

Liz Truss: The UK's New Prime Minister And The Indo-Pacific

By James Jennion

Author is a U.K.-based foreign policy adviser and analyst.

Liz Truss, the United Kingdom's new prime minister, loves the Indo-Pacific. That's what her many visits, photo-ops, and speeches within the region would suggest. Having served as the U.K.'s foreign secretary from September 2021 until last week, and previously international trade secretary, Truss arrives at Downing Street with an international resumé. Now that she is in the driver's seat, Truss will need to show she can provide more than visits and slogans to make the U.K. a worthy partner in the Indo-Pacific.

However, bold promises made during her election campaign, combined with serious domestic challenges, may hamper Truss' ability to build the U.K.'s footprint in the region.

Who Is Liz Truss?

It is essential to note that Liz Truss was not elected in a country-wide election. Truss was elected as leader of the governing Conservative Party after the resignation of her predecessor, Boris Johnson. She is therefore prime minister by virtue of her leadership of the governing party, not from a public mandate brought by a national election. She was elected by more than 160,000 Conservative Party members – or 0.3 percent of the U.K.'s voting public – so her recent rhetoric has been geared toward convincing a small subset of the U.K. population that she was leadership material. As prime minister, she has to convince the entire U.K. public that she is doing a good job.

It should be expected that Truss' positions on the Indo-Pacific and core foreign policy issues like China will sound different during her tenure as head of government, as the hard work of delivering on bold promises becomes a reality. Truss' previous roles and actions offer insight into how she plans to do this. In the early days of the leadership race during her tenure as trade minister, Truss put great stock into her work to secure many of the U.K.'s post-Brexit trade deals with nations in the Indo-Pacific, including Australia and Japan.

She is clearly a figure who sees the Indo-Pacific as an integral part of the U.K.'s future, and the U.K. as a real player in the region. However, Truss is frequently criticized for depending on optics and headline-grabbing stances over substantial, reasoned policy. It is one thing to make bold promises on China and the Indo-Pacific during a leadership contest, but another thing entirely to actually deliver on them once in power.

A Hard Line on China

Truss has been loud in her extensive criticism of China. In return, Truss is intensely disliked by China's leadership. China-U.K. relations have swung between poles over the past decade, from the "Golden Era" of the mid-2010s to the increasingly bitter and combative engagement of recent years, notably through the sanctions tennis of early 2021, during which the U.K. and China sanctioned one another's officials. Relations will likely deteriorate further under Truss.

Throughout the leadership campaign, both Liz Truss and her opponent Rishi Sunak went to great lengths to flaunt their tough stances on China. While Sunak pledged to ban Confucius Institutes from the U.K., Truss said that she would declare the atrocities in Xinjiang to be a genocide. It is possible that Truss may soften on this promise once in office. Declaring genocide in Xinjiang will put the U.K. in a complicated position, given states' obligations to not only prevent but also punish genocide when it is committed.

As foreign secretary, Truss allegedly made the decision to gut funding for the Great Britain China Centre, one of the U.K.'s major sources of China expertise. Truss has spoken at length about the need for democratic nations to rally against authoritarianism. In a speech at the Lowy Institute, Truss spoke about the need for democracies to build a "Network of Liberty" – a thinly-veiled call for liberal actors to band against Russia and China.

This may run the risk of alienating less clearly aligned countries such as India. David Lawrence, a research fellow at Chatham House, said in an interview that building coalitions through overt use of liberal values "puts a lot of countries in a difficult position," as they seek to balance their alignment between different poles of global power. "Framing networks in terms of more specific infrastructure and economic projects would make the U.K. more likely to find helpful partnerships," Lawrence added.

Read complete article on website thediplomat.com

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and New Education Policy

By Alok Virendra Tiwari

Author is pursuing Masters in Political Science. He has carried out research works in Tribal districts of Jharkhand and Tripura.

"मुसलसल कोशिशों से ही बना करती है तकदीरें , जो थककर बैठ जाते हैं कभी मंजिल नहीं पाते "

I firmly believe that this line is completely meant for Dr. Ambedkar. Dr. Ambedkar once said, "The Education level of a person can't be determined by how many degrees he has, it can't be determined by how many books he has read, but the Education level can be assessed by how much Independent thinking he has developed". The role or contribution of Dr. Ambedkar in order to spread Education for not only those who belong to the lowest strata of society but for the nation as whole is immense. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar is one of the greatest intellectuals the nation has ever witnessed. He was a versatile personality who enlightened the world with his Political, Cultural, Economic and above all social thoughts. He is an embodiment of social justice and a great councillor of depressed and deprived classes. He called upon the weaker section of society to get Educated, United and to fight for their rights of Liberty, Equality and Social Justice. But how was Dr. Ambedkar able to do this? Even at the time when the community to which he belonged was dominated and oppressed by the so-called upper caste. He was able to do this by the invisible tool of 'Education'.

He opined that, "Education is the greatest weapon which can change the future of not only Individuals but the whole society." As we all know and it is rightly said that 'Until you walk the talk, others won't accept you' and Dr. Ambedkar really walked the path. He had obtained Masters Degree in 64 subjects, He went to Columbia University to get M.A. as well as Ph.D. degree after completing M.A. from Mumbai University. Later on, he also went to London and secured M.S.C, D.S.C. and Barrister at law degree. And due to all this experiences and later on the efforts which he took for social emancipation he was made the chairman of drafting committee which he prepared are of the finest Constitution in this world.

In the New Education Policy 2020 special emphasis on establishing National Research Foundation has been done in this. Similarly, special efforts for the learners with disability and to establish Multi-disciplinary Institutions has been done in this. Most of these initiatives are inspired by Dr. Ambedkar's views. Along with this special care for underrepresented groups which includes students from backward sections has been done in this. Provision for special scholarships for them is also mentioned. The NEP is sensitive towards the issue that most of the people who are majority in numbers in our country still don't have access to education. The NEP aims to achieve 100% Youth and Adult Literacy by 2030 and it will be able to do so, if the opinions and views of Dr. Ambedkar are taken into consideration while implementing it. Also, the Sustainable Development Goal number 4 aims for equitable and inclusive education for all the young brains of our country. India has also signed this and the New Education policy will greatly help to universalise the education and reap demographic dividend to achieve the goal. Article 350 of the Indian Constitution states that every state and local authority should provide adequate facilities for Instruction in local language or mother tongue in the primary stage of Education and Dr. Ambedkar was a staunch supporter of this Article which we can know from the parliamentary debates of constituent Assembly. The NEP also provides the same and talks for teaching in mother tongue during the primary stage of Education. This shows that thoughts of Dr. Ambedkar are still very relevant in today's time. Even though there are many obstacles and hindrance in implanting this however having faith in government along with active support from citizens can help to achieve the goal of cent percent literacy rate and not only literacy rate but will help to have a society where citizens will be able to develop their independent thinking.

As Dr. B.R. Ambedkar said, "Taking Birth is not in our hands but getting Education and expecting a better and respectable future is completely in our hands". Taking Inspiration from Dr. Ambedkar the history of this nation can be rewritten in a way which is desired by many true leaders of our country and which is desired by those who are still deprived of many small things which can bring very big change in their lives.

Xi Might Want To Quickly Forget His Samarkand Outing

By Srikanth Kondapalli

Author is Dean of the school of International Studies and Professor in Chinese Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University.

Chinese President Xi Jinping's first foreign visit since the outbreak of the Covid pandemic – to Samarkand for the SCO summit – seems to have proved largely counter-productive.

China and Russia helped form the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in 2001, building on its earlier avatar 'Shanghai Five' of 1996. Today, the SCO has eight members and several observers, dialogue partners and partner multilateral institutions. It has made some progress in counter-terrorism -- through 'Peace Mission', 'Pabbi' and 'Solidarity' exercises -- and energy cooperation and multipolarity. Except for China and India, the SCO is still weak in market economy.

When Xi visited Samarkand on September 16, what surprised many analysts was that he made no major headline-grabbing speech nor attended the official dinner. His anodyne address to the summit meeting on “sunny and rainy days” alternating only led to speculation on the domestic and global situation. No significant reports of his bilateral meetings were mentioned, except for that with Russian President Vladimir Putin, which apparently did not go well.

The expected meeting at Samarkand between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Xi did not take place despite the partial disengagement of troops on September 8 at Gogra Heights and Hot Springs in Ladakh. There are at least six more “friction points” where disengagement and deescalation need to be carried out. The SCO ‘spirit’ is to build mutual trust. However, China’s military aggression against India, a fellow SCO member, has punctured such claims.

Also, the Samarkand Declaration emphasised on fighting terrorism, even as China was putting on hold, once again, sanctions on Pakistan-based terrorists. While Beijing has been bailing out terrorists like Masood Azhar, Zakir-ul-Rehman, Makki and others since 2009, blocking action to proscribe them in the UN Security Council-mandated 1267 Committee, the trend has intensified recently – contrary to the SCO’s spirit and agenda.

The Samarkand Declaration stated that the “global situation is deteriorating alarmingly”. This is in reference to the Ukrainian situation, energy and food crises, supply chain disruptions due to the spread of the pandemic, and others. Xi is also under tremendous pressure due to the persistence of Covid-19 across China, despite his ‘zero covid’ policies, and the resultant relative decline in economic growth rates and social unrest.

However, the undercurrent at Samarkand was the uncertainty brought about by Putin’s invasion of Ukraine. The supposedly mighty Russian military has been unable to bring Ukraine under its boot even after seven months of fighting. Nor has Putin been able to achieve his stated goals of forcing Ukraine to remain neutral and preventing NATO expansion. The recent withdrawal of Russian troops from Kharkiv further raised doubts in China about Russian superiority.

In early February, a Xi-Putin joint statement had proclaimed their partnership to be “limitless”. Just months later, stark differences have come to the fore between them, including on how far China would go to support Russia against western sanctions. Not just that, Chinese migration to Siberia is changing the demographic profile in Khabarovsk, Krai, Primorovsky and other regions in the Russian Far East. Then there are, of course, issues like Chinese smuggling, IPR theft, espionage for defence technologies, fisheries’ restrictions, etc.

It was reported that at the Xi-Putin meeting in Samarkand, Xi had reiterated his readiness “to work with Russia in extending strong support to each other on issues concerning their respective core interests”. Putin, on the other hand, said he understood China’s “questions and concerns”. A week before the Xi-Putin meeting, Li Zhanshu, the No 3 Politburo Standing Committee member, visited Russia and reportedly assured China’s support for Russia.

Thus, while China-Russia equations on Ukraine, Taiwan and other issues are still shrouded in secrecy, it appears that China is feeling the heat from the NATO countries – together, China’s largest trading partners, with nearly \$2 trillion in trade that is heavily beneficial to Beijing. With the Ukraine war dragging on for more than seven months now, China is under tremendous pressure from all quarters. Initially, China justified the Russian invasion, blaming NATO expansion for it. This view is now relatively subdued in Chinese statements.

Increasingly, China is under pressure domestically and internationally for its ties with Russia. Domestically, as China is witnessing relative economic decline, it increasingly needs the support of western countries to resurrect Chinese fortunes. With the 20th Communist Party Congress due on October 16 this year, Xi is under growing pressure from different factions in the Communist Party.

[Read complete article on website deccanherald.com](#)

With Russia's Declining influence, India needs a new strategy in Eurasia

By C. Raja Mohan

Author is senior fellow, Asia Society Policy Institute, Delhi.

As Moscow muddles through with its Ukraine invasion, the implications of a weakened Russia are coming into bold relief. With Russia's traditional sphere of influence now under growing contestation, India will have to find new ways to secure its interests in Eurasia. After all, India has long hitched its Eurasian wagon to the Russian star. The Kremlin's star, however, is dimming and it is not within India's power to alter that dynamic.

Thanks to its close ties to the Soviet Union, India had privileged access to the Central Asian Republics in the Cold War era. But Delhi could not do much with that since the collapse of the Soviet Union. Absence of geographic access and limited trade and investment ties meant Delhi's salience in the region has been underdeveloped.

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Delhi has largely relied on Moscow to buttress its role in the region. India worked with Russia and Iran, for example, to counter the Taliban in Afghanistan in the second half of the 1990s. Russia had also actively campaigned for India's membership of the SCO despite China's reservations. Moscow bet that having India in the SCO will produce a better regional balance of power. Russia was also ready to supply arms to India during its military confrontation with China in eastern Ladakh in the summer of 2020.

China's rapid rise in the new millennium, however, has begun to change the regional equations. China has not only become a leading economic partner for the Central Asian states, but its security ties with Moscow have deepened amidst the sharpening conflict between Russia and the West. And Moscow's inability to quickly wrap up the Ukraine invasion is making matters worse.

Many in the Indian strategic community have long complained about the West "pushing" Russia into China's arms. But the Russian state has been around for more than a thousand years, and it is quite capable of making choices based on its perceived interests. Russian President Vladimir Putin did his sums on Ukraine — in retrospect, it is quite clear that he got them wrong.

Whether Putin was "pushed" or "jumped" into Chinese arms, the consequences for India are the same. Putin's Ukraine war has set off three negative trends. First, the Russian invasion of Ukraine has alarmed its close neighbours. If Russia can claim that Ukraine had no right to independent existence and invade it, Moscow could do much the same to other republics that were part of the Soviet Union.

In early August, former Russian President Dmitry Medvedev posted a tweet proclaiming that after defeating Ukraine, Moscow should take back lost lands to revive the "mighty and invincible Russia". "Under Moscow's indivisible hand, with the Slavic people at the head, we will proceed to the next campaign to restore our motherland's borders, which, as you know, do not end anywhere," Medvedev said. He claimed that Georgia "didn't exist at all" before becoming part of the Russian empire in the 1800s and that Kazakhstan is an "artificial state".

Kazakhs did not need Medvedev's tweet — which was pulled down a few minutes after it was posted — to remind them of the potential implications of Russian aggression against Ukraine. Kazakhstan has been wary ever since the Russian invasion of Georgia in 2008 and the occupation of Crimea in 2014. The war in Ukraine has intensified its efforts to enhance its "strategic autonomy" from Russia.

The Kazakh president Kassym-Jomart Tokayev took Russian help to put down a revolt in January. But he refused to support the Russian invasion of Ukraine a month later and recognise the “independent” republics that Moscow set up in eastern Ukraine. Nor is he willing to break international sanctions to help Russia. Tokayev is stepping up the engagement with Europe, Turkey, and China to reduce the traditional dependence on Russia. Second, as Russia weakens, conflicts are breaking out within its Eurasian sphere of influence. In the last few days, two founding members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation — Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan — have been at each other’s throats on their disputed border. The dispute has been there for long; what is new is Russia’s declining capacity to control and mediate such conflicts.

Equally important have been the clashes between Azerbaijan and Armenia — two dialogue partners of the SCO. This conflict has raged for a while. Although Armenia is one of the closest allies of Russia, Moscow has been unable to counter the offensive by Azerbaijan and Turkey against Yerevan. There is much sympathy for Armenia in the US and Speaker Nancy Pelosi rushed there last week to express solidarity, including potential military assistance.

But no one is better placed to capitalise on Russia’s vulnerabilities than China. On his way to the Samarkand summit last week, Xi Jinping stopped at Nursultan, the capital of Kazakhstan. In a joint statement issued at the end of his meetings with Tokayev, Xi announced China’s strong support for Kazakhstan “in safeguarding national independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, and in taking reform measures to preserve national stability and development.” You don’t have to be a strategic genius to figure out who the statement is directed at.

Until now, it has been the practice to denounce the US itch for intervention and regime change in the name of promoting democracy through “colour revolutions”. After Ukraine, the region’s fears of meddling are not focused on the distant power, the US, but on Russia next door which seems intent on restoring its past glory. For India, the ideal situation would be one in which Russia is at peace with the West, manages the turbulence in inner Asia, keeps Chinese power in check, and facilitates India’s engagement with the region. The new reality is very different. Whether Delhi likes it or not, Russia is locked in an unwinnable war with the West, is increasingly beholden to China, and struggling to retain its traditional primacy in inner Asia.

As it took over the chair of the SCO last week, it is abundantly clear that India can’t play a consequential regional role by holding on to the Russian coattails. In the last year or more, Delhi has signalled the desire to develop an autonomous role in the region.

In November 2021, National Security Adviser Ajit Doval convened a meeting of his counterparts from Central Asia in Delhi to discuss the Afghan situation. Last January, Delhi invited the five Central Asian leaders to participate as special guests at the Republic Day celebrations but the Covid surge in January prevented their presence in Delhi.

India has long looked at Iran to gain geographic access to inner Asia. It must now tie up with its Arab friends like Saudi Arabia and the UAE to pursue large-scale regional projects in Eurasia. India is also renewing its engagement with Turkey, which is emerging as an important force in Central Asia, which was once known as Turkestan. The European Union, which is stepping up its engagement with the region through its eastern initiative, could also be an important partner for India in the region. The Eurasian vacuum created by the weakening of the Russian sphere of influence is unfamiliar geopolitical terrain for India, but it is full of new possibilities as well.

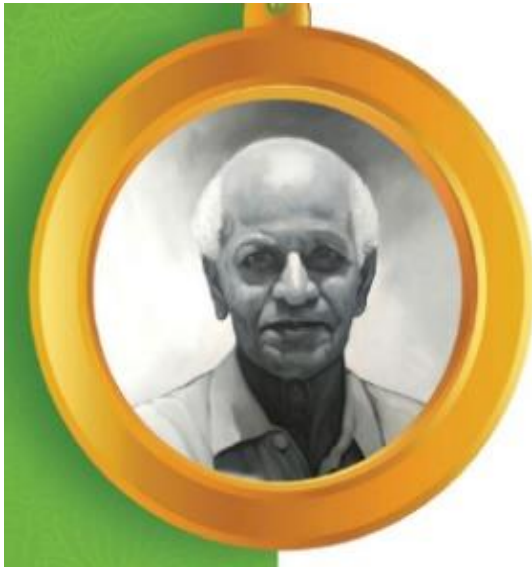
[Read complete article on website indianexpress.com](https://www.indianexpress.com)

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors. They do not purport to reflect the opinions or views of the FINS or its members.

Nation is Indebted to:

Veterinarian Dr Vaidyanathan Krishnamoorthy

1929-2002



Dr V Krishnamoorthy was an Indian veterinarian, conservationist and elephant expert known for his pioneering work in elephant care.

He governed Mudumalai Theppakadu Elephant camp and was well known by the world as Dr.K or Elephant man or Elephant Doctor. He has written the many journals related to the elephants and his last journal has been published in the London's Nature (journal). He was a member of International Union for the Conservation of Natural Resources and Asian Elephant Specialist Group.

Dr.V.Krishnamurthy was born and brought up in the then Madras Presidency. He graduated from the Madras Veterinary College and started his career as a Field Veterinary Assistant Surgeon in 1952. Upon the creation of Andhra State in 1953, Krishnamurthy was transferred to Kambam, Madurai District where he served till 1957.

Krishnamurthy is known for his activities in elephant conservation and suggested darts with chemical weapons as the safest and most efficient means of capturing wild elephants. He is credited with having raised living standards of captive elephants across Tamil Nadu. From 1953 to 1956 he performed post-mortem on 18 elephants, out of which 12 had been killed by poachers. He suggested the Tamil Nadu Government to introduce Temple Elephant rejuvenation camp which is now successfully followed. A considerable feat was the capture of the 'Makhna' elephant, which killed 15 persons in Tamil Nadu and Kerala. (Mudumalai jungles in Tamil Nadu are famous for inhabiting tusk-less male elephants. In Tamil, these elephants are called as 'Makhna'. Because of genetic disorder sometimes male elephants can't develop tusk at all. Such male elephants are known to be aggressive and dangerous)

Dr. V. Krishnamurthy has been on a short-time scholarship to the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, U.S. and conducted several workshops on captive elephant management. He had considerable expertise in hand rearing of orphaned elephant calves and was involved in the creation of a stud book record of captive Asian elephants. When Iain Douglas Hamilton, attended a seminar with Krishnamurthy at the Mudumalai sanctuary and found the jumbos crowding around in response to his voice, he remarked, "I would love to exchange places with you."

After retiring from Services, joined the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) as Project Officer and actively took up assignments on Radio Collaring of Wild elephants for study of their migration. Actively involved in Asian Elephant Special Group (AESG) as a Steering Committee Member. Dr. Krishnamurthy was on a long list of committees for wildlife conservation. He was Senior Technical Consultant to the Asian Elephant Research and Conservation unit of the Centre for Ecological Studies at the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore.

The Government of Tamil Nadu made Dr. Krishnamurthy an honorary warden of the Nilgiri Hills. The Government of Kerala recognised his contributions with a certificate of merit in 1989. In 2000, Krishnamurthy was awarded the Venu Menon Allies Award for Animals Welfare. Tamil writer Jeyamohan has made Dr. Krishnamurthy as one of the title characters in his collection of short stories called "Aram" Stories on the title "Yaanaai Doctor"

Dr Krishnamoorthy, followed the noble path of service to any living being and he devoted his life to serve ELEPHANTS in India.

What a remarkable life journey indeed.

Write to us at:

bulletin@finsindia.org

**OFFICE :4, Belle View, Lakhamsi Nappu
Road, Dadar (East), MUMBAI – 400014
Phone 022 24127274**

EDITORIAL BOARD

Col Ravindra Tripathi

Mr Gopal Dhok