

## INDIA

## BSP, the biggest winner in UP?

M ABDUL HAFIZ

THE results of much awaited polls in Uttar Pradesh has shattered the BJP's dream of saving its last fortress of power in Hindi heartland where it is now left with its only foothold of tiny Himachal Pradesh. BJP's rather sound election strategy in the state under the aegis of its Chief Minister, Rajnath Singh, failed to repair the image of his government of under performers, mischief-mongers and habitual defectors' having in many cases, criminal records.

With only 152 BJP MLA's in a 403-strong assembly Rajnath ran the show with diverse allies with bewildering varieties of demands mostly unreasonable. Therefore, the election of BJP in UP was virtually at time for penance.

Not only the number of BJP MLAs has plummeted further in the poll, in a neat four-cornered election fought among the BJP, SP, BSP and Congress the newly-wooded small allies of the BJP also are almost eliminated. The BJP has lost in three other states: the Punjab, Uttaranchal and Manipur where the assembly elections were concurrently held last month.

However, it is in all-important state of Uttar Pradesh that the BJP was dealt potentially the most lethal blow. Although it has managed to come a poor second, in term of the number of seats it is only a handful of seats ahead of Bahujan Samajwadi Party (BSP) led by mercurial former chief minister of UP, Mayawati.

Mulayam Singh Yadav's Samajwadi Party (SP) tops the tally of the seats with 174, but falls short of a workable majority.

In term of electoral gains, BSP's 98 seats are by far the most impressive achievements. In earlier elections held in 1993 and 1996 the BSP failed to cross 70-seat mark in the state-assembly. Even then two governments depended on Mayawati further survival and she herself became chief minister twice. There is all the more reason to reckon that she would be an important factor also this time and in all likelihood hold the balance of power between SP and BJP. There is however a deep rooted rivalry and antagonism between Mulayam Singh and Mayawati in spite of their common profession of secular politics and according to political observers it rules out the possibility of power sharing between them.

It is interesting to recall that in the past the BSP made deal with the BJP without compunction. The speculation around that even this time the BSP will eventually gang-up with BJP.

But then Mayawati has come of age over the years in the politics of Uttar Pradesh against a complex setting of the state's deep-rooted social and caste problems. While the media kept focusing on Rajnath and his principal contestant Mulayam Singh during the entire pre-poll period the BSP went about its electioneering in a quiet manner mobilising its committed voters. Far from the media gaze Mayawati spent her pre poll days ensuring that the party's hardcore supporters had received their voter ID cards.

Fixing her eye mainly on dalit votes Mayawati widened her vote base by giving party nominations to the candidates of upper castes. Although most of them failed to win they did weaken both BJP and SP by claiming a chunk of their vote bank. What helped the BSP was the fragmentation of its rivals' votes while Mayawati could, under any circumstances, take the dalit votes for granted. She could also take care of communist boroughs that dotted parts of western Uttar Pradesh by successfully converting the class issue into caste one and turning the areas into BSP bastions.

A hung assembly in the UP is not a new phenomenon. Ever since the Congress was decimated in the state the BJP, SP and BSP have been sharing power in Lucknow for more than past one decade. In any dispensation involving BSP in the past Mayawati proved to be a difficult ally with equally difficult demands. Both BJP and SP are bitter about her. It is an irony that yet they can not do without doing business with the BSP queen, particularly when her clout is much more enhanced this time. Mayawati now has a stronger bargaining counter and is in a position to dictate terms to both BJP and SP in any power sharing arrangements. The minimum she is likely to demand is the top slot in the state.

If the BJP and SP are disdainful about her, Mayawati also nourishes no less bitterness about them, particularly the BJP. She is still bitter about the manner the BJP dumped her as chief minister and bought off her party MLAs to secure majority in the house. Still there is little possibility that the SP and BJP will ever come together to face their common adversary; the

BJP.

Traditionally the road to the citadel of power in Delhi passes through the UP, India's most populous state, home to a staggering 160 million people and significant in terms of electoral politics. If any party has hopes of clinching power at the centre, UP must figure prominent in its calculation. In that sense, the BJP will be the principal bidder for power in UP in spite of the party's further loss of strength in the assembly.

Although behind the facade of 'Delhi durbar' the party has lost control of all major states it would like to hold up to retain a symbolic value for next Lok Sabha election. Mulayam Singh's SP holding single largest majority in the assembly also will like to be asked to form the government. As a result both the parties will have to wily-nilly woo the BSP which however is a little far behind required strength to independently form the government.

What about Congress which now rightly claims to have control over more number of states than the BJP and allies put together? Notwithstanding that rise of stature, the party has miserably performed in UP election in which its representation in the state has further reduced. But with its odd two dozens of MLAs it can be of crucial help to the SP, while its support to BSP is irrelevant and BJP out of question.

Mulayam Singh unceremoniously let down Sonia Gandhi in 1999 when letter made a brief attempt to form an 'alternative' government at the centre. Singh arrogantly refused to lend her support. Can Sonia overcome the trauma in the interest of bringing up a secular front in the UP and stopping BJP from seizing power in India's political heart land? Unless these questions are resolved quickly another ominous possibility looms: the president's rule in the UP. For the purpose, Mr Shastri, an old RSS veteran and the governor of UP will be found handy. There are indications that the senior leaders of the BJP prefer President's rule. This is also not without a precedent in UP where in 1996 one of Shastri's predecessors, Ramesh Bhandari recommended President's rule keeping the assembly in suspended animation. The political situation in the state now is not much dissimilar.

M Abdul Hafiz is former DG of BIIS.

## SRI LANKA

## Island of peace (and hope)

JEHAN PERERA

THE main feature in the Norwegian-drafted Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe and LTTE leader Velupillai Prabhakaran in March is the indefinite cease-fire agreement. It calls for a two-week notice being given by either party prior to termination of the cease-fire. This clause is likely to assuage apprehensions regarding the possibility of a surprise attack by either side. In the past, it has always been the LTTE that ended cease-fires with surprise attacks. On this occasion, with the Norwegians and, indeed, the entire diplomatic community in Sri Lanka keenly watching the peace process, the chances of such repeat performances are consider-ably reduced.

On the other hand, there are a couple of serious problems with the cease-fire agreement. The first deals with the government's ability to interdict LTTE re-supplies, which could lead to a possible unravelling of the peace process. The government's position is that the MOU permits the Sri Lankan armed forces to safeguard the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country, though without engaging in offensive military operations against the LTTE. Apprehending unauthorised vessels entering Sri Lankan territorial waters, by this reasoning, would be self-defence. But the Tigers' reasoning can be expected to be different.

Just a few days before the signing of the agreement, there was a major clash at sea between the Navy and the Sea Tigers. The LTTE's version was that the navy fired on the Sea Tigers while training, whereas Colombo claimed that the rebel flotilla had fired first while the navy was approaching it to check for gun-running. The MOU fails to address this type of problem, thus presenting a potential flashpoint which could unravel the cease-fire. It is noteworthy, however, that both the government and the insurgent leadership chose not to press this naval encounter to propaganda advantage. This indicates that both sides are determined to pursue the peace option, even though no doubt each has a fallback option firmly in place.

There is no doubt that the emplacement of a new government in December is what has precipitated this dramatic political evolution in Sri Lanka. It is obvious that the government of Ranil Wickremesinghe rejects any overt strategy of politically or militarily marginalising the LTTE. Indeed, it appears prepared to work with and through the LTTE. Prime Minister Wickremesinghe and the ministers who have been deployed in the peace process have stated publicly that an end to the war is a precondition for resolving the country's economic and other problems.

There is some apprehension that if the present MOU is an outcome of the government's one-sided need, then it puts the

LTTE in the driver's seat and the insurgents may be merely biding time to strike when the opportunity presents itself. Those sceptical of the LTTE's motives attribute its willingness to go with the peace process to inter-national pressures unleashed after 11 September and the United States' war against terrorism. On the other hand, we need to remember that the insurgents had indicated their desire to engage with an administration led by Mr Wickremesinghe long before the events of 11 September. For at least two years prior to that fateful day including during the presidential elections of 1999 and the general elections of 2000 the LTTE had showed clear preference to work with Mr. Wickremesinghe as prime minister.

It must be said that the overall track record of the previous Chandrika Kumaratunga government was not strong on seeking constructive engagement with the LTTE. On the contrary, its objective was to marginalise the LTTE through a two-pronged politico-military strategy. The unwillingness of President Kumaratunga to work with the government in the run-up to the present cease-fire, too, indicates her continuing reservations about working with the LTTE for peace.

The second problematic area in the MOU, therefore, is the government's inability to obtain bipartisan support for it. The prime minister had invited President Kumara-tunga to co-sign the MOU with him, but she refused to do so on the plea that she had was unaware of the contents of the agreement until after the LTTE leader had already signed it. Given the nature of the insurgency in Sri Lanka one which touches the people's deep-rooted psyche itself and the high stakes, a bipartisan policy towards the peace process remains essential. There must not be division between the two major political parties on the matter of a cease-fire meant to lead to peace. Civil society organisations that gave their whole-hearted support to the former government in its own peace initiatives, and the international community as well, need to do all they can to persuade the President and her party to cooperate in the peace process that has just been re-started.

President Kumaratunga's refusal to co-sign is a negative signal if there was one. On the one hand, her instincts as a combative politician are to not wish the new government to succeed where she so clearly failed to Mr. Wickremesinghe would go then the mantle of peacemaker. On the other hand, the president is also acutely aware that the people at large support a genuine peace process. Mrs. Kumaratunga perhaps understands that it is too early to conclusively reject the peace process as one that will not lead to a permanent peace.

The spoiler in the peace process already out on the field is the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP), which has been opposing the Norwegian-facilitated peace process since the very beginning. Quite unconcerned that the MOU consolidates the

cease-fire, the JVP has been engaging in a massive poster campaign against it, charging that it paves the way for a hand-over of the Northeast, together with its Sinhalese and Muslim inhabitants, to the LTTE. However, lacking a mass base, the JVP has not been able to mobilise the crowds. Any alliance with the Mrs. Kumaratunga's People's Alliance in opposition to the MOU during the local government elections scheduled for 20 March would therefore be a great opportunity to the JVP. All eyes are therefore on the PA.

There is a third problematic aspect that the MOU must contend with, and that concerns the Muslim community in the east. Using the opportunities provided by the cease-fire to enter into government-con-trolled territory over the last couple of months, the LTTE has been extorting millions of rupees from the Muslims, even kidnap-ping them for the purpose. The LTTE has thus succeeded in creating a rift between itself and a community that constitutes at least a third of the population of the east. This is likely to complicate future political negotiations regarding the unit up for devolution. It would be understandable if the Muslims balk at being put under the rule of those who so mistreated them.

The MOU does state in general terms that abduction, extortion and harassment of the civilian population is not permitted. It further states in its preamble that the Muslim population is one of the groups that are not directly a party to the conflict but who are suffering its consequences. It goes onto say that the provisions of the MOU regarding the security of civilians and their property apply to all inhabitants. Apart from the MOU, however, the matter of Muslim disenchantment with a possible formula is something the civic organisations and international inter-locutors must pay particular attention to.

More than two decades ago, sections of the Tamil community took to arms in the pursuit of their right to self-determination after facing oppression from the majority Sinhalese. Today, the Tamil people and those who seek to represent them must recognise that in turn oppress minorities living in areas that they numerically and militarily dominate. It is not improbable that in the interests of preserving good relations with the LTTE, both the government and Norwegian facilitators will soft pedal the LTTE abuses. National and inter-national groups must take this matter up with both the government and LTTE to ensure that all people benefit from the signing of the MOU.

By arrangement with Kathmandu-based Himal Magazine.

## NEPAL

## Fatal attraction

The inner Maobadi circle needs to be penetrated, and dramatically, writes C. K. Lal from Kathmandu

THE evening news bulletin of Radio Nepal begins these days with the latest body count of 'terrorists', a deadpan voice reading out a press release detailing the arithmetic of encounters between the Maobadi and the defence forces. Occasionally, there is a separate press release from the Home Ministry adding more impersonal numbers.

These announcements are now so customary that we mentally switch off when they begin. We hear the news of death and devastation without actually listening. There is an analogy with the so-called credibility gap of the Vietnam-era five o'clock follies run by the COMUSMACV, the Commander of the US Military Assistance Command. The underlying assumptions of all such spin are similar: those killed on the other side must have been terrorists, everyone held is inevitably a suspect. In the face of the enemy fire, the possibility of human error is considered too insignificant to matter.

But unimportant it is not. The death of even one innocent is morally reprehensible as well as strategically disastrous. Just as every drop of blood from the body of the demon Raktabej gave birth to hundreds of other demons in the story of Durga in Hindu mythology, every innocent victim breeds many more recruits for the insurgents.

Unlike in a conventional war, inflicting maximum casualty is not a desirable goal in fighting insurgency, mainly because it's almost impossible to differentiate between a friend and a foe while fighting an elusive enemy. Insurgents have a tactical advantage they can create terror by targeting practically anyone. Security forces can't, because even one misfired shot can alienate the entire population of an area and irreparably damage their credibility. In every insurgency, security forces have to fight with one hand tied behind their back, unable to distinguish between insurgents and the people. This is an unfortunate but inevitable part of fighting a section of one's own population.

As with the Vietcong or the Khmer Rouge, Nepali Maobadi are also composed of cadres that form three concentric circles. The outer ring consists of the people who have perfectly legitimate occupations by day, but turn into deadly fighters by night. In the day, your friendly neighbour could be a simple peasant eking out a living on his unproductive pakho land. He could be a teacher, a shopkeeper, or an NGO worker. He could even be a village council member representing a legitimate communist party. Come evening, and the ferocious face behind the innocent mask comes out to attack the first security personnel in sight.

Occasionally, a part-time terrorist is caught in the dragnet of the armed forces, and then all hell breaks loose in the relative safety of urban areas. Human right activists, political leaders, and sundry other do-gooders make a hue and cry over the excesses of the security forces. The best way to avoid this trap is to minimise the casualty in this category of Maobadi. In any case, these 'terrorists' aren't beyond redemption, and as the experiences in Bihar and Andhra Pradesh in India have shown, many of them can prove helpful in isolating the 'full-time' insurgents.

The inner ring contains the politically motivated and highly mobile cadres who attack isolated police posts and poorly-guarded state installations, loot banks, and spread terror in populated areas. Some may eschew

camouflage, but most don't, blending easily into the countryside when pursued. Despite the rural nature of the Maobadi assault, a significant section of these fighters probably come from an urban bourgeois background, originally indoctrinated by aboveground communist parties. Disillusioned by the shenanigans of leaders of these parties, their more idealistic members perhaps strayed into the lethal arms of Maobadi. If the political climate of the country were to improve, many of these young people could easily be weaned over to the mainstream.

The innermost circle is the tough one. Consisting of romantics with suicidal instincts, members of this hardcore group are said to be skilful organisers and doughty fighters. Like Maoist guerrillas elsewhere, they do not expose themselves easily, and do not fight the security forces unless they have an apparent advantage and are fairly certain of winning. Since in the long run insurgents acquire legitimacy from their victories, rather than ideology or votes, this group needs to be smashed to contain insurgency. Unfortunately, these people are near-invisible and the intelligence network of security forces has proven fatally flawed, unable to penetrate the movement to this level. They have acquired an image of invincibility because not one has been apprehended till date.

It is hard to gauge their strength there is an impenetrable veil of secrecy over their training camps but educated guesses put the strength of this group at about 2,000, and their weapons are only as advanced as those they looted from army barracks of Dang and Mangalsen. Many of their camps could well exist on Indian soil, but there have to be at least some in Nepal. What is most glaring is the complete failure of security forces in exposing such centres.

Nepali Maobadi have been mercilessly feeding the outer ring to security forces, selectively using their middle ring to create confusion and inflict damage in places as far apart as Salleri and Sitalpati, and successfully employing their innermost ring for decisive victories like Dunai, Dang and Mangalsen. If all war is propaganda, the Maobadi sure know how to wage one with skill and determination. In comparison, the technically superior forces of the state come across as bungling novices.

The news of muskets and socket bombs seized, explosives found, or Maobadi literature confiscated fail to reassure an edgy population exposed to more direct threats like the forced closure of educational institutions. When even the daily body count has apparently little impact, the security forces risk losing their credibility even further in a drawn-out conflict.

In the long run, feeding the news-hounds with faxed news releases may turn out to be counter-productive. The info-war against insurgency badly needs something dramatic, something like the parading of the Nepali counterparts of Gonzalo, Guzman or Charu Mazumdar in front of television cameras. The illusion of invincibility around these elusive leaders needs to be shattered. Only then will the insurgency cease to exert its fatal attraction on desperate people.

By arrangement with the Nepali Times. CK Lal is a senior journalist in Kathmandu.

## BHUTAN

## A master craftsman's story

TSHERING GYELTSHEN in Thimphu

SITTING by the window of his comfortable home in Thimphu, 70-year-old Namgay Tshering spends his time praying, reading scriptures and religious biographies.

But he is not one of those pampered old men wallowing in the care and hospitality of his children in his twilight years. He is a master craftsman enjoying his days of retirement.

In a 50-year career as a *troelko* (gold and silver smith), Namgay Tshering has taught and trained scores of smiths and has left behind a rich legacy of his own skills.

"Not really to boast, I can safely say that I have done a bit for my country," Namgay Tshering told Kuensel.

And the "bit" that he had done includes the construction of the 17 feet *pelphug* chorten in Taktshang, the 15 feet *machen* chorten in Punakha, the Druk Wangyel medal (the country's highest national award), and the two *kilkhors* (mandalas) in the Thimphu and the Punakha dratshangs.

It also includes three swords and a bathra for His Late Majesty, hundreds of souvenirs for state guests, and countless other gold and silver artifacts, ornaments and wares for the royal household.

He had cast and constructed over 25 bronze, silver and gold chortens and made the *kdung* chortens for the previous Namkhai Nyingpo and Khamtrul Rinpoche.

His works can be found not only in many major lhakhangs in Bhutan but also in Nepal and India.

Of all the work that he has done in his lifetime, he is "most honoured" by the *machen* chorten in Punakha dzong which houses the embalmed body of the Zhabdrung. He was the engineer, designer and supervising craftsman of the *machen* chorten which took some 30 men six years to complete.

Another work that "brings pride and joy" in his heart is the Druk Wangyel medal. He designed and made the Druk Wangyel the highest national award instituted by His Majesty the King in a record 20 days. The Druk Wangyel was posthumously awarded to the late prime minister of India, Indira Gandhi, by His Majesty the king in 1985.

Namgay Tshering was born into a family of *troelkos* in Drawanglo in Paro where a *troelzo* tradition existed since the Zhabdrung's time.

His maternal uncle served in the court of the first king. His own father, who was a renowned *troelko*, worked for the second king. He learnt the art and craft of *troelzo* from his father at the age of 10.

Namgay Tshering said that learning *troelzo* is a difficult and demand-

Namgay Tshering: keeping *troelzo* alive

ing job. A learner or trainee begins by carving human forms, birds and animals, all the saints and renowned masters in the Buddhist pantheon, and all religious signs and symbols in their most intricate detail.

"It takes a great deal of patience, skill and endurance," he said. "Very few people can master the *troelzo* in its entirety. Out of 60 people who begin learning at the same time, may be only about three will become a good *troelko*."

His greatest regret today is that the craft to which he dedicated his life, skill, and love is declining. He feels that *troelkos* these days are commercially driven and are more concerned with outer appearance than with doing a genuinely good job.

"Everybody wants to have an easy time and make good money," he said adding that for the craft to succeed whoever takes it up "must be genuinely interested, devoted to the profession and determined to excel".

He also feels that special recognition and incentives need to be given to those who are exceptionally talented and good.

"*Zorig chusum* (13 arts and crafts) must not be allowed to disappear," he said. "All the dzongs, lhakhangs, chortens and in fact our unique cultural and religious identity owe its

existence and origin to *zorig chusum*.

What we are able to show to the outside world as distinctly Bhutanese is essentially because of *zorig chusum*.

That is why although he is retired, he continues to teach. He has taught about ten boys since retiring in 1998. Two boys are presently training under him. "I am doing my best to impart whatever I know to those who are interested to learn," said Namgay Tshering, the teacher of about 70 *troelkos*.

Namgay Tshering has seen his country evolve from wilderness into a modern nation state in a lifetime spanning three kings.

He said that the Bhutan of today is like a dream compared to the one he knew as a young man. Pem, his partner in life, love and struggle for over 50 years and mother of his eight children said she could not describe how hard, difficult and cruel life was in those days. "There was a heaven and earth's difference between *gom* (authority) and *yop* (subordinates)," Namgay Tshering told Kuensel.

"Everyone is so equal today I feel like there is no gom."

Courtesy: kuenselonline.com

## NUCLEAR COMPULSIONS

## Dangers in South Asia

MAJ GEN (RETD) ASHOK KRISHNA

THE need for nuclear stability in South Asia is engaging the attention of the international community. Mutual suspicions between India and Pakistan, the absence of transparency, their use of coercive nuclear diplomacy, poor intelligence and inadequate command, control and communications systems will assume greater significance after the deployment of nuclear weapons. In states of high alert, dispersed nuclear arsenals would require the mating of warheads with delivery systems, in which case, the potential for accidental, or, inadvertent nuclear use will inevitably increase. The danger of intentional, including pre-emptive nuclear use, could also increase because of misperception, misinformation or miscalculation.

Nuclear Compulsions of India and Pakistan

Pakistan: Guided by its animosity towards and rivalry with India, Pakistan's nuclear weapons capability is aimed at matching and undermining India's regional influence. Domestic imperatives play a significant role in shaping Pakistan's nuclear policy. Pakistan's nuclear weapons programme is the preserve of its anti-Indian military establishment. Its political bureaucracy assumes a subordinate role. Even during Pakistan's brief democratic interludes, the military retained control over the nuclear weapons programme. In May 1998, it pressurized Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to hold retaliatory nuclear tests to counter the perceived Indian threat and offset perceived Indian gains in power and prestige. As long as the military leadership dominates nuclear decision making in Pakistan, its nuclear policy will be shaped by nuclear developments in India.

India: India justifies its nuclear weapons programme due to security threats from Pakistan and China. In his letter to President Clinton written after the May 1998 nuclear tests, Prime Minister Vajpayee had stated, "We have an overt nuclear weapon state on our borders, a state which committed aggression against India in 1962... (That) country has materially helped another neighbour of ours to become a covert nuclear weapons state. At the hands of this bitter neighbour we have suffered three aggressions in the last 50 years. And we have been the victim of unremitting terrorism and militancy sponsored by it in several parts of our country...." India also

hopes to match China's regional and global standing with a countervailing nuclear weapons capability.

These political and military compulsions of India and Pakistan are unlikely to change in the future. Therefore, both states will continue to possess nuclear weapons. While nuclear weapons are only for deterrence and not for use, there are a host of nuclear dangers which need being attended to by both countries.

Nuclear Dangers

Indian and Pakistani stockpiles of fissile materials are currently small, hence, their basic safety and security systems are dependent on guards, gates and guns. These arrangements are at present sufficient to prevent nuclear theft by sub-state dissidents or terrorists. However, should India and Pakistan opt for an operational nuclear force, the resultant

nuclear arms race will lead to an expansion of these stockpiles, increasing the potential for nuclear theft and diversion.

Both India and Pakistan claim that their nuclear warheads are currently un-assembled and stored at separate sites from delivery systems, reducing the chances of theft or unauthorized or inadvertent nuclear use. This situation would change if India and Pakistan operationalise their nuclear arsenals, increasing the risks of nuclear use.

Further, should India and Pakistan use their limited financial resources to enlarge their stockpiles of weapons-grade plutonium and uranium, it is unlikely that they would be able to pay attention to strengthening nuclear custodial security and safety measures, because of financial and technological constraints and the lack of a safety culture. Nuclear theft or diversion could result in the acquisition of sensitive materials by terrorists. However, because of its proven Chinese nuclear weapon designs and Chinese and North Korean-based ballistic missiles, Pakistan could possibly mate its nuclear warheads with Chinese M-11 missile and other missile systems.
































































Fissile Materials

The other aspect of concern is the existing stocks of fissile materials. Until Pakistan feels it has enough weapons usable fissile material to stop production, it can point to India's existing stocks as an asymmetry that needs to be remedied before any moratorium or cut-off treaty is acceptable. Being on the centre stage after the September 11 attacks, the conditions required to bring Pakistan into a world wide effort to limit un-authorized access to WMD technologies will now be possible. Hence, Pakistan could stop the production of weapons grade fissile material in future.

Conclusion

At this stage in South Asia's nuclear development, the Bush administration will maintain pressure on India and Pakistan to exercise nuclear restraint and rethink their policies to advance the US global nonproliferation objectives and anti-terrorism goals. The United States would also engage India and Pakistan to contain the Kashmir conflict and enhance crisis stability in South Asia.

The author is the Deputy Director of Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, New Delhi. Courtesy: IPCS web site.

STRATEGIC BALANCE	
<b>Armed forces manpower</b>	
                                                               	1,263,000