagine the additional volumes of greenhouse gas emissions, thanks to our craze for ACs. Not to forget that India is already the number-three spewer of greenhouse gases, burning through 800 million tonnes of coal every year.

The irony is that as humans try to stay cool, the refrigerants inside AC units and the generation of electricity needed to power the appliances are exacerbating global warming. Studies -- including by the World Health Organisation and UN-Habitat -- show that the heat-generating motors inside AC units can themselves push up temperatures in urban areas, where the appliances are widely used, by a degree or more.

The increasing demand for ACs, therefore, causes greater demand for power, frequent break downs, and while individuals enjoy the coolness of the confined space of the house or office, the surrounding environment is bearing the brunt of hot air coming out of millions of vents of ACs simultaneously. Absence of research on having an alternative to a cooling system that does not consume energy and does not release heat and noxious gases, as compared to making more and more affordable ACs will explain the basic flaws in our thinking. And this will continue because the producers and traders of AC have disproportionately more clout economically, financially, politically.

A more efficient cooler can substantially replace the demand for ACs with much less consumption of power and a fraction of damage to the environment. Another alternative is the age-old khas curtains (*Chrysopogon zizanioides* – a grass native to tropical Asia) that once adorned all government offices, even private mansions in summer, offering cool fragrant draft of air without any additional demand on electricity. Besides, it offered employment to millions across India. Alas! this traditional technology completely lost out to the western influence as also to our increasing pursuit of comfort.

The concern for future demands moderating the craze for comforts, an increasing obsession with the rich and the aspiring masses. Sustainable Development may be a term, trumpeted about but there is no evidence that we really mean it.

Because it does not espouse sacrifice or lowering of luxuries of life, not even slowing the race for more. Sacrifice, if any is expected from those who are still aspiring to level with the haves of the world. The prevailing development paradigm may be aiming at the race to welfare and well-being of all, but in terms of the future of the resources of the world, it is without the least doubt, a race for the bottom being pursued relentlessly.

I would argue that in the context of exacerbating environmental challenges, the favoured developmental policies and strategies demand a serious rethink, as the race for more and more consumption, the core of such strategies, runs contrary to the very idea of protection and conservation of environment and natural resources. The current paradigm of creating endless demands ensures the perpetuation of the privileged position of predators of earth's resources, and in turn, pushes the rest in crises- one more serious and threatening than the preceding. The brunt, though, is borne by the majority who have scant say in devising and dictating such policies.

This must change.

Among the world leaders, Indian Prime Minister is the only one who has despite severe domestic compulsions, taken a stand on environmental issues far more sagacious, far reaching, bold and daring. His recent announcements in the recently COP26 at Glasgow to cut India's total projected carbon emission by 1 billion tonnes by 2030, reduce the carbon intensity of the nation's economy by less than 45% by the end of the decade and net-zero carbon emissions by 2070, reveals his deep commitment as well as his sound understanding of the real dynamics of complex issues. It also shows that he has the vision, foresight and the resolve to look beyond the present trap of developmental paradigm that runs in many ways contrary to the sustained preservation and conservation of the planet's dwindling and constantly diminishing resources.

The abiding challenge to environmental degradation can be met only by enlightened political leadership aided and advised by the community of scientists, experts, intellectuals and administrators.

India has the advantage of such leadership.

Reviving The Tradition Of Raja Guru – Raja Rishi

By Swami Pranavashudhan Jnana Thapaswi

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The ruler should have a Sannyasi-like attitude of self-sacrifice. The ruler "should be as noble as an emperor and as humble as a servant".

Most of the modern countries, including India, are democracies today, upholding the principle: "government of the people, by the people, and for the people", whereby voters determine who will represent them at the governmental level. And these elected representatives seek advice on various policy matters from permanent executives (in India, union or state recruited civil servants) before taking final decisions.

However, in the early days, a king would have his advisors. Trusted and wise, these advisors guided the king on various matters, ranging from foreign policy to home affairs.

For instance, during the Vedic period in India, in the day-to-day administration, the hereditary kings were assisted by a few functionaries, the most important being Raja Guru or Dharma Guru. Based on literary evidence, scholars place the Vedic period in the second and first millennia BCE continuing up to the sixth century BCE. The Vedic period was during which the Vedas, the oldest sacred texts of Hinduism, were composed.

Raja Guru or Dharma Guru was the chief adviser on policy matters and the spiritual teacher of the king. The king administered justice with the assistance of Raja Guru. The office of the Raja Guru was one of great respect and prestige, the next important position after the king. Western scholars have pointed out two types of priests in ancient Indian texts: Raja Guru (the royal priest or advisor) and Rishi (sage), who lived in the forest and shared his wisdom only with those who asked for it.

The two Raja Gurus who played a significant part in the time of Rig Veda were Vasishtha and Vishwamitra. 'Vedas' are the treasure-house of Indian civilization, as every subject has been dealt with extensively, be it philosophy, theosophy, ecology, astrology, astronomy, science or poetics. That is why it has been rightly said 'sarvjanamayo hi sah'.

Vedic seers were the greatest philosophers who believed in universal brotherhood and fraternity. They had a practical and optimistic approach towards life that professed 'e-kam sad viprah bahudha vadanti', which means the truth is one but is called by many names.

Now, the state is no longer an instrument in the hands of an elite. Instead, it is driven by the public arena, where interest groups discuss and deliberate on policy matters for taking the country forward.

However, in the Republic, Plato argues that kings should become philosophers or that philosophers should become kings. They are called 'philosopher-kings', as they possess a superior level of knowledge, which is required to rule the nation or state successfully.

It can be easily argued that ideally, in the modern world, rulers should have the necessary knowledge to bring about positive change. Theoretically, it would be ideal if the modern states were ruled by knowledge, not power.

Like Navajyothi Shree Karunakara Guru, the founder of Santhigiri Ashram in Kerala, said rulers should have Atama Jnana. If not, they should seek advice from an Atama Janani, the person who has the highest wisdom to guide the ruler in policy matters.

Two concepts of paramount importance in the Upanishads are Brahman and Atman. The Brahman is the ultimate reality, and the Atman is the individual self (soul). It may appear that Plato and others are advertising an undemocratic political system led by a benevolent dictator. The argument for the philosopher-king may be unrealistic in the modern context of democracies, but it traces the characteristics seeking an ideal ruler who is interested in the welfare of his subjects or people like the Vedic period.

The above arguments for having a philosopher-king or seeking advice from an Atama Janani can be set in the modern state in that form. The ruling is a skill that requires special training. Rulers must possess qualities that enable them to rule. For instance, they must be able to recognize the difference between friend and foe, good and bad, for taking the state on the path of Dharma.

Pertinently, they must be seekers of wisdom. Socrates defined the philosopher not just as a lover of wisdom, but as a kind of sage or a seeker or a sannyasi or a brahmachari—someone dedicated to knowledge of the Ultimate Truth or The Primordial Consciousness.

In Bhagavad Gita, Bhagwan Krishna points out that a Sannyasi must have jnana or wisdom. Sannyas is, in a sense, an attitude. He who has jnana is a Sannyasi or a Brahmchari or a Yogi. Sannyas is an attitude of selfless sacrifice and universal service to humankind, which is Dharma.

Likewise, Chanakya, the Hindu statesman and philosopher who wrote the classic Arthashastra, outlined that "wisdom raises the quality of governance"— "Vigyanenatmanam Sampadyet". Wisdom makes the ruler more capable and more efficient and leads them on the path of Dharma.

The whole idea of governance is to follow Dharma by seeking guidance from an Atama Janani. As said earlier, the rulers or people's representatives need to have a self-sacrificing attitude to governing the state to prosperity. As Navajyothi Shree Karunakara Guru said, "work without positions of power and achieve through self-sacrifice. It is this sacrifice that saves you."

In a nutshell, the ruler should have a Sannyasi-like attitude of self-sacrifice. The ruler "should be as noble as an emperor and as humble as a servant".

For instance, leaders like Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi maintain a Sannyasi-like attitude, focusing on raja dharma. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath is a mahant of the Gorakhnath Math, serving and taking the most populous state on the track of prosperity while remaining in Sannyas.

Earlier, many Sannyasis like Swami Vivekananda and Sri Aurobindo had inspired millions to fight during India's struggle for Independence and serve the nation after Independence.

We have to be prepared to adopt the goodness shown to us by our ancestors through a life of self-sacrifice. So the ideal society needs truth-seekers as rulers. And the rulers need to take advice from an Atama Janani, Rishi or Sanyasi as in the glorious Vedic past.

Loitering Ammunition

By Lt Gen VA Bhat

Gen Bhat served as the Director-General of Quality Assurance (DGQA) at the Department of Defence Production (Ministry of Defence) affairs.

With the advancement of Technology, the art of warfare is continuously undergoing a big change. Every nation aims to eliminate the enemy with least number of casualties to its own troops. With this in view all major powers have developed Loitering Ammunition for its defence Forces. Loitering munitions are a mix of a surface-to-surface missile and a drone. They can destroy radar installations, air defence systems, communication centres as well as dynamic targets such as enemy vehicles and troops. A loitering munition is a weapon system category in which the munition loiters (waits passively) around the target area for some time and attacks only once a target is located. Loitering munitions enable faster reaction times against concealed or hidden targets that emerge for short periods without placing high-value platforms close to the target area, and also allow more selective targeting as the attack can easily be aborted. Development of Loitering Ammunition can be traced back to the 1980s, 1990s against the Surface to Air Missiles (SAMs) and were named [Suppression/Destruction of Enemy Air Defences \(SEAD/DEAD\)](#) missions. While a missile, once fired heads straight to its target after a flight of usually a few minutes, loiter munitions are launched in a manner similar to a drone and they stay aloft for a longer time, surveying a designated area and seeking targets. Once a target is identified and locked on, they act as a missile to destroy it.

If a mission is aborted or there are no suitable targets, loiter munitions can also be recovered. Loiter munitions, however, are smaller, cheaper and less complex systems than combat or armed drones.

Loitering munitions are an asset to the artillery branch of the Army as they are able to detect and take out static and moving targets across all types of landscape — from mountains to deserts. This Munition can also be a force multiplier to the Infantry where it can be used for destroying targets beyond the visual range like over a small hillock. This ammunition which can be fired can hover over this hillock and can be used to destroy enemy concealed once it emerges.

The Indian Army has issued a Request for Information (RFI) on April 8 for CALM (Canister Launched Anti-Armour Loiter Munitions) for use by its Mechanised Forces namely BMP (Infantry Combat Vehicles). These Troop carriers will have to be suitably modified use this system. This CALM System will be used along the western borders and North High-Altitude areas up to 5000 meters. In the plains the system should operate between 0 to 45 degrees and in the high Altitude from 15 degrees to 40 degrees. The army wants a tube or canister launched system with a capability to observe, identify and engage non-line-of-sight targets such as enemy armoured vehicles, other ground-based weapon platforms and troop positions up to a range of 15 kms and a flight endurance of at least 60 minutes during day or night.

This is the second RFI issued by the Army the first one in March 2020 for procuring 100 x loitering munition systems, which will be deployed with the infantry using man-portable platform. The essential features of this RFI are It must be Man Portable, Capable of Day and Night surveillance capability, the system should be light weight, man portable easy for a soldier to carry and operate, it should have warhead to destroy personnel and soft skinned targets. The system should function in all weather conditions. The total weight of the loiter munition system should not more than 20 kilogram and should be operable with one/two persons. One ground system should be able to handle multiple Loiter Munitions. This procurement was to be made under the DPP 2020 in India under Atmanirbhar programme. The outcome of this RFI is not yet in the public domain.

Very recently, indigenously designed and developed, three different types of loitering munitions were successfully tested in Ladakh last month, with the Army Design Bureau facilitating trials at Nubra Valley to rate performance and safety standards.

The man portable munitions can take off with a 4 kg warhead, flying for an hour and homing at ground-based targets with precision. Such munitions, much cheaper to produce than armed drones, can cause disproportionate damage to conventional targets like ground-based bunkers, command centres, artillery and armoured formations.

Further, three munitions - two fixed wing variants and a hexacopter - have been developed by Economic Explosives Ltd (EEL) in partnership with Bangalore-based start-up Z Motion Autonomous System Pvt Ltd and are expected to be at least 40% cheaper than imports from Israel and Poland. The defence ministry has also placed loitering munitions on a recently released 'import ban' list.

In addition to EEL another firm Alpha Elsec a subsidiary of Alpha Technology has received an order for Qty Ten. Features are 10 Aerial Targeting Systems (ATS) each consisting of 12 BIRDS, one launcher, one ground system with communication display. Each bird has a 5 kg ammunition for Anti-Tank operations. The powers that be in Min of Defence must name this Munition as Mark 1 and ask for better or higher specs which are doable to minimise import of such like ammunition.

Loiter Ammunition carry a camera that is nose mounted which helps the operator to scan the area and choose target and give the command to destroy. These munitions also have variants that can be recovered and reused if not employed for the purpose it was launched.

This development is indeed a bold step towards the motto of “Atmanirbhar Bharat”, a matter of pride. Indian Firms who are making attempts to develop equipment for the Armed Forces need to be encouraged may be with Capital support, to produce and make Atmanirbhar Bharat mission successful.

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Nation is Indebted to:

Bindee Tewary: The Sepoy

47th Bengal Native Infantry (1824)



History has made heroes of ordinary men, but some heroes and martyrs are destined to live in the shadows of others. A soldier named Bindee Tewary, is such hero. He led the Revolt of 1824 against the British East India Company in Barrackpore near Calcutta.

1,400-odd Indian troops, which included the 47th, 26th and 62nd regiments of the Bengal Native Infantry, were to travel to Chittagong before they left for Rangoon via ship. Among the leaders of these troops was Sepoy Bindee Tewary.

The troops had to organize their own provisions and even transportation, while, the Company making these arrangements only for their officers.

The sepoys had already travelled 800 miles (1,287 km) on foot and, without much rest, had to hurry to Chittagong. They demanded three things: better battle gear, transportation for their belongings and twice their usual allowance (bhatta) for fighting in hostile territory.

The British turned down their demands.

Sepoy Bindee Tewary refused to follow the orders and he was joined by 11 others, all of them battalion leaders. Major General Dalzell of Bengal Presidency, was unable to pacify them and proceeded to Calcutta to consult the Commander-in-Chief, India, General Sir Edward Paget.

Under the leadership of Tewary, the soldiers-maintained order during the day and remained on the parade ground all night, while a petition was sent to Paget, who arrived from Calcutta on hearing of the escalation. The sepoys presented their demands to Paget via an emissary and explained that their refusal to be shipped overseas was due to religious scruples. They requested to be dismissed from service if their demands were not met.

Paget replied that legitimate demands would be addressed only after the sepoys laid down their muskets. Paget, an old-school disciplinarian of the Royal Service, viewed this refusal as an act of armed mutiny. He summoned two regiments of European troops, as well as troops of the Governor-General's Bodyguard from Calcutta. He also brought in horse artillery from nearby Dum Dum.

On the morning of 2nd November, the reinforcements and the loyal members of the 26th and 62nd Regiments moved into position. Native troops were ordered to they lay down arms. They were given only ten minutes to make up their minds.

The sepoy either hesitated or rejected the ultimatum and Paget ordered two cannons to fire on the ‘rebels’, followed by an attack from the rear by the secretly placed horse artillery. Surprised by this sudden assault, the sepoy tried to flee but the rest of the British regiments attacked from every direction. Some of the sepoy jumped into the Hooghly River to escape but they drowned, others took refuge in local homes but the loyalists chased and killed them with bayonets. Many bystanders, including women and children who happened to be in the neighbourhood, were also killed during the operation.

Bindee Tewary and the 11 other leaders of the revolt were tried and sentenced to death. Tewary was singled out for particularly brutal treatment—his limbs were chained; he was hanged from a peepal tree and his body was allowed to rot for days.

The British soldiers were compelled to leave his body dangling with the tree to teach the Indian rebellion an exemplary lesson. He was the first to wage war against the British on November 1, 1824.

Folklore whispered that this place turned haunted and some British officers even had felt Tewary’s presence. They started abandoning the road closed to the peepal tree. Soon after, his family members were called in from Uttar Pradesh and according to the Hindu ritual his last rite was performed.

A small Hanuman temple was also constructed adjoining the tree, in which, he was hanged. He was considered a martyr and was referred to as ‘Colonel” Bindee. The temple still stands today at Barrackpore Cantonment in West Bengal, India and now famous as Bindee Baba Mandir.

No words can explain how and why these native soldiers had such a courage and even did not hesitate to lay down their own life.

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