

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Visit to China, May 2015

Kishan S. Rana

Honorary Fellow, Institute of Chinese Studies, Delhi
kishanrana@gmail.com

Prime Minister Modi's May 2015 visit to China is examined with reference to several issues: the border dispute; trade, investment and economic cooperation; education, culture and people exchanges; South Asia, Pakistan; 'Silk', BCIM and other routes; and building trust. External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj's January 2015 hint in Beijing about an 'out of box' solution to the border issue was not borne out; we may ask if Indian publics are being prepared for a possible settlement, and without that it appears that the issue has not reached a tipping point where past positions become redundant. But the bilateral engagement has been widened and deepened. Modi seems to act on the premise that diplomacy can deliver result attuned to India's basic objective of national social-economic development.

Keywords: India-China border issue, bilateral economic cooperation, education, culture and people exchanges, building mutual confidence

Major bilateral visits by national leaders provide insight in two ways. First, they open a real-time window into the interplay of relations, offering glimpses of how key issues stand at a particular moment in time. Second, they offer a perspective, when seen in comparative terms; they sketch the evolution in how countries handle their bilateral agenda and deal with the world around them. While it is the former that provides a snapshot of the moment, for the analyst, it is the longer comparative timeframe that offers deeper insight. Let us examine the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's China journey from 14 to 16 May 2015 through these two sets of tools.

Narendra Modi has shown, from the moment of his inauguration, his personal diplomatic finesse in inviting neighbouring leaders to that event. His slogan 'neighbourhood first' may not be novel, but it is for the first time that India has expressed such high value for its proximate states. The programme of activities he has undertaken on each foreign visit has shown communication skill and personal commitment to taking each relationship to a new level. That same savvy was visible on this China visit.

Diplomacy has always been both substance and spectacle. Our information and communications technology (ICT) age with instant transmission of images, public comments and personal messages across the globe, allows intense *personal* participation in such events. This takes the spectacle element to an entirely new level. By taking Prime Minister Modi first to his hometown Xian, Chinese President Xi Jinping repaid the compliment he had received from Modi at Ahmedabad in September 2014; this also permitted a neat segmentation for the summit discussions—a first day between the two *political* equivalents, followed the next day at Beijing with Premier Li Keqiang, the *state rank* equivalent. The final day in Shanghai, the commercial capital where the real economic business of relationships is transacted, became a neat capstone.

The same Indian media that distracted itself to a point of embarrassment in September 2014 seemed to overlook an event that did not occur in May 2015. Coinciding with President Xi's September 2014 India visit, we had witnessed what appeared to be a staged confrontation on the border, with Chinese border guards carrying banners in Chinese and English, asking Indian guards to go back. This time the border was tranquil, un-marred by anything that might have undermined official bonhomie. Perhaps that reflected Xi's tightened control over his military establishment. Let us come back to the media issue.

A novel element this time was the establishment of a 'State/Provincial Leaders' Forum', which held its first meeting in Beijing in the presence of the two premiers—this is the first time that Indian state chief ministers have played a public role at a bilateral visit, though some have joined foreign visits, as did Mamata Banerjee, the chief minister of West Bengal, during the June 2015 visit to Bangladesh. It has added an external dimension to Modi's pet theme of 'cooperative federalism'. This is a kind of empowerment for Indian states not seen prior to Modi's premiership.¹ China is especially useful as a role model, because of the officially delegated role that its provinces play in external economic promotion.² It will be interesting to see how bilateral cooperation in this domain plays out.

Prime Minister Modi's China visit is examined below with reference to several major themes.

¹ It was during the China visit that Prime Minister Modi slightly amended that slogan to 'cooperative and competitive federalism', in effect encouraging states to compete among themselves. In the same vein, New Delhi is to produce a 'doing business' index that will measure the business-friendly policies of these states, again for the first time.

² China's practice of operating 'foreign affairs offices' at all its provincial capitals, jointly answerable to the Foreign Ministry and the provincial government, and entrusting to them some local cross-border management tasks is also unique (Rana 2007).

INDIA–CHINA BORDER

This remains the key obstacle to deeper cooperation and also the root cause for apprehension in the perceived intent of the one country towards the other. This dispute especially dominates Indian thinking, in the media, and to almost an equal degree among the public to the point where China is taken as the country's external biggest threat. In China, India figures lower in its threat perception, much behind the US and Japan, but it remains the third largest cause for concern; rather, few in India comprehend the extent to which Tibet is a key element in the way China apprehends its security threat from India.

Initiated in 1981, bilateral talks on the border issue were elevated to 'special representative' level in 2003. Held in 18 rounds so far, they seem to have moved at a pace that appears glacial from the outside. The reality is surely more positive, but remains cloaked in secrecy.

The Joint India–China Statement issued on 15 May 2015 declares:

The two sides are determined to actively seek a political settlement of the boundary question. They made a positive assessment of the important progress made through the mechanism of the Special Representatives, and reaffirmed the commitment to abide by the three-stage process for the settlement of the boundary question, and continuously push forward negotiation on the framework for a boundary settlement based on the outcomes and common understanding achieved so far, in an effort to seek a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable solution as early as possible. The two sides will resolve outstanding differences, including the boundary question, in a proactive manner. (Ministry of External Affairs 2015: paragraphs 11 and 12)

This essentially repeats earlier formulations, though analysts undertaking linguistic comparison with past statements might parse the words in different ways.

So what are the real hurdles to a settlement? Professor Zhang Li of Sichuan University, a well-known scholar, shed some light on Chinese thinking in a recent interview. Though not an official spokesman, he is among those who can be taken as knowledgeable. He said of China's claim in the Eastern sector regarding Arunachal:

Basically this is a reference to Tawang, which is not just part of the territorial issue but also part of the Tibet issue. When Chinese think of the Tawang issue they also have to think about Tibet. Perhaps China associates the stability of Tibet with Tawang. This is something new... We can guess that if Tibet is more stable then the Chinese government will be more flexible in discussing the border issue with India. For the Chinese government it is much more important to stabilize Tibet than it is to settle the border issue early as India has expected... Like I said, there is some connection between Tibet and the settlement of the border issue. That there is a direct linkage is something new in the last 10 years. Perhaps China has some misgivings about the situation in Tibet. (Shukla 2015)

Another small revelation came in a news comment attributed to Foreign Ministry Deputy Director General Huang Xilian, regarding attempts to identify the 'Line of Actual Control' (LAC). He told a group of Indian experts in Beijing, after the Modi visit:

We tried to clarify some years ago but it encountered some difficulties, which led to even more complex situation. That is why whatever we do we should make it more conducive to peace and tranquility for making things easier and not to make them complicated. (*The Indian Express* 2015)

In contrast, India has long urged, publicly and in the border talks, that the two sides should exchange maps showing their own versions of the LAC. This task is rendered difficult in those disputed areas in Ladakh, and at other places, where no clear natural features exist to affirm the claims of either side regarding the area over which each has customarily exercised control. Determining an agreed LAC would have to be a prelude to a settlement.

Succinctly put, the border dispute entails an asymmetrical parallelism in misperceptions for the two sides. China has not fully understood the persisting trauma that the 1962 border war left for India. India has not fully grasped the connection in the Chinese mind between the border issue and Tibet.

Yet, the real positives remain. The 2005 agreement on 'political parameters' remains a key commitment for both sides. Despite continual reports of Chinese intrusions across the LAC, no armed clash or exchange of fire has taken place between the two sides since 1986. This speaks of good border management, especially when an agreed LAC does not exist, and at many locations the terrain is, such as, to leave open to interpretation the alignment of an LAC; local incidents have been contained and a robust mechanism exists for 'flag meetings' and mutual discussion between border commanders at different levels of hierarchy. This is supplemented by 'hot lines' between the army commands. Joint military exercises, exchange of visit among high-ranking defence personalities, plus some training exchanges, also point to a mutual concern with managing the issue in a peaceful manner.

A majority view in the published assessments on the visit is that India did not make much headway on the border issue. The visible evidence supports that, but we do not have access to the inside story. It may be better to withhold judgement, and observe how events play out in the coming months. Modi's personal engagement, and his capacity to mobilise domestic support, may offer some chance for forward movement.

TRADE, INVESTMENT AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION

An impressive 24 business deals totaling US\$22 billion in value were signed in Shanghai on 16 June in the presence of Prime Minister Modi. This represents real traction in economic exchanges, moving beyond official promises of investment intentions

as during Xi's September 2014 trip. Modi's meeting that same morning with 20 principal business leaders of China and Hong Kong may yield greater dividend in the coming months.

Two-way India–China trade now been static for three years; it seems frozen at around US\$70 billion. It is bedeviled by a persisting bilateral trade imbalance, which rose in 2014 to US\$35 billion against India. The Joint Statement refers to 'joint measures to alleviate the skewed bilateral trade so as to realize its sustainability'; it sets out steps aimed at stepping up Indian exports, covering pharmaceuticals and agro-products, and 'increasing services trade in tourism, films, healthcare, IT and logistics'. The India–China Joint Economic Group has been tasked to work on the trade balance issue.

The Joint Statement notes: 'The two sides resolved to work together to further strengthen their closer developmental partnership.' This phrase is not new, but its detailed elaboration suggests an interesting axis for cooperation, given that India–China socio-economic experience offers many parallels, hitherto largely understudied by the policy mangers. For instance, the former Indian Planning Commission had carried out a study of China's vocational training programmes, so enormously relevant for India's skill enhancement and job creation plans. We may expect the new 'Niti Aayog', successor to the Planning Commission to take this forward, the more so under the envisaged expansion in links between this Niti Aayog and the China's National Development and Reform Commission; the heads of these two agencies lead the 'Strategic Economic Dialogue' that is emphasised in this Statement. Mutual sharing has much relevance, the more so because each can bring to the table a spectrum of experiences that can enhance the efficiency of the comparable developmental activities in two countries.

All this is to the good. The Statement declares: 'The leaders noted with appreciation the positive momentum in investment projects as Chinese companies respond to the invitation to "Make in India" and Indian companies expand their presence in China.' The earlier target of attaining two-way trade level of US\$100 billion is not repeated, but we can expect natural growth in exchanges as a consequence to expansion in investment and business contracts, to push trade exchanges to that level and beyond. Taking a long view on economic cooperation would show that deficits, even when they appear formidable, are less important than the net contribution that bilateral exchanges make to the economy. The numbers will change once the 'Make in India' project begins to deliver.

EDUCATION, CULTURE, PEOPLE EXCHANGES

Xi personally accompanied Modi to the Da Xiong Temple and the Wild Goose Pagoda in Xian on 14 June. Should we read anything into that? Might it be feasible for India and China to evoke the legacy of the Buddha, to use this, their most ancient historical connection, for contemporary purpose? It should be feasible for India to present in

China a major exhibition of Buddhist art, and possibly even a display of Lord Buddha's relics, as it had done in Sri Lanka a few years back. That would produce enormous public impact.

The 21 agreements signed in Beijing included some actions of lasting value, such as, joint research in nuclear energy and space and co-production of films. India's unilateral announcement of an e-visa for Chinese tourists will be of real benefit, against the background of obduracy by the visa sanctioning authorities in New Delhi, which has inhibited more Chinese tourists, businessmen and especially academics from travel to India. Other actions that have a potential to unlock much needed expansion of real scholarly and institution-level cooperation, include the establishment of Gandhian and South Asian studies at Fudan University, Shanghai, and yoga and cultural studies at Minzu University, Yunnan. But there is no mention of matching actions in India to expand the country's China study infrastructure. The opening of consulates at Chengdu, Sichuan and Chennai, Tamil Nadu, would expand the diplomatic footprint for each. Other actions that appear distinctly underwhelming in impact include: enhancement of media cooperation between India's Prasar Bharati and Chinese TV, and raising the number annually sent in youth exchange from 100 to 200 people. One might include in this category the establishment of a new quasi-official 'think tank forum'; currently, several such track two and track one-and-a-half forums meet each year, and one wonders if this new platform will make a real difference. Unfortunately, there is no mention of expansion in scholarships for university students; at present, the number of official scholarships hovers around barely 50, in each direction. In India, fellowships for researchers to carry out fieldwork in China are very limited; in contrast, Chinese institutions find many more ways to fund their scholars to engage in study tours in India. It remains to be seen what will come out of what the Statement calls an 'expanded Educational Exchange Programme'.

India does not permit foreign education institutions to install their facilities at its public universities; this has blocked Confucius Institutes from opening branches at major institutions; this also prevents others, such as, the US from setting up 'American corners', as per their practice elsewhere. This policy is unlikely to change, though India's plans to expand collaboration with foreign universities have remained on the legislative drawing board for too long now. The net result is that 2012 inclusion of Chinese as an optional foreign language for Indian high schools has not produced the expected surge in language study, mainly owing to a shortage of teachers. At present, barely a score of Indian schools have recruited teachers to offer Chinese to students. Plans to send several hundred Indian teachers to China for training have withered on the vine. Thus, without a sizable catchment of Indian students interested in China through language study, real expansion in student exchanges, in both directions, on the scale required to improve mutual comprehension is unlikely to take place.

Tourism flows are sputtering along, again in unbalanced fashion. In 2014, about 600,000 Indians visited China while the reverse flow was as unbalanced as before, at about 170,000. Perhaps the new e-visa, if implemented in prompt and clear fashion will

help. The years 2014 and 2015 were to witness reciprocal promotional programmes in both countries to encourage tourism and other visits, but there has been no assessment of the net impact of this promotion.

Some Indian films have begun to break through into the Chinese commercial market and this offers real potential. Bollywood blockbuster *PK*, released in India and abroad in March 2015 was screened in over 200 cinemas across China, and garnered US\$10 million in the first week of release. An Indian journal wrote:

A China-based film analyst described the film's success in the China market as 'game-changing'. 'Considering that unlike the U.S. this is a market where there is no large Indian diaspora and the attendances have been entirely local audiences, this is all the more impressive and game-changing,' said the analyst. (*India Today* 2015)

Such profit-driven commercial exchanges hold better promise than officially sponsored activities. As in Japan, South Korea and elsewhere, such autonomous flows are especially useful in reshaping public perceptions.

The two sides announced more 'sister city' arrangements, moving beyond the September 2014 arrangements; these now cover Aurangabad and Dunhuang, Chennai and Chongqing, and Hyderabad and Qingdao. The choice of partner cities is imaginative, but on the Indian side, a serious flaw with such arrangements is that unlike in China and in other countries, Indian city administrations are weak, with virtually no financial or executive authority. Consequently, the sister city arrangements concluded by India with other countries have been moribund; perhaps the Modi government will find a new approach, which probably would mean a new empowerment of local level governance. But that is unlikely to happen in a hurry. However, the announced provincial partnership between Karnataka and Sichuan should work; a decade back, the undivided state of Andhra Pradesh had signed an arrangement with one of the Malay states; in bifurcated Andhra Pradesh, Singapore is committed to helping it develop a new capital and other infrastructure. This also gives more teeth to Indian states.

The India–China Statement declares:

The Indian side expressed appreciation to China for providing flood-season hydrological data and the assistance in emergency management. The two sides will further strengthen cooperation through the Expert-Level Mechanism on the provision of flood-season hydrological data and emergency management, and exchange views on other issues of mutual interest.

This indicates a slight movement by China on the Himalayan rivers, an issue much discussed in India. Our main interest is in some form of joint management of the Brahmaputra–Tsang Po, but China, as an upper riparian state, has long resisted such arrangements, bilaterally, regionally and at the UN. Management of the Himalayan rivers will remain a problem issue.

SOUTH ASIA, PAKISTAN

A US observer calls the security scene in South Asia 'bipolar', viewed in terms of an informal arrangement where India and the US 'have come closer' and Pakistan and China 'have come much closer' (Riedel 2015). That implies an Indian strategic choice vis-à-vis the great powers, which simply does not conform to reality. It is another matter that Washington, DC, would like New Delhi to lean much closer towards itself, but that simply does not conform to an overriding Indian objective, which remains as always to find a middle, balancing path in a complex Asian political maze that draws in every global player, with the partial exception of the EU and its major entities.

President Xi's April 2015 visit to Pakistan brought for that country a rich US\$46 billion harvest of aid and investments, focused principally on the Gwadar–Karakoram economic corridor and huge plans for virtually doubling Pakistan's installed power-generation capacity. This level of financial investment gets Beijing deep into this neighbouring country that faces a complex existential threat, largely of its own making. Pakistan is the global training centre for terrorism, deeply enmeshed in Islamist extremism, both externally and internally. Its home-grown dissidence, in Baluchistan, North-West Frontier (NWF) Province, among the Sindhis, and the Mohajir, is matched by other internal divisions, vis-à-vis the domination by the Army, Punjab and the land-owning classes. Official support to extremists, overt and covert, is producing huge backlash, with thousands killed each year, victim to terrorists. Will the creation of a 10,000 strong special police force to protect the thousands of Chinese that will enter the country to execute a string of projects, ensure their safety in that fragile, combustible environment? Might it not become an unwitting factor in Pakistan's divisive internal politics? And what of a backlash among some of the extremist Uighur of Sinkiang, who already flock to conflicts, such as, Syria? China has taken a huge gamble, as some of its analysts privately acknowledge.

Whatever the outcome of this massive politico-financial engagement in Pakistan, China now takes on a major stake in the stability and wellbeing of that country. If these investments do bring prosperity to Pakistan, India also potentially stands to gain. An unstable, failing neighbour might give moments of *schadenfreude*, but it does nothing for our own security. Some may find it hard to swallow, but China–Pakistan collaboration is not inimical to India, if it works. Its failure can bring deeper adverse consequence, if a tottering Pakistan plays once again its India-card to muster domestic unity. As for the Gwadar link, this gives China access, at fairly high cost, to the Arabian Sea for its land-locked Sinkiang and other parts of Western China. We may expect Gwadar port to also furnish facilities for Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) Navy vessels. Frankly, we may dislike this intensely, but have no choice but to live with it. This should also prompt us to redouble effort to build up and utilise Chabahar port in Iran as our own access route to Central Asia. No one expects Pakistan to provide such transit facilities for India.

At the Tsinghua University, Modi spoke of a common threat to stability from extremism and terrorism arising from the same source. One might see in China's expanded engagement in Pakistan a potential for the emergence of some shared interests between Beijing and New Delhi. Is this possible? India has to explore this further.

India remains interested in the regional organisation Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) and the Joint Statement reads: 'The two sides are ready to continue cooperation under the framework of Shanghai Cooperation Organization. China welcomed India's application for full membership of Shanghai Cooperation Organization.' In contrast, South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) is covered in these bland words: 'The two sides agreed to broaden cooperation in SAARC.' Does this suggest that India might find it possible to join SCO without having to give China enhanced status in SAARC?

'SILK', BCIM AND OTHER ROUTES

India has avoided a formal position on Xi Jinping's much touted 'One Belt One Road' (OBOR) concept, today the *leit motif* of China's eco-political diplomacy across most of Asia and beyond. This finds no mention in the Joint Statement. But in his public remarks, Prime Minister Modi has been a little more forthcoming. He told Chinese journalists in an interview just before travelling to China: 'Today, a re-emerging Asia must reconnect its many regions and with the world beyond. Like China, India too is seeking to strengthen connectivity to the East and West. India and China are also working together on Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar Corridor' (*Business Standard* 2015). Almost the exact words are repeated in Modi's 15 June Tsinghua University speech.

The Joint Statement declares:

The two sides welcomed the progress made in promoting cooperation under the framework of the BCIM (Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar) Economic Corridor. Both sides recalled the second meeting of the Joint Study Group of BCIM Economic Corridor, and agreed to continue their respective efforts to implement understandings reached at the meeting.

This essentially repeats earlier statements, without suggesting any new actions.

Connecting India's northeast (NE) region with its foreign neighbours is a complex challenge for India (Rana and Uberoi 2012). It entails first of all the modernisation of road, rail and air transport infrastructure within the NE region, currently underway on a major scale, and then moving ahead with connectivity with immediately adjoining Bangladesh and Myanmar, and using these connections to reach Southeast Asia and China. Concern with security in this region, in the face of armed dissidence movements, complicates India's development action options for this region.

BUILDING TRUST

Modi, like Xi, is cast in the mold of a strong leader, clear in what he seeks and emphatic in his pronouncements. At Tsinghua, he spoke of 'the need for China to reconsider its approach on some issues that hold us back from realizing the full potential of our partnership'. This could be an allusion to the border issue, and could also refer to other points of difference. Such plain speaking is rare in India–China relations.

Some small steps: India has long sought to engage China in discussion on arms and disarmament issues. The Joint Statement reveals that an 'India–China Dialogue on Arms Control and Non-proliferation (was) held in Beijing on April 17, 2015'. This widens conversation on international issues. Talled together, the number of official, quasi-official and 'non-official' discussion forums between India and China have grown considerably in the past several years; a tally, probably incomplete, puts the current figure at nearly 30, a sizable increase over what obtained a decade back. This is a natural process of mutual discussion, and the latest summit indicates that this will grow further.

At the time of President Xi's travel to Ahmedabad in September 2014, joining a small cluster of TV speakers on a Hindi channel, I witnessed how mutual unfamiliarity plays out. When the TV anchor repeatedly referred to the visiting leader as 'President Jinping', I pointed out that this needed correction, because in China the family name is customarily placed ahead of the personal name. This was duly passed on to the networks editorial section, but no change was made that evening. When I persisted in urging rectification, the network's staff came back to say that while they understood the point, they did not want to make a change because viewers would phone to 'correct' them if they used the name 'President Xi'! Happily, by the time of the May 2015 Modi visit the right nomenclature had become accepted usage by Indian TV channels, though not in the print media. This is a small demonstration of the consequences of unfamiliarity.

One may ask: Is the time ripe now for a joint study by the best strategic thinkers of India and China on how the two countries can deepen and broaden mutual confidence? Some of the challenges are self-evident. Exchanges among the youth need great expansion. A small example is the dispatch of groups of students between high schools, to spend a few weeks on home-stay in the other country, attending the counterpart school. Such exchanges can be greatly multiplied to enormous mutual advantage. They would also create a catchment for university-level student exchanges that also call for great expansion. Tourism is the other sector where the natural propensity of our peoples to travel abroad can be harnessed, again contributing to deeper understanding.

At a recent conference in China, a leading Chinese professor asked if trust is a prerequisite to cooperation. His personal response was that a great deal of cooperation could be accomplished between states, even in the absence of trust. China's relations with the US and Japan show in different degrees how this works out. But there is no gainsaying that trust enhances and deepens the reality of cooperation. This is a useful road for India and China.

CONCLUSION

During a visit to Beijing in January 2015, the External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj had spoken of an 'out-of-box' solution to the border issue. Immediately prior to Modi's visit, the Indian media had speculated if new steps might be announced. None of this happened. One may ask if India needs, at some stage, to prepare Indian publics for a possible settlement.

Open societies faces major dilemma in negotiating political disputes that carry huge historical baggage. How should a compromise path be found in confidential interstate discussion? And more important, how might it be 'delivered' to domestic publics to secure their concurrence, in the face of legacy standpoints (epitomised here in the 1962 unanimous resolution of the Indian Parliament) that preclude any compromise? If we look to the way other states have found a way out of comparable major bilateral dispute, probably countries have to reach a tipping point where past positions become redundant, and the prospect of benefit from resolving that dispute becomes overwhelming. It would seem that both India and China might not yet have reached a point where that might be accomplished. Therein lies the virtue for both India and China to construct broad-based cooperative relations and deepen understanding amongst the two peoples.

Prime Minister Modi's visit takes cooperation in economic and other sectors forward, and also shows small steps in a diversification of political exchanges. It does not seem to do enough in building deeper people-to-people understanding, but perhaps the small steps undertaken will also yield dividend.

Seen in long perspective, the quality of the bilateral engagement has widened and deepened, with new subjects covered in mutual conversation, in a way that has no parallel for New Delhi and Beijing. This is a major take away from this visit, going beyond the number of agreements signed or the volume of business deals struck. It coincides with the advent of strong, activist leaders in India and China that enjoy mass backing, and project themselves in their own countries and abroad with easy confidence. In addition, we have in Modi a prime minister who is personally committed to taking relations with foreign countries to a new level, guiding external policy without losing focus on the domestic agenda.

A premise underlying the above analysis is that China is a 'normal' country, subject to the same broad set of motivation that applies in international relations, regardless of the frame we select for this, be it *realpolitik*, liberalism or structuralism theory, or Chanakya's *mandala* thesis. We should apply a similar perspective to our assessment of Pakistan. This flies in the face of those that view these two states as malevolent opponents of India, who behind all gestures are singularly committed to their fundamental hostility. Underlying PM Modi's active foreign affairs agenda is innate optimism that foreign policy and its delivery mechanism, that is, diplomacy, can be better harnessed across the board and sharpened to better serve India's paramount domestic objective of national socio-economic development, and bring sustained prosperity to its people.

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