

FORUM



LEGACY OF A REGIME

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Kim Jong Un the Key
to Regional Stability?

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ABOUT THE COVER:

This cover design conveys the ominous intrigue of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

FORUM Illustration



U.S. PACIFIC COMMAND

Dear Readers,

Welcome to *Asia Pacific Defense FORUM*'s fourth-quarter edition for 2015, which focuses on flash points. This issue examines the regional dynamics in the Indo Asia Pacific and identifies areas susceptible to military escalation, expansion, and conflict.

For many years, the increased economic activity in the Indo Asia Pacific has helped lift millions of people from poverty and enabled nations to increase spending on infrastructure, technology and security. However, this increased prosperity has also increased competition and demand for natural resources, especially in the maritime environment. In response, nations have pursued strategies to secure their national interests. Some nations chose strategies that increased the overall stability in the Indo Asia Pacific, while others have become consumers of that security through aggressive and sometimes provocative actions.

The security environment that exists today in the Indo Asia Pacific is largely a result of the United States' continued presence, its strong network of alliances and partnerships, and the multilateral organizations dedicated to the security of the region. This security environment has enabled countries to address security challenges diplomatically and inhibit larger nations from imposing their will on smaller nations.

Continual pursuit of multilateral understanding and cooperation is key for developing flexible regional security solutions to address potential flash points and threats in the region. Territorial disputes, violent extremist organizations, weapons proliferation, drug and human trafficking, and North Korea's nuclear ambitions must be addressed cooperatively to mitigate existing and developing threats.

I hope you find this edition insightful and thought-provoking, and I welcome your comments. Please contact us at contact-apdf@apdforum.com with your perspectives.

All the best,

HARRY B. HARRIS, JR.
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APD FORUM

Flash Points

Volume 40, Issue 4, 2015

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Asia Pacific Defense FORUM is a professional military magazine published quarterly by the commander of the U.S. Pacific Command to provide an international forum for military personnel of the Asian and Pacific areas. The opinions expressed in this magazine do not necessarily represent the policies or points of view of this command or any other agency of the U.S. government. All articles are written by FORUM staff unless otherwise noted. The secretary of defense has determined that the publication of this magazine is necessary for conducting public business as required by the Department of Defense.

ISSN 2333-1593 (print)
ISSN 2333-1607 (online)



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SIDDHARTH SRIVASTAVA is an independent journalist, consultant and author based in New Delhi, India. He covers foreign and strategic affairs, security, politics, defense, energy and subjects related to South and Southeast Asia. In a career that has spanned more than 20 years, he has been a correspondent for *The Times*

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Featured on Page 48

TOM ABKE and **JIRI KOMINEK** write about biometrics and border security for this issue of *FORUM*. Abke is a freelance researcher and writer based in Bangalore, India. He has contributed to articles and research reports on topics ranging from mining to forced migration. Born and raised in Barbados, Abke has lived and worked in Algeria, Mali, Tunisia and Libya. Kominek is an independent journalist based in the Czech Republic. He covers economic, defense and security matters in Central and Eastern Europe, Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States, and Asia for a number of publications and organizations, including IHS Jane's, Business New Europe, The Jamestown Foundation and CNBC European Business. **Featured on Page 52**

Join the Discussion

We want to hear from YOU!

Asia Pacific Defense FORUM caters to military and security personnel in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region. A product of U.S. Pacific Command, the quarterly magazine provides high-quality, in-depth content on topics that impact security efforts across the region — from counterterrorism to international cooperation and natural disasters.

FORUM provokes thoughtful discussions and encourages a healthy exchange of ideas. Submit articles, pictures, topics for discussion or other comments to us ONLINE or at:

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FORUM

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INDIA

NEW ATTACK
SUBMARINE
DEBUTS

The Indian Navy undocked its first indigenously built Scorpene attack submarine at Mazagon Dock in Mumbai in April 2015. Indian Defense Minister Manohar Parrikar and Maharashtra State Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis cast off the diesel-electric-powered sub, which will undergo sea trials before being cleared to join the fleet. India is building six in partnership with France's Direction des Constructions Navales, with the first set to be handed over in 2016. *The Associated Press*



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

THE PHILIPPINES

Two-Crew Cockpit Rule Set

The Philippines in April 2015 became the latest country to require two airline crew members in the cockpit at all times after the co-pilot of a German plane deliberately crashed it in March 2015.

The Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines announced its decision after investigators concluded Germanwings co-pilot Andreas Lubitz intentionally smashed a flight into the

French Alps after locking his colleague out of the cockpit. All 150 people on board died.

"For aircraft certified for two pilots, a flight crew-member, preferably male but not necessarily a pilot, shall be required to be inside the flight deck should one of the pilots leave the flight deck for personal reasons," the regulation read.

The authority's director-general, William Hotchkiss, said all air operators

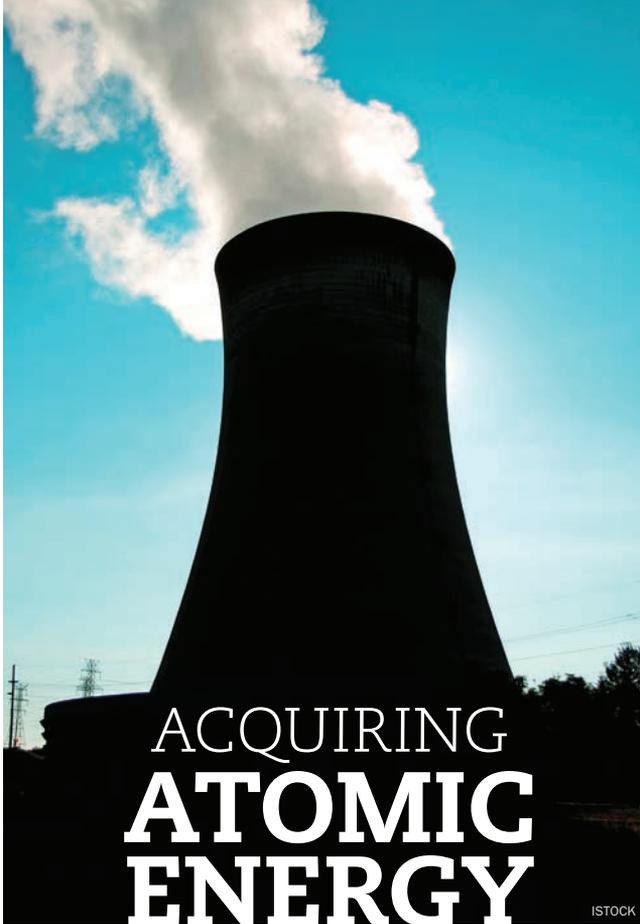
must revise their operations manuals to comply with the new regulation.

Many airlines worldwide have introduced a two-person rule since the March 24, 2015, tragedy.

French air crash investigators announced in April 2015 that information from the doomed plane's flight data recorder had confirmed their earlier findings that the co-pilot acted deliberately. *Agence France-Presse*



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



ACQUIRING ATOMIC ENERGY

ISTOCK

SRI LANKA

Sri Lanka and Pakistan signed six agreements including one on atomic energy in April 2015, the two countries' leaders said, as the strategically important island looks to build its first nuclear plant.

Details of the agreements were not immediately available, but they come after India agreed in February 2015 to build Sri Lanka's atomic energy infrastructure, including training of personnel.

Sri Lanka's new president, Maithripala Sirisena, swept to power in January 2015, ending a decade of rule by Mahinda Rajapaksa, and has moved to reduce China's influence in his country, which had irked India.

Pakistan and Sri Lanka have traditionally enjoyed strong ties, particularly over defense, with Islamabad providing military assistance during the war against Tamil Tiger guerrillas that ended in 2009.

Speaking at a news conference with Pakistan's Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, Sirisena said: "At critical moments in our post-independent histories we have stood in solidarity with each other," adding he was "profoundly grateful for the strong support in the fight against terrorism" by Pakistan.

"We discussed regional and international agreements and signed six agreements in the fields of disaster management, sports, shipping, atomic energy ... and in narcotics and academic cooperation," he added.

Pakistan has three operational nuclear plants generating a total of around 740 megawatts of power and has begun work on two more, including a 2,200-megawatt station to be built with Chinese technical assistance on the Arabian Sea coast at Paradise Beach, 40 kilometers west of Karachi. Agence France-Presse

CHINA

CRACKDOWN ON High-Level Corruption

Prosecutors charged former national security chief Zhou Yongkang with corruption and leaking of state secrets, setting the stage for him to become the highest-level politician to stand trial in China in more than three decades.

The Supreme People's Procuratorate announced the long-expected indictment on its website in March 2015 after a lengthy investigation that also scrutinized Zhou's former allies in government and the oil industry, but gave no new substantial details of the accusations against him.

A former member of the Communist Party's all-powerful Politburo Standing Committee, the dour-faced and once-feared Zhou had been under investigation since late 2013 and has been unavailable for comment since then.

"Announcing the charges against him means the beginning of the end for Zhou," said Dali Yang, a political scientist at the University of Chicago, reflecting the widely held notion that Zhou's conviction was virtually assured.



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Zhou, 72, is the highest-level official charged as part of President Xi Jinping's anti-corruption campaign that began in late 2012. He would be the highest politician to face court since the 1981 treason trial of Mao Zedong's wife and other members of the "Gang of Four" who persecuted political opponents during the 1966-76 Cultural Revolution.

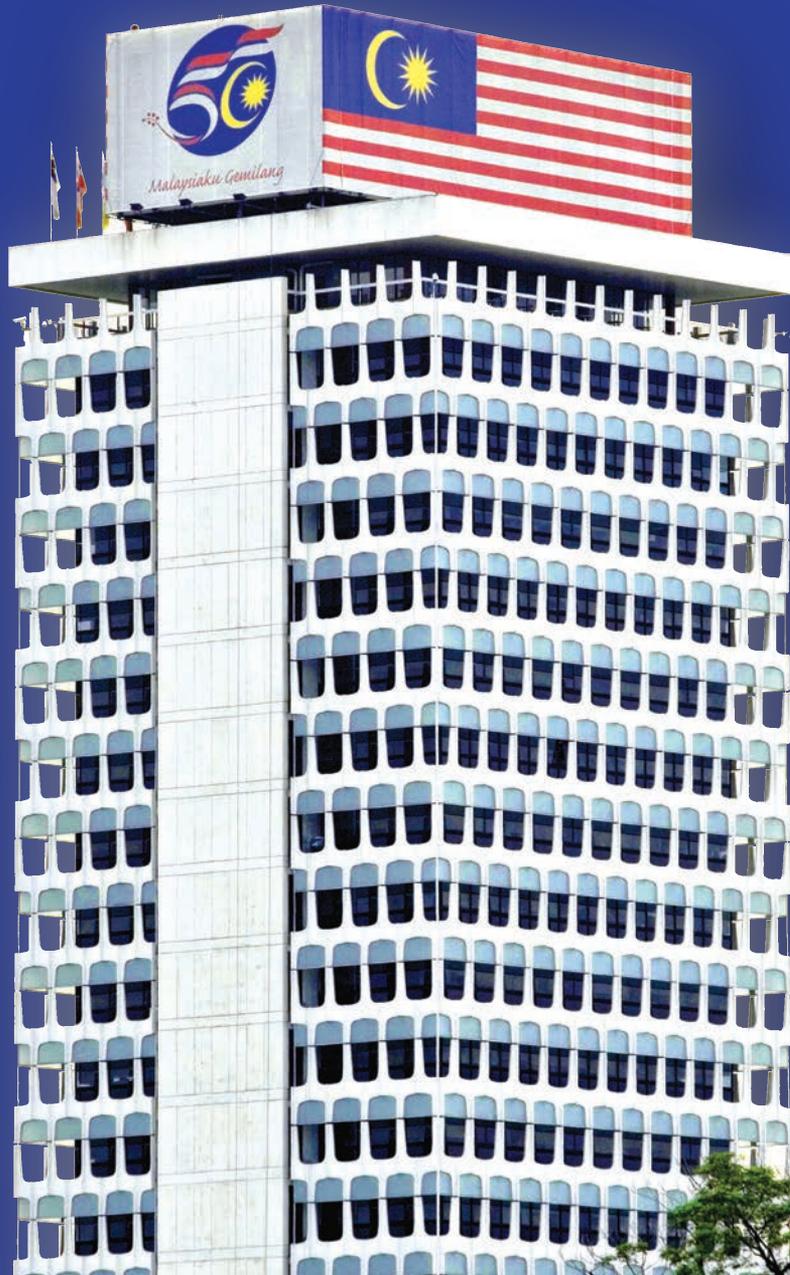
Although the case against Zhou has been touted by state media as showing the party's determination to fight corruption regardless of one's rank, it also has been widely perceived as part of factional politics in the ruling party's uppermost echelon and the removal of a potential rival for Xi.

"Corruption commonly exists among the party's senior officialdom, and so it looks like Zhou is another example of being the loser of a power struggle," said Zhang Lifan, a Beijing-based commentator and historian. The Associated Press

Malaysia

PASSES ANTI-TERROR LAW TO
CURB ISLAMIC MILITANTS

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Malaysia's
Parliament
building in
Kuala Lumpur

AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Malaysia revived detention without trial when lawmakers approved an anti-terror law in April 2015 that the government said was needed to fight Islamic militants.

The government said in late 2014 that new measures were needed after the arrest of 100 Malaysians suspected of supporting the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria militant group. More than 60 Malaysians were believed to have joined the war in Syria and Iraq, as well as another 10 who had been killed.

The Prevention of Terrorism Act was passed by Parliament's lower house in the wee hours of the morning after hours of debate, with 79 votes in favor and 60 against. The law allows authorities to detain suspects indefinitely without trial, with no court challenges permitted.

Critics slammed the legislation as a revival of a controversial security law that was repealed in 2012, and they warned the laws could severely curtail civil liberties.

The Prevention of Terrorism Act, which Parliament began considering in March 2015, stresses that people cannot be detained solely for their political beliefs or activities.

A second act, the Special Measures Against Terrorism in Foreign Countries, empowers authorities to suspend or revoke the travel documents of any citizens or foreigners believed to be engaging in or supporting terrorist acts.

Local media quoted Home Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi as saying in March 2015 that the two bills were aimed at curbing terrorism and preventing Malaysia from becoming a transit point for foreign terrorists.

Other parts of the legislation call for increased penalties for terror-related acts, including up to 30 years in prison for those found receiving training or instruction, traveling to or from Malaysia

to commit terrorism in a foreign country and the building of "conveyance" for use in terrorist acts.

Possession of items associated with terrorism could also lead to seven years in jail, and those found present at a terror training venue could be sent behind bars for 10 years.

Critics are worried that the new laws could curtail fundamental rights and be misused to unfairly punish individuals. They said the Prevention of Terrorism Act act was similar to the Internal Security Act (ISA), abolished in 2012.



A view inside Malaysia's Parliament House in Kuala Lumpur in July 2014 AFP/GETTY IMAGES

The ISA was enacted in 1960 after a communist insurgency to give the government power to prevent national security threats. Over the decades, however, political opponents and government critics occasionally have been held for months without trial. "I find that it is no different between the ISA and [the new bill]. Like old wine in a new bottle," said lawmaker Wong Chen.

Legal rights group Lawyers for Liberty said the reintroduction of "oppressive and outdated preventive laws" will not resolve the danger of militancy. The group warned that the laws allow for arbitrary arrest and detention by police and leave detainees at the mercy of the authorities.

targeting
TERRORIST
ties to WMD



*Why stopping
proliferation of
weapons of mass
destruction matters*

DR. ALFRED OEHLERS

W

hen traveling through Asia, I am frequently surprised by the low awareness of the risks posed by proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. A

conversation recently shared with a well-traveled and seemingly smart young scholar in a major air hub typified many experiences. While waiting for our flights, we talked about the most pressing security challenges facing Asian nations today. “Huh? Proliferation?” He furrowed his brows. “But that’s not our problem, right? That’s yours!” I must have mumbled a puzzled response. “Yeah, yeah,” he helpfully continued, “you people in the advanced world, the first world — you make these things and sell them all around the place. They fall into the wrong hands and get trafficked to bad people. All of your own making — nothing to do with us!”

Casting the problem in this manner as one unique to the advanced nations and hence of little concern to developing Asian nations is one of many reasons why proliferation ranks low in the public imagination and often remains a low priority in decision-making circles. There are others, however, who believe that since their nations are neither sources nor destinations for weapons of mass destruction (WMD), they will never be a target for proliferators or bad actors seeking to exploit vulnerabilities. So, why bother? Even if there is an inclination to address the issue, others point out that this problem is so technical, advanced and complex, it overwhelms their slender capacities. Lacking the necessary detection equipment, skills and training,

and often hamstrung by outdated and deficient legal codes, even sympathetic security operators often dejectedly shrug at the problem. Without a sense of high-level urgency and priority surrounding the issue and already grappling with a series of other significant threats with highly constrained capacities, what can be done?

Some of the constraints and challenges often alluded to are real and compromise the ability of well-intentioned actors committed to addressing proliferation. However, misinformation and disinformation undermine thoughtful discussion and fruitful paths forward. Much of this stems from a basic unfamiliarity with the topic. Patient engagement and dialogue may help build interest and understanding that over time may translate into stronger support. Such outreach, however, should include a conversation about how proliferation may insidiously undermine the safety, security and sovereignty of affected nations. Far too often, given its nature as a transnational threat, discussions of the negative impacts of proliferation are couched at the supranational level — how it undermines regional or international security, peace and stability, the safety of the world community, and so on. The issue needs to be brought closer to home for the nations concerned. At the end of the day, what is the bottom line? How will proliferation affect their economies, their people, their future development, if left unaddressed? What’s in it for them? Perhaps then, with this harder-hitting narrative about how proliferation may derail their significant development achievements, a more compelling case can be made for cooperative action.

Members of the chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear explosives unit of the Armed Forces of the Philippines participate in an anti-terrorist drill in Quezon City in March 2014.

REUTERS



Defining the phenomenon

Proliferation is a term used to describe the spread of WMD capabilities. This spread might be at a level between states, but may also occur between states and nonstate actors or even among groups of nonstate actors, all of which are broadly defined. Capabilities not only refer to the possession of a finished WMD device but also encompass technologies used to produce such a device, the required parts and materials, and the intellectual expertise guiding the conception and development of such weapons.

There are many types of WMD. As the name suggests, these are weapons capable of killing many and causing widespread and long-term destruction. Four categories are usually suggested: nuclear, chemical, biological and radiological (though the inclusion of this last is sometimes debatable, as explained below).

Nuclear WMD may be the most familiar, relying either on fission or fusion to release massive amounts of energy and destructive force. While we normally consider them strategic weapons, they can be miniaturized for tactical battlefield deployment (in artillery, for example) or as human-portable devices. The illicit spread of strategic weapons and components has always been a concern, but now an added worry is that the ever smaller tactical devices are easily concealed and transported, probably with wider appeal, especially to nonstate groups.

Chemical weapons cause death, temporary incapacitation or permanent harm through the toxic effects of some chemical agents. These include, for example, lung irritants (chlorine and phosgene), blood agents (hydrogen cyanide), blistering agents (mustard agent) and nerve agents (sarin, tabun, VX). With some exceptions, these chemical agents are easily available and accessed in nearly any country that has a sizable industrial sector. From a proliferation perspective, this category presents formidable challenges because the basic precursors for any kind of toxic cocktail are easily within reach of many bad actors.

Biological weapons kill and injure humans and animals and destroy plants and crops by exposing them to living, biological agents. Examples include pathogens (bacteria, viruses, and fungi such as anthrax, cholera, the plague and smallpox) and various toxins (poisonous chemicals produced by living systems — for example, ricin and botulinum toxin).

Finally, there are the radiological devices (or “dirty bombs”). These consist of radioactive materials attached to conventional explosives which, when detonated, spread radioactive contamination. They are improvised weapons, typically fashioned by terrorist groups, with limited real impact in terms of death and destruction. That’s why it is debatable if they should be included as a WMD. However, if the economic and psychological shock effects of such a weapon are considered, the havoc they may cause should not be underestimated.

Due to the appalling harm WMD may cause, an international effort is growing to stop the spread of such weapons and eliminate them altogether. International protocols governing nuclear, biological and chemical weapons have been established to stop the spread of such weapons and are rigorously enforced. To prevent subversion of these protocols and the illicit trade, counterproliferation agreements have also come into force, such as national export controls, the Proliferation Security Initiative, and at an international level, United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540.

Despite these international efforts, the risks of proliferation are increasing. Paradoxically, the forces of globalization responsible for bringing progress to vast swaths of the globe have had a darker side, making it easier for proliferators to pursue their trade. Increasing global interconnectedness, whether via enhanced transportation networks, communications or even an exchange of ideas, has made access to WMD materials and components easier. Several well-recognized black or gray markets for materials or expertise in WMD now exist, both in a physical sense (especially in poorly governed spaces) and in virtual domains. Rapid scientific and technological advances are generating newer and newer innovations, some with the potential for destructive effect. International organized crime has thrived in this globalized world, inserting itself into influential positions in the lucrative WMD supply chain. Even more worrisome, nonstate groups such as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria have been capturing territory that once had facilities for manufacturing and stockpiling WMD materials. The use or transference of such materials by these groups adds further concern to an already troublesome issue.



ADDRESSING PROLIFERATION WILL ALWAYS BE A CHALLENGE. *Proliferators are constantly adapting their game, seeking ways to elude detection and staying a step ahead of law enforcement.*

For the most part, law enforcement capabilities in detection, interdiction and prosecution have not kept pace with these broad developments. Many nations — including those in Asia — remain highly vulnerable to exploitation by proliferators. The nature of such exploitation varies, depending on the nation concerned and the needs of proliferators. Past experience suggests a broad menu is open. A country may be used as a base to obtain items for proliferation or as a location for the assembly of a partial or finished weapon. Or it may function as part of a wider chain of deceit designed to conceal the movement of illicit cargoes — a false destination to create fraudulent commercial paperwork, complicit or duped local brokers and businesses to create fronts, a transshipment or transit point, a convenient point to access banking or other financial intermediation services.

Left unchecked, proliferation over time will come to exercise several pernicious effects on afflicted nations. Proliferators, for example, often catalyze corruption in countries, accelerating a deterioration in the quality of governance and the rule of law. Commensurate with a falling confidence in the institutions of government and public office, legitimate commerce is undermined and licit trade in parts, materials, technology and ideas will most surely be threatened. Companies, ports and authorities in affected nations will suffer the consequences to their reputations. Trust and confidence — so necessary for trade to advance — will be weakened, probably inhibiting the prosperity of the nation. Nations that are part of

a chain in the construction of a WMD are also exposed to the risks of a WMD-related incident. While it may be argued such risks are remote, the costs of an “accident” involving WMD material, both short-term (involving loss of life and physical damage) and long-term (involving decontamination, reputational and other costs), should not be discounted. A significant setback may result in an otherwise positive trajectory of national progress.

Addressing proliferation will always be a challenge. Proliferators are constantly adapting their game, seeking ways to elude detection and staying a step ahead of law enforcement. There is a constant search for new, alternative suppliers, ever more elaborate front companies and networks, increasingly sophisticated document fraud, and more and more circuitous routes and transshipment points. With technological savvy, the proliferators will also be looking for new items to procure that are not on prohibited lists yet. Nations chasing these moving targets will need stronger whole-of-government cooperation and coordination. Stovepipes in authorities and ways of thinking about proliferation need to be overcome to bring together relevant players from across the entire proliferation supply chain to address the issue. Stronger networking at the regional and international levels can also play an important role, especially in information sharing or participation in joint projects such as the Container Security Initiative. Vigilance is key, and raising public awareness of proliferation and developing an active civic consciousness around the risks posed by proliferation will be crucial.



STOPPING WMD TRAFFIC

How to establish technical reachback

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Effectively targeting terrorism's ties to weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in the long term requires that governments address the causal

factors that foment and sustain violent extremism. In the short term, however, governments should strive to limit access to weapons and components that terrorist groups seek to employ to achieve their goals. This presents an enormous challenge to state governments, because technological innovations and the rapid spread of knowledge have placed WMD and improvised chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) weapons within the reach of terrorist groups intent on using them to create chaos and casualties. Awareness and cooperation among military, law enforcement, border patrol and technical officials — combined with appropriate legislation to prohibit

terrorist activity and regulate sensitive commodities — is needed to effectively and proactively combat WMD terrorism.

In addition to the increased spread of knowledge and information, rapidly evolving global economies and industries make CBRN-related, dual-use commodities and materials more plentiful and easily accessible. While the manufacture and large-scale production of WMD programs still require enormous investments in industrial and human capital development that largely limit acquisition to nation-states, today many critical materials, components and technologies are readily available and can be improvised on a small scale for relatively few resources. Terrorists routinely exploit the free flow of information and easily accessible goods to advance their tactics and weapons by incorporating the latest scientific and technological innovations into their plans.

Philippine Soldiers participate in an anti-terror drill at Camp Aquinaldo in Manila in March 2014.

AFP/GETTY IMAGES





***TERRORISTS ROUTINELY
EXPLOIT THE FREE
FLOW OF INFORMATION***

*and easily accessible goods
to advance their tactics and
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the latest scientific and
technological innovations
into their plans.*

Given the accessibility of the items and resource limitations, terrorist organizations are likely to pursue small-scale, improvised WMD or CBRN devices — ranging from repurposed toxic industrial chemicals, such as ammonia or chlorine, to weapons such as anthrax and radiological dispersal devices (also known as dirty bombs).

As sensitive goods, technology and expertise become available, certain commodities are more likely than others to be exploited for CBRN weapons. For instance, biological and chemical WMD-related materials, components and equipment are at the greatest risk of being used by terrorist organizations because they are widely available. Although nuclear weapons have not been used by terrorists and would be harder to develop, terrorist organizations have said they would like to use these weapons, and some have employed technical experts and taken steps to research the weapons. No terrorist

organization has used a radiological weapon, but attempts have been made. Moreover, orphaned or stolen radioactive isotopes remain an enduring issue of concern. According to the 2014 report by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Illicit Trafficking Database, the 125 participating countries reported more than 2,477 incidents of nuclear materials out of regulatory control between 1993 and 2013. Of these, 424 were incidents of criminal possession including attempts to move, purchase or sell radioactive sources. During the same time period, an additional 664 incidents of lost or stolen radioactive material were reported, according to the database. The materials reported range from the less dangerous to extremely hazardous isotopes such as caesium-137 and americium-241.

Fighting the CBRN threat requires a familiarity with components and technology that enforcement officials do





not normally possess. However, it is essential that law enforcement maintain a close working relationship with subject matter experts and technical agencies that can provide training on the effects, impact and technical specifications of CBRN-related commodities. Effectively preventing WMD terrorism requires familiarizing enforcement officials not only with the CBRN commodities, but also with the national experts and agencies that can help identify, secure, transport, manage, respond and investigate WMD incidents. Furthermore, technical experts are better positioned to request international assistance from the IAEA and other organizations should additional resources be required. The technical reachback these agencies provide front-line enforcement officials is invaluable and should be an inextricable element of national efforts

to prevent proliferation and target WMD terrorism.

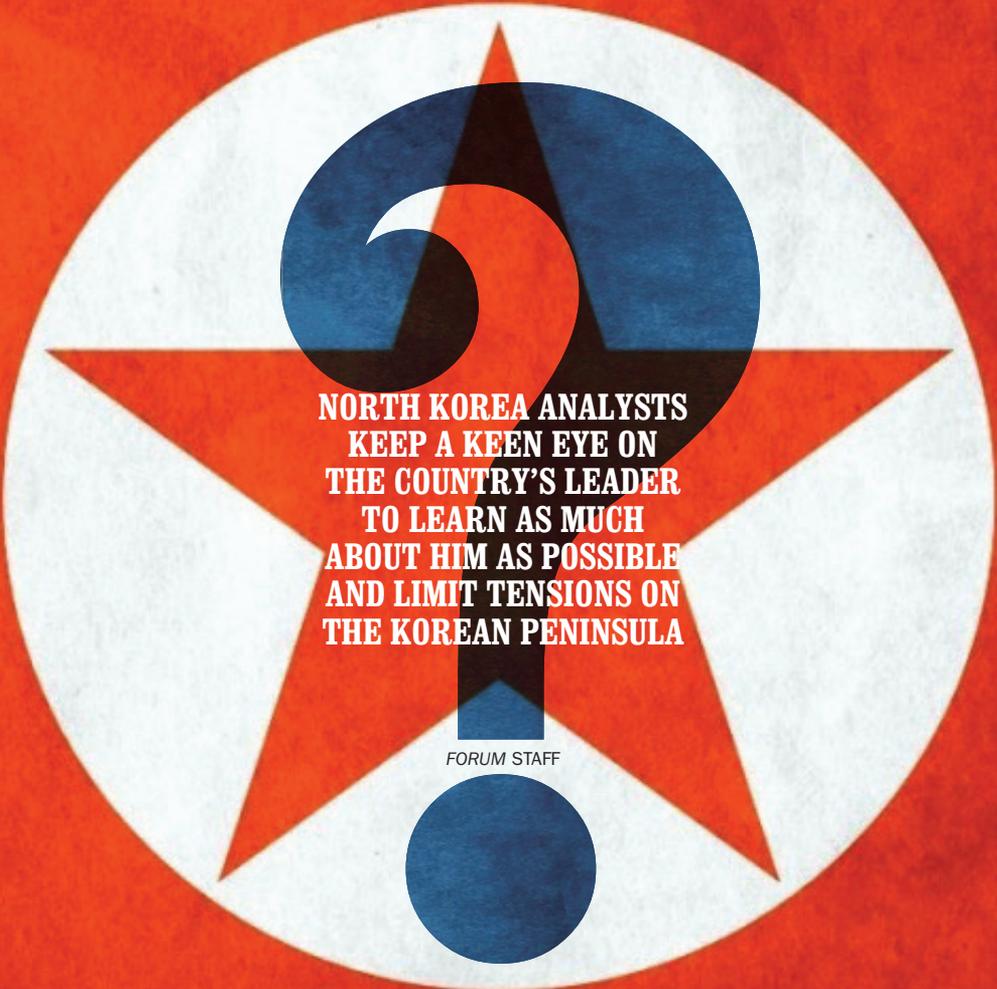
Terrorist pursuit of WMD is a real and persistent threat to international security. Cooperation among military, customs, law enforcement and technical agencies to better understand the WMD terrorism threat and CBRN commodities is essential to countering terrorist attempts to acquire, develop and use these weapons. Establishing a technical reachback partnership between enforcement and technical organizations early as an integral part of training can streamline communication during critical, time-sensitive CBRN incidents. This interagency approach to training, combined with robust anti-terror legislation and regulations for CBRN-related commodities, builds national capacity to target and prevent improvised WMD terrorism acts. □

Members of the chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear explosives unit of the Armed Forces of the Philippines assist a mock victim during an anti-terrorist drill in Quezon City in March 2014.

REUTERS



**THE
KIM JONG UN
EFFECT**



**NORTH KOREA ANALYSTS
KEEP A KEEN EYE ON
THE COUNTRY'S LEADER
TO LEARN AS MUCH
ABOUT HIM AS POSSIBLE
AND LIMIT TENSIONS ON
THE KOREAN PENINSULA**

FORUM STAFF

Kim Jong Un emerged as a major question mark on the world stage in December 2011, when he inherited the North Korean dictatorship upon the death of his father, Kim Jong Il.

Few people had confirmation that Kim Jong Un even existed until shortly before he assumed power. His official debut came in 2010 when Kim was introduced during a military parade as a four-star general and vice chairman of the nation's Central Military Commission. No one knew his age, though North Korea celebrates his birthday on January 8. Sources differ on whether he was born in 1982, 1983 or 1984.

His childhood and adolescence were so sheltered that they bordered on imprisonment, some say. While studying abroad in Switzerland, he assumed the pseudonym "Un Pak" and claimed to be the son of a diplomat working at the local North Korean Embassy.

"He is officially a state secret," Andrei Lankov, a historian on North Korea and professor at Kookmin University in Seoul, South Korea, told *FORUM*.

Much of Kim's personal life as an adult remains shrouded in secrecy.

His wife, Ri Sol Ju, hadn't made a public appearance for four months until she surfaced alongside her husband in April 2015 at a birthday celebration for the late Kim Il Sung, North Korea's founding leader and Kim Jong Un's grandfather.

It was former basketball player Dennis Rodman, an American, who announced the name of Kim Jong Un's daughter to the world, saying in September 2013 that he had held baby Ju Ae during a visit to

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, third from left, salutes as he and his wife, Ri Sol Ju, walk past an honor guard upon arriving for the 2014 Combat Flight Contest among commanding officers of the Korean People's Air Force in this undated photo released in May 2014.

REUTERS



Pyongyang. Rodman called Kim “a good dad.”

Onlookers soak up such blips of information and glimpses into the Kim dynasty in hopes of learning more about the man who critics deemed most unlikely among his siblings to rule the country. Nearly four years into his dictatorship, the world doesn't seem any closer to answering the question of who Kim Jong Un is.

“He is unpredictable. He will remain unpredictable,” said Lankov, author of the book, *The Real North Korea: Life and Politics in the Failed Stalinist Utopia*. “He is a rather young, emotional and impassionate person who makes decisions that look odd.”

Still, that hasn't stopped scholars or news organizations from analyzing Kim's latest actions in an

attempt to assess his current mindset and predict his next move.

An unnamed senior U.S. official told CNN's Security Clearance Internet blog that while Kim Jong Il was “colder and more calculated” in his actions, he remained more aware of ways to de-escalate tensions than his son.

“Nobody knows what he [Kim Jong Un] has planned, what he is thinking or contemplating doing or why the North Koreans are tripling down on their rhetoric,” the unnamed source told CNN in March 2013.

John Delury, an expert on North Korea at Seoul's Yonsei University, said Kim has surpassed expectations in some ways.

“He came in as the youngest head of state probably on the planet, in a culture that values age and seniority and in a political system with lots of powerful people well over 60 years old,” Delury told *Stars and Stripes* newspaper in December 2014. “It tells us a bit about him and a bit about their system — even if you're young, whoever is in that function of hereditary ruler — lots of people are going to make it work.”

Kim's father found himself in a similar position when he began climbing the leadership ladder in the 1980s, Lankov said. Both men made mistakes as they learned how to lead, but they quickly made adjustments, he said. “Humans are smart. We are capable of learning by our mistakes. We are learning devices,” Lankov told *FORUM*.

THE KIM LEGACY

North Korean demands nothing less than total and conspicuous adoration toward the state and, in particular, the Kim family. Murals, statues, posters and museums proclaim the legend of the Kim men who have led the country — probably none more so than Kim Il Sung.

Born April 15, 1912, he became president of North Korea in 1972 and held the position until his death on July 8, 1994. He also had served as a party leader and premier of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea since 1948.

Among Kim Il Sung's many titles: Father of the People, Great Leader and Eternal President. North Koreans have even referred to him as “Dear Leader, who is a perfect incarnation of the appearance that a leader should have.”

Because of the country's unwavering affection for Kim Il Sung, Kim Jong Un has chosen to make as many comparisons to his grandfather as he can, Lankov said, right down to dressing like him.

North Koreans typically blame Kim Jong Il for the country's famine during the 1990s, so Kim Jong Un does his best to distance himself from his father because of that lasting bitterness, Lankov said.

“There are quite a few political interpretations of Kim Jong Un's resemblance to Kim Il Sung. One is that



Kim is imitating his grandfather intentionally in the hopes that his grandfather's legacy will help him increase his own power base," according to an analysis on Kim Jong Un's leadership published in December 2014 in *The Hankyoreh*, a Seoul-based newspaper.

The report included an assessment on Kim's leadership from the South Korean Unification Ministry: "Even while Kim Jong Un plays upon the nostalgia for the past by mimicking the gestures and appearance of his grandfather, Kim Il Sung, he is also developing his own unique leadership style."

FRIENDS, FOES AND WHO KNOWS

Lankov sees more similarities between Kim Jong Un and his grandfather than mere nostalgic gestures and physical resemblances, particularly when it comes to North Korea's current relations with China and Russia.

China has been a longstanding ally of North Korea, but recent provocations by Kim, particularly over the North's nuclear program, at times have caused Beijing to distance itself from Pyongyang.

Headlines about boiling tensions between the two countries were published regularly throughout 2014. On the heels of such speculation came the announcement that North Korea had designated 2015 a "year of friendship" with Russia as Pyongyang looks to Moscow for economic cooperation to lessen its dependency on Beijing, the *Financial Times* reported in April 2015.

"The political relationship between our countries is developing more productively than ever before," said Im Cheon Il, a North Korean diplomat based in eastern Russia, according to the *Financial Times*.

In October 2014, Russia agreed to repair 3,500 kilometers of rail tracks in North Korea in exchange for access to coal and other minerals.

Whether the perceived tensions between China and North Korea are a catalyst for the relationship between Pyongyang and Moscow remains debatable. Furthermore, investments between North Korea and China remain intertwined enough that economic relations will ensure diplomatic relations remain steady, though at times they may appear strained because of Kim's actions.

"Beijing and Pyongyang are too important to each other to end their relationship anytime soon," with China accounting for 57 percent of North Korea's imports and 42 percent of its exports, according to a

March 2015 report in *The Diplomat* magazine titled, "No, China Isn't Abandoning North Korea." "While North Korea relies heavily on Chinese trade and energy, it is also a central part of Beijing's regional strategic goals. Therefore, Beijing's position regarding Pyongyang's nuclear program should not be taken as a reflection of its attitude toward Pyongyang in general."

Lankov shared a similar opinion, though he doesn't see the relationship between North Korea and Russia working out the way Kim may intend.

"He is probably going to be disappointed soon," Lankov told *FORUM*. "He hopes to get aid, which will not require any obligation from his side."

Lankov said Russia will invest in North Korea as long as it receives a return on that investment. Once that relationship sours — and Lankov predicts it will — North Korea will eventually make its way back into China's good graces.

"China has had enough of North Korea in most regards," Lankov said. "At the end of the day, China still needs a reliable buffer state."

SOCIAL IMPROVEMENTS AND STATUS QUO

Lankov stressed that North Korea is not an impoverished nation as once widely believed. Current reforms have pushed the country into a recovery, and signs of economic improvement have sprouted.

"Many of the most important country revolutions started when the country was just doing all right," Lankov said. "North Korea is poor but not desperate. Things are getting better, but that does not mean stability."

While internal structural reforms take place, don't expect any policy changes, foreign or domestic. "He's not going to compromise on anything," Lankov said of Kim.

On reunification, Lankov said China would likely accept a unified Korea but believes Beijing prefers a peninsula that remains divided but stable, particularly given his assessment that war is unlikely to occur.

"South Korea would not start a war. They are likely to win, but at a huge cost," Lankov said, explaining that the South would likely sacrifice Seoul in a fight only to inherit a large, very poor and damaged area across the border. "It's not going to be a cheap and easy victory for South Korea."

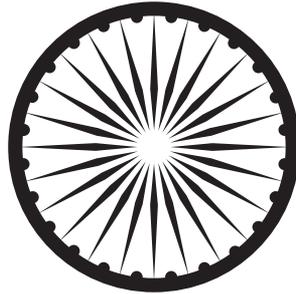
Quite frankly, Lankov said, North Korea is unlikely to start a war, because they know that for them, it would be a losing battle. □



North Koreans wave flags and walk by a statue of former leader Kim Jong Il during a military parade past Kim Il Sung Square in July 2013.

AFP/GETTY IMAGES





POLITICAL ACTION

India renames its “Look East” policy to “Act East” and pushes a more action-driven agenda with regional partners

FORUM STAFF

One of India’s longest-standing external policies has undergone a rebranding, and country leaders have been eager to get the word out — especially to their eastern neighbors.

“A new era of economic development, industrialization and trade has begun in India,” Prime Minister Narendra Modi said during an Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)-India Summit in November 2014, just six months after taking office in a historic landslide victory.

Ushering in that new era means changing the name of the nearly 25-year-old “Look East” policy to “Act East.” The rebranding signals to the region, and the world, that new strategic engagements will follow.

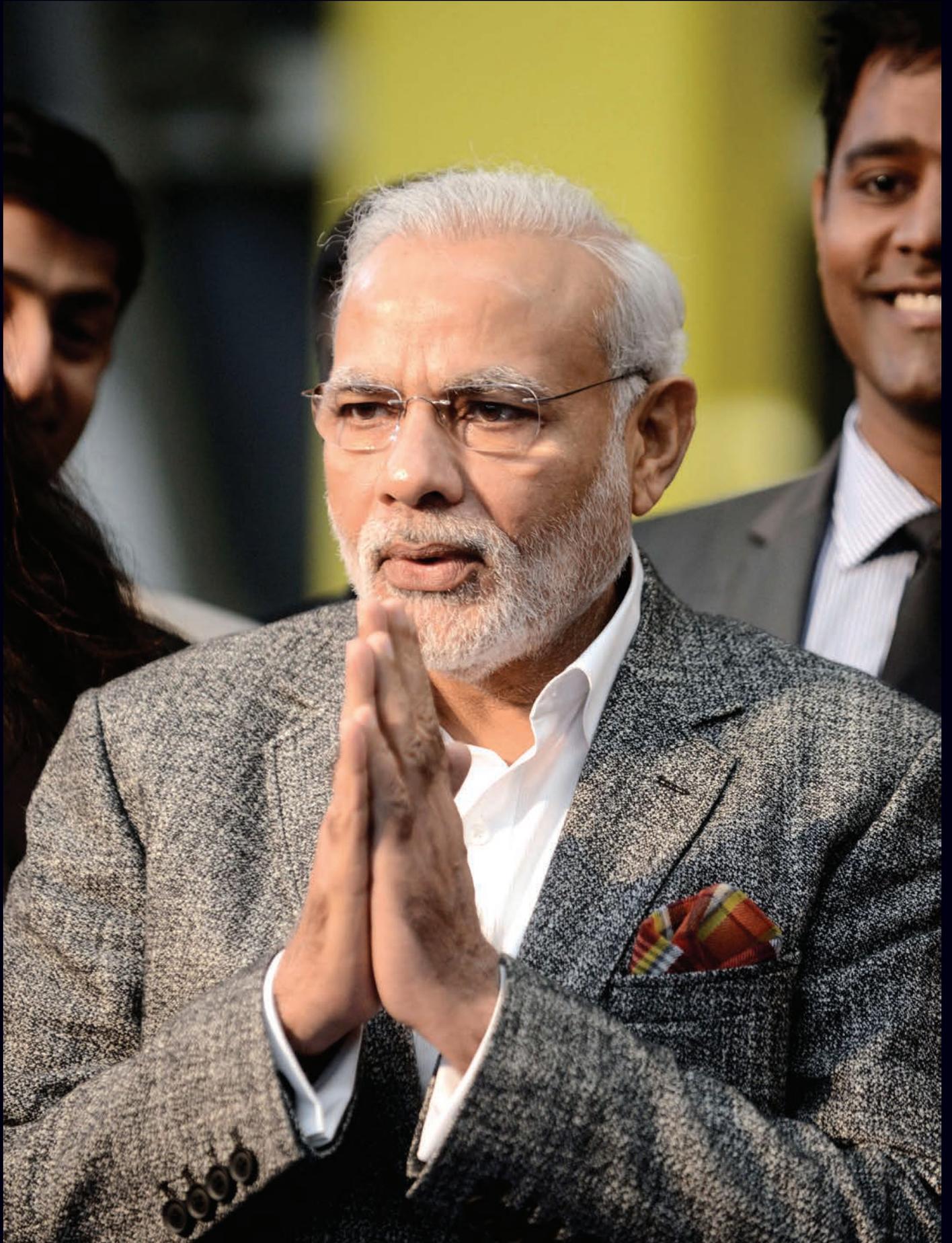
In recent travels, Modi has made deliberate comments to emphasize the more action-oriented policy when it comes to dealing with ASEAN and even countries to the northeast. His government has wasted little time setting a course to prove it will follow through with its actions.

Modi visited Japan on his first trip outside South Asia as prime minister; he welcomed Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott as the first foreign leader to visit New Delhi; and Modi’s administration has had diplomatic exchanges with Vietnam.

“Our vision and commitment is toward the country’s progress, its place in the world and the happiness of its people,” Modi told the *Hindustan Times* newspaper in April 2015. “We have taken a series of measures which have restored faith in our capacity to deliver with transparency, efficiency and speed.”

Analysts call Modi’s Act East policy robust and say that in addition to boosting economic ties, India hopes to leverage itself as a balancing force against Chinese influence in the region.

“In recent years, India has signaled a willingness to play a greater strategic role in the region, deepening links with such partners as Japan, Vietnam and Australia,” according to a December 2014 report by the Sydney-based Lowy Institute for



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi AFP/GETTY IMAGES



FROM LEFT:
Singaporean President Tony Tan Keng Yam inspects the honor guard during a ceremonial reception at the Presidential Palace in New Delhi in February 2015. India's leaders say Singapore is one of its strongest partners.

AFP/GETTY IMAGES

India's Ministry of Finance building sits against the setting sun in New Delhi in April 2015. As part of India's Act East policy, the country looks to boost economic ties.

REUTERS

Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung, second right, and his wife, Tran Thanh Kiem, center, offer prayers during their visit to a Buddhist temple in India in October 2014. Vietnam has asked for India's help in training intelligence officers.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

International Policy titled “India’s New Asia-Pacific Strategy: Modi Acts East.” “The policy has been driven in part by India’s strategy of external balancing against China, but has also been motivated by India’s desire for a greater global role and its rise as a trading nation.”

When it comes to China, India looks to trading information with Japan as a means to monitor interests and resources within the Indian Ocean and South China Sea — and generally to maintain situational awareness about China’s expanding trans-border military capabilities, *The Times of India* newspaper reported in March 2015.

Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop has said her country shares similar views as India when it comes to the South China Sea and China’s ambitious claims. She suggested that Australia and India work together on pushing a code of conduct, the Indo-Asian News Service reported in April 2015.

Chinese officials have heard the chatter and noticed the budding partnerships. Responding to growing concerns over assertiveness in the South China Sea, one official denied any “insecurity” or restrictions on freedom to navigate in the region, according to a March 2015 report in *The Economic Times* newspaper.

“The problem does not exist,” Chinese

Ambassador Le Yucheng said of navigation and security issues in the South China Sea. “China, more than anyone else, is interested in ensuring security of the waters.”

DEEPENING DEFENSE TIES

P. V. Narasimha Rao, India’s prime minister from 1991 to 1996, initiated the Look East policy as the country faced a worsening domestic economic and political situation. Global tensions prior to the 1990-1991 Gulf War created an economic recession in India, later serving as the catalyst for the country to seek economic opportunities elsewhere in the Indo Asia Pacific, according to the Lowy Institute’s analysis.

Now, more than two decades later, India’s Look East/Act East policy encompasses significant engagement with strategic partners on economics and matters of defense.

Onlookers — and India’s leaders, as well — say Singapore has a key role to play as India repositions itself to increase its regional involvement.

In March 2015, Modi attended the funeral of Singapore’s founding father, Lee Kuan Yew. Modi called Lee an “inspiration” and said that the late leader believed in India’s potential “more than any of us did,” according to *The Economic Times*.

“India’s relations with Singapore is one of our strongest relationships in the world, and Singapore is a key pillar to India’s Act East Policy,” Modi said.

In September 2014, the two countries announced a change in their bilateral military ties from joint exercises to cooperation on defense technology, according to *The Times of India* newspaper. Singapore’s Armed Forces have a limited amount of land and airspace for training. For the past several years, Singaporean forces have trained at India’s military facilities.

Singapore isn’t the only eastern neighbor benefiting from new defense ties. Thailand has also bolstered its cooperation with India on maritime security and counterterrorism.

“Both countries want to see the sea lanes remain free and safe, and issues like piracy [and] human trafficking are a concern to both sides,” India’s National Security Advisor Ajit Doval said, according to an April 2015 report by the Press Trust of India news agency.

Also in April 2015, Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung met with Doval to ask for India’s assistance in helping Vietnam boost its defense and military technology, particularly by training intelligence personnel for the Air Force and Navy.

SENDING A CLEAR MESSAGE

Analysts at the Lowy Institute say that India has previously not excelled at articulating a clear vision for its relationships with East and Southeast Asia partners. The current government has a chance to make bigger strides in a shorter amount of time, where progress may have lagged during the past two decades.

“To establish the seriousness of



**“OUR
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OF ITS
PEOPLE.”**

Indian Prime Minister

Narendra Modi

India’s commitment to the region, the Modi government must demonstrate that Act East is more than just a rebranding of an existing policy,” the Lowy Institute concluded. “In order to preclude further inertia, India will need to move quickly to outline a clear agenda for deepening economic, institutional and defense links with the region that go beyond what has been pledged by previous governments. If the Modi government is able to achieve this, then India has the potential to assume a role as a consequential strategic player across the wider Indo Pacific.” □



EMERGING POWER BLOC



The Association of Southeast Asian Nations materializes as a viable community and force — economically and otherwise

SIDDHARTH SRIVASTAVA



With a combined population of more than 600 million people, the member countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) have a larger population than the European Union or North America. Founded in 1967, ASEAN today counts Brunei, Burma, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam as member states. Their economies span vastly different stages of development, but all share immense growth and income generation potential.

China remains the unquestioned giant of emerging markets in Asia; India continues to prosper under the business-friendly government headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Both behemoths keep close eyes on ASEAN.

Investors also do not want to miss tapping the potential of the 10 dynamic markets that make up ASEAN. Companies and governments realize that an overbearing dependence on the already overheated Chinese market can be a risky proposition in the future.

India is a vibrant democracy. However, managing the pulls and pressures of multiple, electorally

significant pressure groups and regional parties can sometimes be a nightmare for any government. This often dilutes focus on governance and sound policy.

In its annual “Asian Development Outlook for 2015,” published in March of the same year, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) said China’s economy is slowing, but Asia will remain a growth hot spot as India and Southeast Asia economies roar ahead. Emerging Asian economies will grow 6.3 percent in 2015 and 2016, unchanged from 2014, the ADB said. According to a May 2014 report by the consulting firm McKinsey & Company, if ASEAN were a single country, it would already be the seventh-largest economy in the world, with a combined gross domestic product (GDP) of U.S. \$2.4 trillion in 2013. It is projected to rank as the fourth-largest economy by 2050. The competition within is immense. While Indonesia is the largest economy of Southeast Asia, there is no guarantee it will remain so.

DEMOGRAPHIC DIVIDENDS

ASEAN is reaping a demographic dividend due to its youthful population, according to McKinsey. “Perhaps, most important, almost 60 percent of total growth since 1990 has come from



The Association of Southeast Asian Nations Secretary-General Le Luong Minh, left, and Malaysian Foreign Minister Anifah Aman speak before a meeting in Putrajaya in January 2015. Malaysia became chair of ASEAN in 2015.

AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Cambodian men run in front of a construction site in Phnom Penh in March 2015. The Asian Development Bank predicts the Cambodian economy will grow by 7.3 percent in 2015.

AFP/GETTY IMAGES

productivity gains, as sectors such as manufacturing, retail, telecommunications and transportation grow more efficient.” However, despite a long and fruitful journey forward over the decades, there are challenges ASEAN needs to address.

These include ironing out processes of economic integration; mitigating suspicions linked to nontariff protectionist measures; expanding horizons to cooperate with other emerging economies such as India; and dealing with apprehensions about Beijing’s widening contour of influence and territorial assertiveness across the region, especially resource-rich South China Sea.

“ASEAN does not need to introduce new efforts in 2015, but actually focus on implementing pending measures under ASEAN Economic Community, or AEC, Blueprint,” said Daniel Wu, an international trade analyst and fellow with the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) Pacific Forum, said in an interview with

FORUM. “The ASEAN chair, Malaysia, is taking certain steps to advance AEC agenda in line with recent global trade developments. Malaysia is reportedly attempting to reach consensus among ASEAN member states to commence negotiations toward an ASEAN Trade Facilitation Agreement. Malaysia is also a strong supporter of ASEAN Business Travel Card, although discussions are underway.”

MALAYSIA'S ROLE

The way the ASEAN bloc will shape up in the offing will depend upon the diplomatic efforts of Malaysia. Tasked with chairmanship of ASEAN in 2015, Kuala Lumpur has stated that realizing the AEC by the end of the year will be its primary aim.

The goal is to stimulate the idea of an ASEAN identity to address rampant, excessive and often surreptitious nontariff measures that hamper regional trade and skew costs. In his recent analysis for the East Asia Forum, Wu of CSIS stated, “It



“The prime minister has publicly declared that Malaysia will not shy away from addressing the sensitive issue of protectionism among ASEAN member states and will seek to defuse the rising rhetoric of nationalism. Malaysia will seek to cogently articulate the necessity for ASEAN members to embrace regional perspective, to look beyond narrow parochial concerns.”

In further comments to *FORUM*, Wu added, “Malaysia has taken up the responsibility to meet [the] target of implementing at least 95 percent of the measures stipulated under the AEC Blueprint in 2015. The fact is that, as of August 2014, ASEAN only collectively implemented 82.1 percent of the 229 AEC key deliverables targeted for completion by 2013, [which] indicates that this already is an ambitious target. If Malaysia can lead ASEAN



“ASEAN does not need to introduce new efforts in 2015, but actually focus on implementing pending measures under ASEAN Economic Community, or AEC, Blueprint.” - *Daniel Wu*

would be unrealistic to expect Malaysia to overcome several years’ worth of delays and disagreements over noncompliance in the AEC implementation process. The minister of international trade and industry’s clear perspective on the leadership ASEAN needs provides a basis for optimism that ASEAN can focus its will and resources to implement the ‘last mile’ integration measures the region needs in 2015.”

In remarks to journalists at the 25th ASEAN Summit in Burma in November 2014, Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak spoke about plugging the information gap to spell out clearly tangible benefits of liberalization under AEC. He said this builds approval of differing populations, thus translating into a broad political consensus for engagement. “The people must understand what actually ASEAN is and what ASEAN is doing,” Razak said.

Mustapa Mohamed, Malaysia’s minister of international trade and industry, spelled out his government’s goals in a statement issued in mid-January 2015.

to achieve the 95 percent threshold, ASEAN will, by all accounts, achieve a seamless AEC. Malaysia’s leadership is needed to encourage the ASEAN member states to push through on their domestic implementation.”

THE CHALLENGE OF CHINA

There is no consensus or unity among ASEAN members about dealing with China, including Beijing’s territorial challenges in the South China Sea that affect ASEAN members Indonesia, Cambodia, Brunei, Philippines, Vietnam and Malaysia. Malaysia, for example, has proposed that ASEAN countries form a joint peacekeeping force. The idea is widely perceived as a nonstarter due to lack of trust among ASEAN members over security matters. China, on the other hand, believes that the issue of its territorial aggression in the region has been blown out of proportion, helped in no small measure by the English language media with a pronounced pro-Western bias. Beijing has long insisted that geographical disputes need to be resolved between nations that are impacted rather than by multilateral bodies.

“We support the building of the ASEAN community, but ASEAN is not a party concerned to relevant disputes over the South China Sea,” Hong Lei, a Foreign Ministry spokesman, told reporters during a regular March 2015 news briefing. Lei was responding to critical comments by ASEAN Secretary-General Le Luong Minh on the South China Sea dispute. China also rejected a proposal from ASEAN countries to discuss implementation of the 2002 Declaration on Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea and further establish a formal code of conduct at a defense ministers’ meeting slated for November 2015 in Malaysia.

Beijing’s dismissal again points to deeper strategic suspicions that ASEAN has been co-opted by America, other Western powers and Japan to contain China’s growing regional influence, both territorial and economic.

China is known to speak in dual tones when asserting its hegemony over territorial matters. The leadership maintains a mundane adherence to diplomatic protocols and nuances. At the same time China does not hesitate to deploy its massive military arsenal, which can only be matched by that of the United States, to send across a belligerent message should the need arise.

“The Chinese perception of ulterior motives for the involvement of the U.S., and the depth of China’s angst, cornering and publicly embarrassing China on South China Sea issues is politically risky and could have dire consequences for the region,” according to Mark J. Valencia, an adjunct senior scholar at the National Institute for South China Sea Studies in Haikou, China. “If lessons are not learned on all sides, refusal to discuss may well be a harbinger of worse to come.”

According to Wu, however, China has generally been supportive of ASEAN’s attempts toward economic integration, trade and greater investment, despite geopolitical differences it may have with the goals of the organization.

“ASEAN has generally preferred the balance of powers with respect to its engagement with its dialogue partners. However, China has been supportive of ASEAN’s integration efforts. Most recently, China and ASEAN have commenced negotiations to “upgrade” the ASEAN-China Free Trade Area to examine opportunities for further tariff liberalization and updates of rules of origin for more flexibility.”

During the 26th ASEAN summit on land acquisition in the South China Sea and Code of Conduct, ASEAN members also “reaffirmed the importance of maintaining peace, stability, security and freedom of navigation in and overflight over the South China Sea,” according to an April 29, 2015, account in *The Diplomat* magazine.

Hong said China is “gravely concerned” about the statement and views it an example of “a few countries’ taking hostage the entire ASEAN and China-ASEAN relations for their own selfish gains,” *The Diplomat* reported.

EXPANDING INDIAN COOPERATION

India, the second most populous country in the world, has been seeking enhanced cooperation with ASEAN. Areas include maritime security, freedom of navigation, anti-piracy, disaster relief, counterterrorism and peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with international law. Prime Minister Modi’s visit in late March 2015 to attend the funeral of Singapore’s founding father Lee Kuan Yew underlined the importance of India’s Act East Policy.

Always concerned about China’s growing influence in South Asia, whether military or economic, whether in Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka or Burma, New Delhi has kept a close watch on the territorial dispute in the South China Sea. India has been supporting freedom of navigation in the South China Sea, citing principles of international law, including the 1982 U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea. The South China Sea dispute formed part of the India-U.S. joint statement issued during U.S. President Barack Obama’s visit to New Delhi in January 2015. India’s flagship state-owned explorer Oil & Natural Gas Corp. (ONGC) has operations in oil blocks in South China Sea that Beijing has been unhappy about.





An Indonesian man walks past a display showing share prices at the stock exchange building in Jakarta in March 2015. AFP/IMAGES

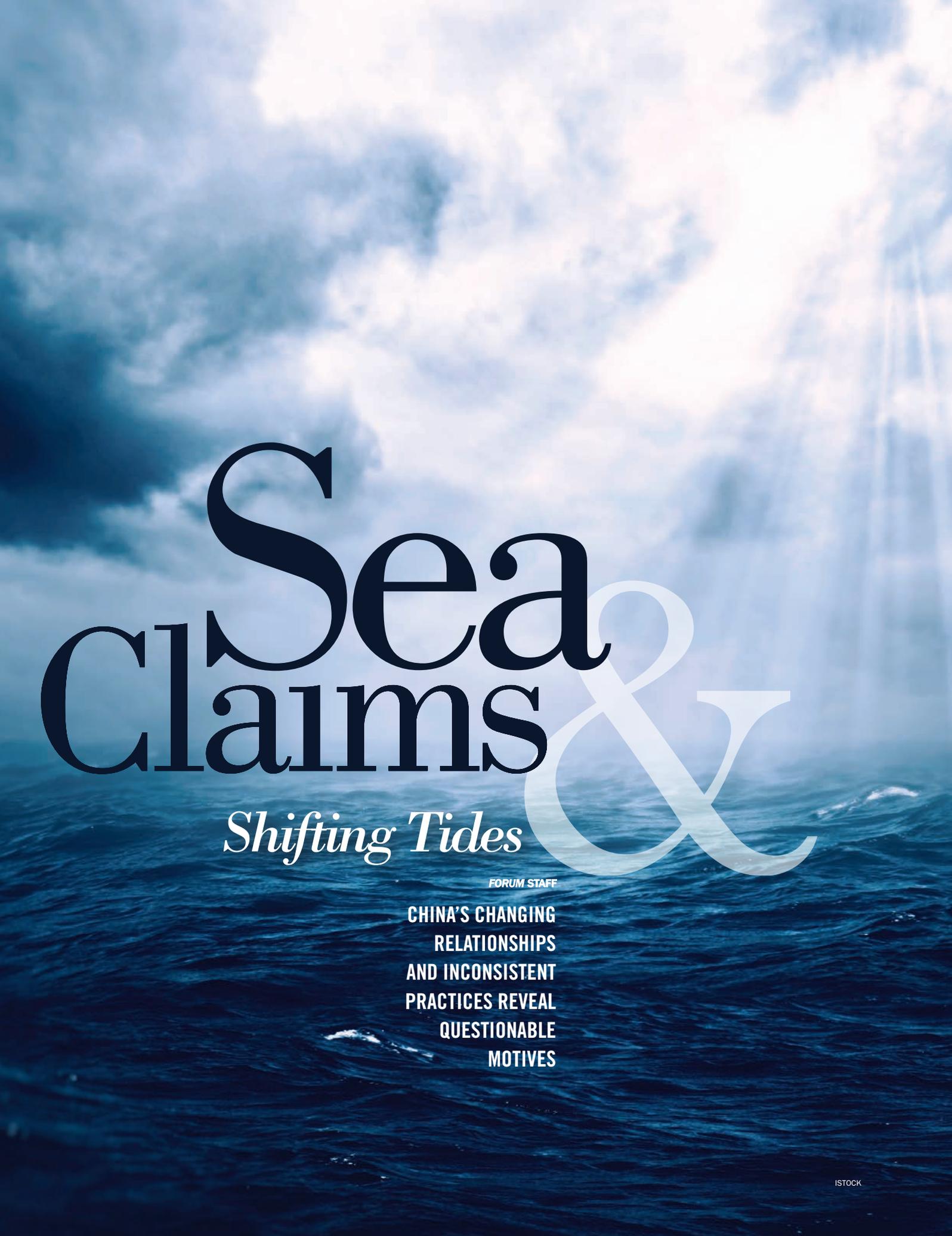
Vietnam has been pushing for greater exploration efforts by Indian firms. New Delhi has chosen to back ONGC's forays in the South China Sea because Indian hydrocarbon companies are well-versed with the strategies employed by Chinese entities to win rights to energy assets across the world, whether in Africa, Burma or South America. State-backed Chinese energy companies are known to deploy multiple tactics, including sweetened deals and financial and political muscle to get their way.

Trade is another focus of engagement between ASEAN and India. The two regions represent an aggregate population of 1.8 billion of mostly young and highly aspirational individuals. The ASEAN-India Free Trade in Goods Agreement signed in 2009 has boosted commerce, Anil Wadhwa of India's Foreign Ministry said in March 2015 at the India-ASEAN Delhi Dialogue VII. He said trade figures between the two economies went from U.S. \$44 billion in 2009-10 to more than U.S. \$74 billion in 2013-14. "This year [2014-15], the figure is expected to rise to U.S. \$100 billion," Wadhwa added. "Our aspiration is to

take ASEAN-India trade to U.S. \$200 billion by 2022, and the RCEP [regional comprehensive economic partnership] negotiations, which are currently underway, will also contribute to this."

"Trade liberalization between ASEAN and India, by way of the ASEAN-India Free Trade Area, creates additional opportunities for innovation and stronger productivity growth," added Wu. "Trade and investment flows spread new ideas and innovation, leading to improvements in the goods and services that people and businesses use. This is good for both ASEAN and India, as both sides are in a period of rapid economic growth and development, so trade cooperation helps to ensure channels remain open for their people and businesses to communicate and collaborate."

The territory that comprises ASEAN is a region of immense potential and dynamism, analysts and economic experts agree. If harnessed well, there is every reason for incomes and well-being to spread to an even larger swath of populations across Asia and more. It remains to be seen whether 2015 will be the year that the challenges are scaled and a new order emerges. □



Sea Claims &

Shifting Tides

FORUM STAFF

CHINA'S CHANGING
RELATIONSHIPS
AND INCONSISTENT
PRACTICES REVEAL
QUESTIONABLE
MOTIVES

China has aggressively laid claims to land in the South China Sea since August 2014. Satellite imagery reveals that China has built new islands on several reefs in the Spratly Islands, including Fiery Cross Reef, Gaven Reefs, Johnson South Reef and Hughes Reef, according to reports by *IHS Jane's Defence Weekly*.

At Fiery Cross Reef, the most extensive project, China began building a 3,000-meter-long and roughly 250-meter-wide island, large enough to support an airstrip, as *Jane's* reported in November 2014. The reef was previously submerged.

Images in March 2015 also revealed that China had begun building its first airstrip on the reef, Reuters reported. Images provided to *IHS Jane's Defence Weekly* by Airbus Defence and Space showed a paved section of runway measuring 505 meters by 53 meters. Moreover, the Chinese started reclaiming an area on Subu Reef in the Spratlys that could also accommodate an airstrip, Reuters said.

Although other countries, including Malaysia and Vietnam, have built on or modified similar existing land masses over the years, China's activities have substantially changed the size and structure of physical land features, according to Mira Rapp-Hooper, director of the Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative and a fellow with the Asia Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. "Until its work on Fiery Cross, China was the only major Spratlys claimant without an airstrip. What sets China's activities apart, however, is that Beijing has been dramatically changing the size and structure of physical land features, while other claimants have built upon or modified existing land masses."

China's endeavor "is a methodical, well-planned campaign to create a chain of air and sea capable fortresses across the center of the Spratly Islands chain," *Jane's* Asia Pacific editor James Hardy told *The Wall Street Journal* newspaper.

This so-called assertive expansionism seems to be the latest example of the apparent misalignment between China's words and actions, as the nation intensifies its drive to reinforce its strategic position as a security provider in the region and strengthen its positions in various disputed territories. Such inconsistencies may be generating fear and uncertainty in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region, some analysts worry.

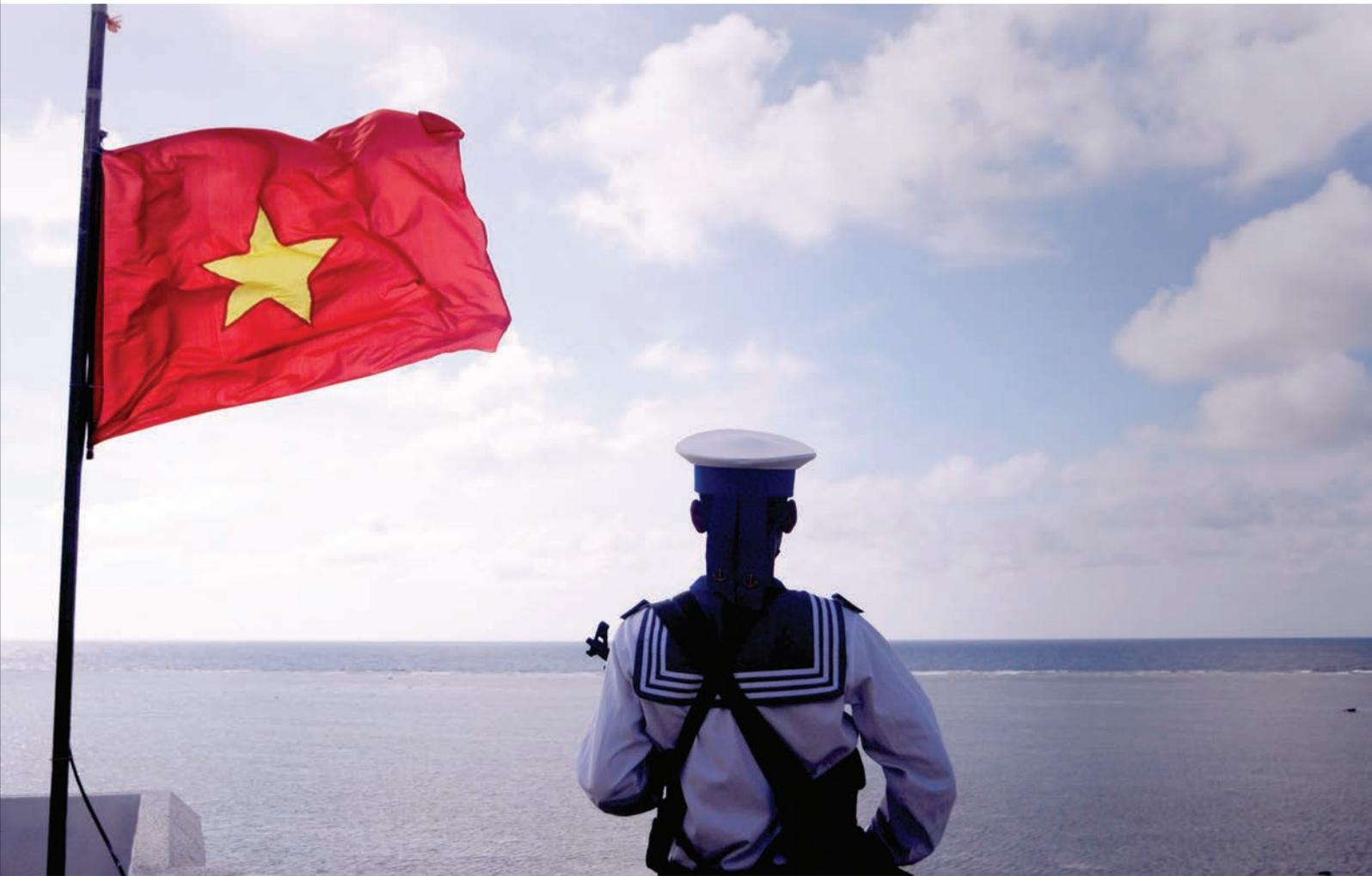
During 2014, for example, China signed a flurry of agreements with Bangladesh to foster economic, strategic and other ties and moved to do the same with other countries and members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Although most countries — including the U.S., India, South Korea, Vietnam, Australia and Japan — welcome increased bilateral trade with China,



some countries are beginning to question some of China's intentions and inconsistencies in its quest to quickly spread its influence. Besides its activities in the Spratlys, China appears to be fostering intelligence and military links by financing and supporting a network of ports in Pakistan, Sri Lanka, the Maldives, Bangladesh and Burma. It has also built railways through Tibet near Sikkim that seem to create a logistical military access to India's border, according to *The New Indian Express* newspaper. Moreover, China seems to have provoked nations that it has ongoing territorial

Philippine Marines transfer from a patrol boat to a rubber boat after conducting a mission at the disputed Second Thomas Shoal, part of the Spratly Islands in the South China Sea. They were returning to a naval forces camp in Palawan province, southwest Philippines, in March 2014. REUTERS





A Vietnamese Sailor stands guard at Thuyen Chai Island in the Spratly archipelago.

REUTERS

disputes with. In early May 2014, for example, China deployed an oil rig in Vietnam's economic zone near islands claimed by both nations and then removed it in mid-July that year. All the while, China has been stating publicly that it wants a "new style of great power relations" with the U.S. and other great powers. China says it promotes a peaceful and integrated periphery. China says it seeks to enhance stability, peace and prosperity while it rises.

Several of China's foreign policy actions undermine these objectives, generating mistrust of Chinese intentions and fear of Chinese manipulation among China's neighbors. In April 2015, President Barack Obama said China was employing its "sheer size and muscle" to push other smaller Asian nations around and cautioned about militarizing the disputed islands, Reuters reported.

Cui Tiankai, China's ambassador to the U.S., claimed it was "natural" for the construction to include military defense facilities, according to Reuters. "There should be no illusion that anyone could

impose on China a unilateral status quo" or "repeatedly violate China's sovereignty without consequences."

Despite this inconsistency, regional nations see few options but to hedge their bets between the U.S. and China. Indeed, the region already appears to be embroiled in a security dilemma. China must directly address the inconsistencies between its rhetoric and actions, clarify its intentions, and take steps to address the concerns of regional nations. Failing to do so not only increases regional instability but also undermines opportunities for political and economic cooperation.

The new type of great power relations (NTGPR) promoted by President Xi Jinping offers a framework for ensuring that China's ongoing development does not generate undue friction with other powerful nations in the Indo Asia Pacific. While the framework applies to China's relations with all powerful countries (including Japan, Russia and India), the Chinese overwhelmingly focus NTGPR on the U.S.-China relationship.

This so-called assertive expansionism seems to be the latest example of the apparent misalignment between China's words and actions, as the nation intensifies its drive to reinforce its strategic position as a security provider in the region and strengthen its positions in various disputed territories.

China offers three main means through which NTGPR reduces U.S.-China friction, according to a 2013 report by the National Bureau of Asian Research. First, NTGPR seeks to avoid conflict by emphasizing dialogue and clearly communicating each side's strategic objectives. Second, it dictates mutual respect for each side's national interests and concerns. Finally, each side should seek out areas of mutual interest that can be pursued cooperatively. These are three laudable goals, but Chinese actions consistently undermine them.

China routinely marginalizes U.S. interests and concerns in the Indo Asia Pacific. This is

especially true regarding international law and territorial dispute resolution. China's nine-dash line claim to territory in the South China Sea is not only ambiguous but does not appear to conform to the rules of the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea, according to a 2014 U.S. State Department report. China has not explained precisely what it is claiming: land, water, sovereignty or exclusive economic zones, demarcated at any specific coordinates. Even though China's territorial disputes are not directly with the U.S., the U.S. has always been closely concerned with international law, and upholding it remains an American national interest. When the U.S. does express concern over Chinese actions in this regard, China admonished the U.S. not to get involved in territorial disputes in the South China Sea. "The United States, Japan and Australia are allies, but this should not become an excuse to interfere in territorial disputes, otherwise it will only make the problems more complicated and harm the interest of all parties," a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman said on the ministry website in October 2013. "We urge the relevant countries to respect the facts, distinguish right from wrong, be cautious, and stop all words and deeds that are not beneficial to the proper handling of the issue and undermine regional stability."

This despite Xi indicating the U.S. is a Pacific nation with real security interests in Asia. "China and the U.S. should continue to enhance dialogue and coordination on Asia Pacific affairs, and respect and accommodate



Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, right, walks past China's President Xi Jinping during a ceremony at the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation forum in Beijing in November 2014. REUTERS



An aerial view of the disputed islands in the East China Sea, known as Senkaku in Japan and Diaoyu in China REUTERS

each other's interests and concerns in the region, and develop inclusive coordination," he said during a joint news conference with U.S. President Barack Obama in November 2014.

Furthermore, some of China's territorial disputes involve U.S. treaty allies Japan and the Philippines. While the U.S. takes no official position on which nation owns what territory, the manner in which these disputes are resolved is of deep strategic concern to the U.S.

The Chinese military seems to be testing many nations. China antagonized Japan in the East China Sea in 2013 and 2014 by increasing patrols of its growing Coast Guard around the cluster of contested islands, known in Japan as Senkaku and in China as Diaoyu. In 2012, China seized Scarborough

Shoal from the Philippines and in May 2014 interfered with Philippine ships reaching the Second Thomas Shoal.

Such actions by China toward Japan and the Philippines often appear to take the form of thinly veiled military pressure and coercion. Xi and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan did meet in Beijing in November 2014 to recognize their different positions on the East China Sea, among other things, according to a report in *The New York Times* newspaper. The safety of its allies remains a core U.S. national interest, and any potential threat to U.S. treaty allies is treated with the gravest concern.

In addition to the NTGPR, at an October 2013 Chinese Communist Party work forum, Xi said one of China's foreign policy goals is a peaceful and integrated community of



China's President Xi Jinping, right, gestures to Vietnam's Communist Party General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing in April 2015. REUTERS

nations along its geographic periphery. The Chinese State Council's 2011 white paper "China's Peaceful Development" also states that China seeks to enhance stability, peace and prosperity in the region. However, Chinese actions again appear to undermine these stated goals, especially in the South China Sea.

Such actions seem to contrast China's own policies to establish a stable and integrated region around its periphery. China's New Silk Road and New Maritime Silk Road policies seek to further enhance and expand China's sphere of influence by creating a stable, integrated, and prosperous political and economic environment conducive to China's stated NTGPR framework, according to an analysis published in the Hoover Institution journal *Chinese Leadership Monitor* by China and East

Asian expert Michael Swaine, a senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Southeast Asia is part of that periphery and incorporating Southeast Asian nations into these policies will be crucial to their success. However, several Southeast Asian nations claim the very areas in the South China Sea on which China is building military bases. Constructing artificial islands and building military bases in disputed territory can only increase political tensions and instability in the region, according to a communique released by the Philippines and Vietnam on January 30, 2015. The communique's focus was to express deep concern "over the ongoing massive land reclamation activities that pose threats to the peace and stability in the region as well as to the lives of many people across the

various coastal states,” *The Diplomat* magazine reported in March 2015.

As China may come to find, no amount of economic incentives will convince the people of the Indo Asia Pacific to look the other way while China builds Navy and Air Force bases on territory that they claim. South China Sea nations may begin to reject Chinese regional economic plans until China addresses their political concerns. As the agreement between Vietnam and the Philippines shows, these nations view building military bases in disputed territory as coercion, pure and simple. If China does not change course, they may soon reject programs such as the New Silk Road and New Maritime Silk Road.

COURSE FOR STABILITY

So what could China do to address the concerns of its Indo-Asian-Pacific neighbors? A first step could be to follow point No. 1 from the NTGPR: Emphasize dialogue and clearly communicate strategic objectives. If China is serious about accomplishing its stated objectives of promoting regional stability, prosperity and cooperation, then outlining Chinese views and objectives diplomatically should not be a problem. By clearly and precisely outlining its desires, especially concerning territorial claims, China can mitigate regional angst about its actions.

Pursuant to that, China could demonstrate how Chinese policies support regional stability, prosperity and cooperation. If China has a clear plan for how its actions in the South and East China seas promote its stated goals, then it should share that rationale with the other nations of the Indo Asia Pacific. Even if China’s neighbors disagree with the Chinese assessment, directly engaging on the subject will allow all parties to increase mutual understanding and address disagreements in a meaningful way. If Indo-Asian-Pacific nations are talking past one another, it is important to realize that and take actions to rectify it as soon as possible to avoid potential conflicts.

China might also take more concrete steps to demonstrate Chinese benevolent and stabilizing intentions. To be meaningful, these steps must directly relate to regional points of concern. For example, China should offer exact demarcation coordinates for its nine-dash line in the South China Sea and supplement this with an exact description of the contents of that claim (land, sovereign seas and exclusive economic zone). This would allow other disputant parties to

clearly understand what China claims, helping to diminish their fears of manipulation.

Another more ambitious step would be to freeze the construction of military installations in the South China Sea. China’s ongoing construction efforts there are some of the leading drivers of regional instability. Freezing construction to allow for dialogue would go a long way in calming nerves. Additionally, due to the nature of the multiple overlapping claims in the South China Sea, diplomatic dialogue could be between China and ASEAN. That could allow concerned parties the opportunity to exchange views in a dynamic and effective way.

ALIGNING ACTIONS AND WORDS

The gap between China’s stated intent and actual conduct is generating instability in the Indo Asia Pacific. China claims to seek peace,



Construction at Fiery Cross Reef in the disputed Spratly Islands EPA

stability and prosperity in the region. However, Chinese actions in the political and security realms seem to undermine these goals.

Perhaps China has a coherent plan for how it believes this seeming contradiction can unfold harmoniously, but until it demonstrates that to the region, regional insecurity and instability may well continue to grow. If China cannot address the political and security concerns of its neighbors, then its economic, political and security aspirations may all fail. □



MITIGATING THE
**FOREIGN
FIGHTER
TERROR
THREAT**

*Militant extremists returning
from Syria and Iraq must be
rehabilitated and reintegrated*

There are myriad reasons why individuals are drawn to become foreign fighters and willing to travel abroad to participate in violent combat often thousands of miles from their homelands.

No one knows the precise number of individuals who have chosen this path to fight in the Syrian and Iraqi conflict. Estimates place the number above 20,700, surpassing the number of foreign fighters who joined the Afghan mujahedeen's 10-year fight against the former Soviet Union.

Security experts, however, agree that many of these foreign fighters will eventually return to their homelands, and the danger posed by such returning foreign fighters is real.

Tallies released in January 2015 by the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence (ICSR) and the Soufan Group show recruits from more than 80 countries — including more than 11,000 from the Middle East, 4,000 from Western European countries and 250 from Australia, 100 from both China and the United States, 60 from Indonesia as well as small numbers from New Zealand, Japan, Bangladesh, Malaysia and the Philippines. As the wars continue, the flow of returning fighters to the Indo Asia Pacific will likely increase and with them the potential threat.

“Veteran foreign fighters are more likely than nonveterans to view domestic operations as legitimate,” according to Thomas Hegghammer, director of terrorism research at the Norwegian



FROM TOP:

A member of the Iraqi security forces arrests a suspected Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) militant in Jurf al-Sakhar in March 2014.

Anti-terror police raid the house of a suspected ISIS member in Jakarta, Indonesia, in March 2015.

Australian police officers walk with a robot toward Lindt Cafe in central Sydney, where several hostages were held at gunpoint in December 2014.

REUTERS

Defence Research Establishment. In a study of 945 foreign fighters between 1990 and 2010, he estimated that 1 in 9 “returned for an attack” on their homeland. He published his findings in *American Political Science Review* journal in February 2013.

Moreover, domestic attacks planned by returning fighters are usually more effective. Hegghammer’s study found such plots by foreign fighters were 1.5 times more likely to be executed and twice as likely to cause fatalities. Other studies have shown that the involvement of foreign fighters in a domestic attack also increases the lethality and viability of the terrorist plot, according to ICSR Director Peter Neumann.

Already, some 30 jihadis have returned home to Australia after being foreign fighters, *The Herald Sun* newspaper reported in February 2015. “The number of foreign fighters is increasing, the number of known sympathizers and supporters of extremists is increasing, and the number of potential terrorists, including many who live in our midst, is rising as well,” Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott said in a February 2015 address.

Nations, militaries and security services, however, have capabilities and tools to mitigate such threats to the Indo Asia Pacific, as well as elsewhere. Experts recommend identifying opportunities to encourage potentially dangerous individuals to opt for nonviolent routes and employing such actions as arrests, visa denials, preventive detentions and other forms of disruption when necessary.

Approaches include increasing community engagement to dissuade would-be fighters from going to Iraq or Syria in the first place, disrupting travel routes, strengthening border control and improving deradicalization programs to reform returning fighters, according to a Brookings Institution policy paper released in November 2014 titled, “Be Afraid. Be A Little Afraid: The Threat of Terrorism from Western Foreign Fighters in Syria and Iraq.”

Governments across the region are also strengthening broader counterterrorism efforts on many fronts. Australia, for one, will appoint a national counterterrorism coordinator and develop new national counterterrorism and counter violent extremism strategies, in cooperation with its states and territories, to better coordinate efforts to counteract such threats as homegrown actors and radicalization, Prime Minister Abbott announced in February 2015.



Anti-terror police walk ahead of guard officers carrying evidence from a March 2015 raid at the house of a man suspected of involvement with the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria in Indonesia's Banten province. REUTERS



STOPPING TERROR'S REACH

Even if the number of returning foreign fighters may have been somewhat overblown, the phenomenon poses broad security risks, experts say. "The overwhelming majority of foreign fighters will not return home to commit terrorist attacks," Thomas Joscelyn, a senior fellow and counterterrorism expert at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies told *The Japan Times* newspaper in February 2015. "But some of them will. The real risk is that as the number of foreign fighters increases, the talent pool from which terrorist organizations can draw deepens. This increases the chance that terrorist groups will find highly skilled, intelligent and committed fighters who can be repurposed for plots in their home countries."

The Indo Asia Pacific has already seen some signs of influence by the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) in other insidious ways. A small explosion of a homemade bomb in a Jakarta, Indonesia, shopping mall in late February 2015 fueled fears that ISIS' influence is penetrating the region.

Terrorism experts, including members of Indonesia's National Police and Sidney Jones of the Institute for Policy Analysis and Conflict, contend that the bomb, which employed chlorine gas along with batteries and paint tins and wires, may have been an example of local extremists adopting the tactics of ISIS as evidenced by its chlorine signature, according to media reports. The bomb, which was left in a public restroom, failed to detonate properly and didn't cause any injuries. ISIS has used chlorine gas in its attacks in the Middle East, a tactic not previously used by radicals in Indonesia.

Generally, "there are two main concerns for Indonesia," Jones told *The New York Times* newspaper in January 2014. "One is the return of foreign fighters and what that could mean to providing leadership to the very weak and incompetent jihadi movement here. Second, the process of raising funds for Syria could strengthen the resource base of groups in Indonesia, such as Jemaah Islamiyah [JI]," the Southeast Asian terror group linked to al-Qaida that claimed responsibility for the Bali bombings in 2002. A resurgence of JI could have long-term consequences, she said.

DISILLUSIONED RECRUITS

Many foreign fighters will never return for various reasons. For a start, the reality that foreign fighters face in country is often grim. ISIS typically uses foreign recruits to conduct suicide bombings, first-wave attacks and so-

called martyrdom operations, according to a Brookings Institution study released in January 2015 by Daniel Byman, research director of the Center for Middle East Policy, and Jeremy Shapiro, a fellow at the Center on the United States and Europe. Plenty of the recruits die in suicide attacks or firefights with opposing forces. Neumann of ICSR estimates that 5 to 10 percent of foreign fighters die soon after arriving in theater.

Gen. Ali al-Wazir of the Iraqi Army told *The Japan Times* that in skirmishes in Diyalla province against ISIS, “We often see the foreign fighters in the first wave of attacks, and then the Arab fighters will come in after an area is cleared.” Other experts speculate that putting foreign fighters on the front lines is part of ISIS’ longer-term strategy to “remain and expand.”

Still, other would-be foreign fighters are arrested or disrupted by intelligence services and law enforcement

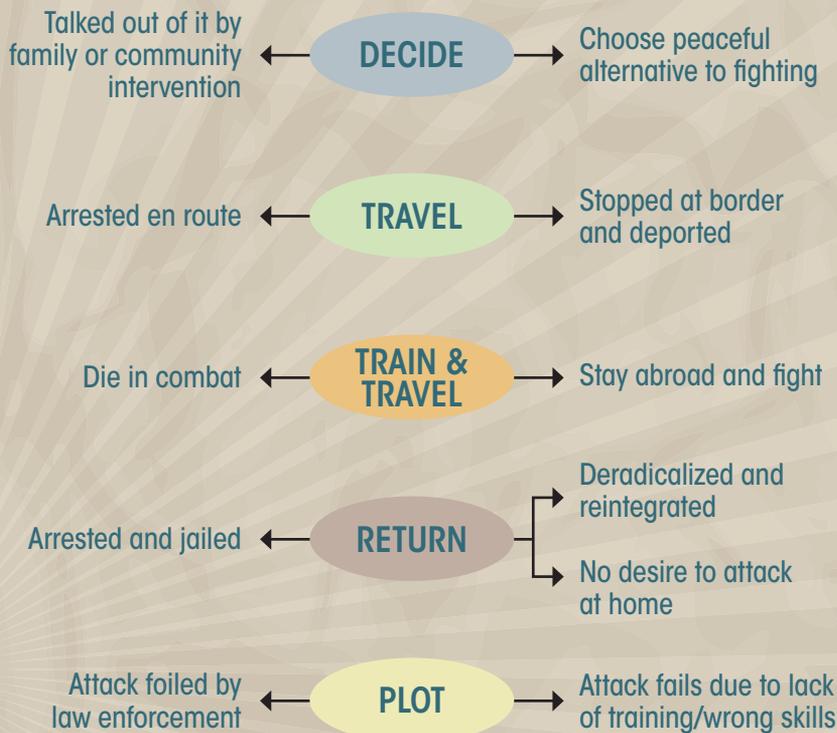
because foreign fighters are readily traceable in many cases, the Brookings study authors found. Those who aren’t arrested in transit or killed may continue fighting in the conflict zone. Significant numbers of foreign fighters, however, soon become disillusioned and return home to resume a nonviolent life.

To mitigate threats outside the war zone, Ziad Akl, senior researcher at the Cairo-based Al Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies, told the Voice of America in March 2015 that security experts should also focus on how ISIS is actually fighting. “The potential threat of these foreign fighters coming back and committing similar acts where they are originally from, or in their native land, seems to me something that depends on the strategy of the organization itself,” he said. “Exactly how the group operates can vary from country to country.”

Members of the Spanish Civil Guard carry evidence at the Spanish National Court in Madrid that was seized in the arrest of 10 people in April 2015 in Barcelona and Tarragona. They were accused of trying to travel to Syria and Iraq and are suspected of links to the Islamic State group. AFP/GETTY IMAGES



FOREIGN FIGHTER RADICALIZATION: AN UPDATED MODEL



Source: Brookings Institution

FORUM ILLUSTRATION

effective in helping move would-be terrorists toward nonviolence, experts agree. Family and community members can help put returned fighters on a different path.

“Not every returning fighter or terrorist dropout can be reintegrated into society, but some can,” said Matthew Levitt, director of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy’s Stein Program on Counterterrorism and Intelligence. “Even among those who can be prosecuted and convicted, the vast majority will eventually be released,” Levitt said. “One key lesson is that rehabilitation and reintegration programs must have some type of connectivity to law enforcement and intelligence to decrease the risk of trying to reintegrate uncompromising individuals who are intent on doing harm. Such risk assessments are necessary not only at the intake stage, but later as well to account for the possibility that a person could re-radicalize or become further radicalized, such as appears to have occurred with the Kouachi brothers [the Islamist

terrorist brothers behind the *Charlie Hebdo* magazine massacre] in France.”

Incarcerating at-risk returnees can also backfire. In prison, for example, foreign fighters can be exposed to radicalizing elements and hard-line jihadist ideologues who push them to join terror networks.

Just as there is no single pathway, no single factor, no common socio-economic or religious background to predict who will become radicalized or a foreign fighter in the first place, there is no single way to rehabilitate violent extremists. “Four decades of psychological research on who becomes a terrorist and why hasn’t yet produced any profile,” John Horgan, director of the Center for Terrorism and Security Studies at the University of Massachusetts Lowell, told *The Atlantic* magazine in March 2015. Researchers, however, have been successful in understanding individual pathways, which could provide insights for rehabilitation, experts say.

ADDRESSING RETURNEES

Counterterrorism and law enforcement and other security officials face many large challenges in managing the flow of foreign fighters back home. First, they must triage returnees, identifying and monitoring the ones in need of attention and those intent to launch attacks. Then they must reintegrate those who have left their extremist ways behind them, as Brookings summarizes in its November 2014 policy paper.

Nations should enable an open and honest dialogue with returnees, explained Jacob Bundsgaard, mayor of Aarhus, Denmark, and a leader in the city’s jihadist rehabilitation program. He spoke at a Washington Institute for Near East Policy forum in February 2015. “If there is reason to believe a person has committed a crime, authorities must be clear that they will do everything in their power to prosecute. Yet, if an individual has not committed a crime or it cannot be proven, they should do everything possible to reintegrate the person.”

Individual countries should assess the threats posed by returning foreign fighters on a case-by-case basis, agreed Gilles de Kerchove, the European Union counterterrorism coordinator, who also spoke at the forum. “While very few are likely to commit a terrorist attack, many may be disillusioned and affected by post-traumatic stress disorder.” Generally, authorities need to address how to reconnect isolated returnees to family, friends and society and how to deprogram their extremist ideologies, he said. Promoting counternarratives can be

VIGILANT MEASURES

Cooperation among security services will be key for helping to ensure success of rehabilitation and reintegration programs and to suppress would-be attacks locally and regionally, experts agree. Sharing intelligence from foreign fighter communications, open-source monitoring and information among agencies in particular can be critical for revealing transnational networks, according to the authors of the Brookings report. □



15



GOOD LEGAL PRACTICES *to address terrorism*

Ways to bolster national criminal justice systems

LT. COL. FRANKLIN ROSENBLATT/U.S. ARMY

For many, the word “counterterrorism” evokes images of armed commandos and military aircraft in distant war zones. A group of international experts would like to shift this perception to also include criminal investigators, prosecutors, judges and prison officials.

The Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) emerged in 2011 in response to demand from the United Nations and several countries for sharing best practices and developing lessons about responses to terrorism. A year later, a GCTF working group produced the Rabat Memorandum on Good Practices for Effective Counterterrorism Practice in the Criminal Justice System, named for the site of the group’s final consultation. The memorandum includes a discussion of 15 nonbinding practices to assist countries in addressing terrorism threats (see sidebar on page 50).

A country that seeks to use these practices must already have a criminal justice system that can handle ordinary offenses while also protecting the rights of the accused. Once that is in

place, a country has a range of ways to address terror.

Consider, for example, the foreign terrorist fighter (FTF) threat. This often plays out in a four-step cycle: first, radicalization to violent extremism; second, recruitment and facilitation; third, travel and fighting; and fourth, return and integration. A range of activities, from using social media to international air travel to incarceration, are relevant to the life cycle of FTF activities.

An effective legal system should be responsive to each phase of this cycle in an effort to catch terrorists during preparation, before an attack occurs. Countries should pursue legislation to cover a broad-based system of criminal offenses, including those committed in advance of an attack, such as conspiracy, providing material support, training, incitement and solicitation (practices 13, 14). Further, some of the best investigative techniques against terrorism involve undercover investigations (practice 3) and lawful electronic surveillance of terror suspects (practice 4).



Police patrol the front of a courthouse in September 2014 where four people accused of participating in an attack on a train station in southwestern China faced trial, charged with murder and organizing a terror group. REUTERS

15 GOOD PRACTICES

from the Rabat Memorandum:
a blueprint for the criminal justice sector

- 1: Protect victims, witnesses, informants, undercover agents, juries, investigators, prosecutors, defense counsel and judges in counterterrorism cases.
- 2: Encourage cooperation and coordination among domestic government agencies that have responsibilities or information relevant to counterterrorism.
- 3: Provide a legal framework and practical measures for undercover investigations of terrorist suspects or organizations.
- 4: Provide a legal framework and practical measures for electronic surveillance in counterterrorism investigations.
- 5: Adopt incentives for terrorist suspects and others to cooperate in counterterrorism investigations and prosecutions.
- 6: Enact measures to protect sensitive law enforcement and intelligence information in terrorism cases.
- 7: Provide for the lawful exercise of pretrial detention of terrorist suspects.
- 8: Provide for the professional development of investigators, prosecutors and judges who handle terrorism cases.
- 9: Develop practices and procedures to encourage international cooperation in counterterrorism matters.
- 10: Develop and use forensic evidence to determine the identities of those involved in terrorist acts.
- 11: Ensure that convicted terrorists are appropriately punished, and develop policies for their incarceration and reintegration.
- 12: Criminalize terrorism offenses as outlined in applicable international conventions and protocols.
- 13: Criminalize conspiracies, solicitation and other preparatory acts of terrorism.
- 14: Criminalize attempts to commit and aid and abet terrorist acts.
- 15: Criminalize terrorist financing.

Source: Full memorandum available at <https://www.thegctf.org/documents/10162/38299/Rabat+Memorandum-English>

A terror suspect who is not detained before trial may be able to intimidate parties who are involved in the trial, conduct an attack, continue recruitment or flee the country. Because of this, a counterterrorism-capable criminal justice system will permit keeping certain terror suspects in pretrial detention (practice 7) and enact protective measures for judges, prosecutors, defense counsel and others involved in these cases (practice 1). Laws that protect against criminal evidence being prematurely or haphazardly released before trial ought to give witnesses more confidence that they can testify without fear of retribution (practice 6). A system that permits formal cooperation agreements — also known as plea bargaining — may prod suspects to provide accurate information that helps convict others or disclose terrorist plots and networks (practice 5).

Recent experience from several parts of the world teaches that some of the most fertile breeding grounds for terrorism and radicalization are in national prison systems. A responsible criminal justice sector reform cannot ignore policies for effective incarceration and reintegration (practice 11). Such policies ought to address how to prevent the direction of terrorist activities and recruitment for terrorist causes from within the prison system, proper sentences of confinement needed to deter other terrorist activity, and programs for deradicalization and reintegration to reduce recidivism.

Because terrorism is a global threat that easily permeates national borders, the most effective criminal justice systems will be interconnected with other countries. To this end, countries that have not passed laws to ease extradition and mutual legal assistance ought to do so (practice 9). The professional development of judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, investigators and incarceration officials should be similarly well-networked so that practitioners can share effective techniques. Countries should invest in salaries, professional development, job security and physical protection to retain high-quality professionals who can





Badri Hartono, the convicted leader of a militant Muslim group, looks on at the West Jakarta, Indonesia, court in June 2013. Hortono, believed to have links to al-Qaida, received a 10-year sentence. AFP/GETTY IMAGES



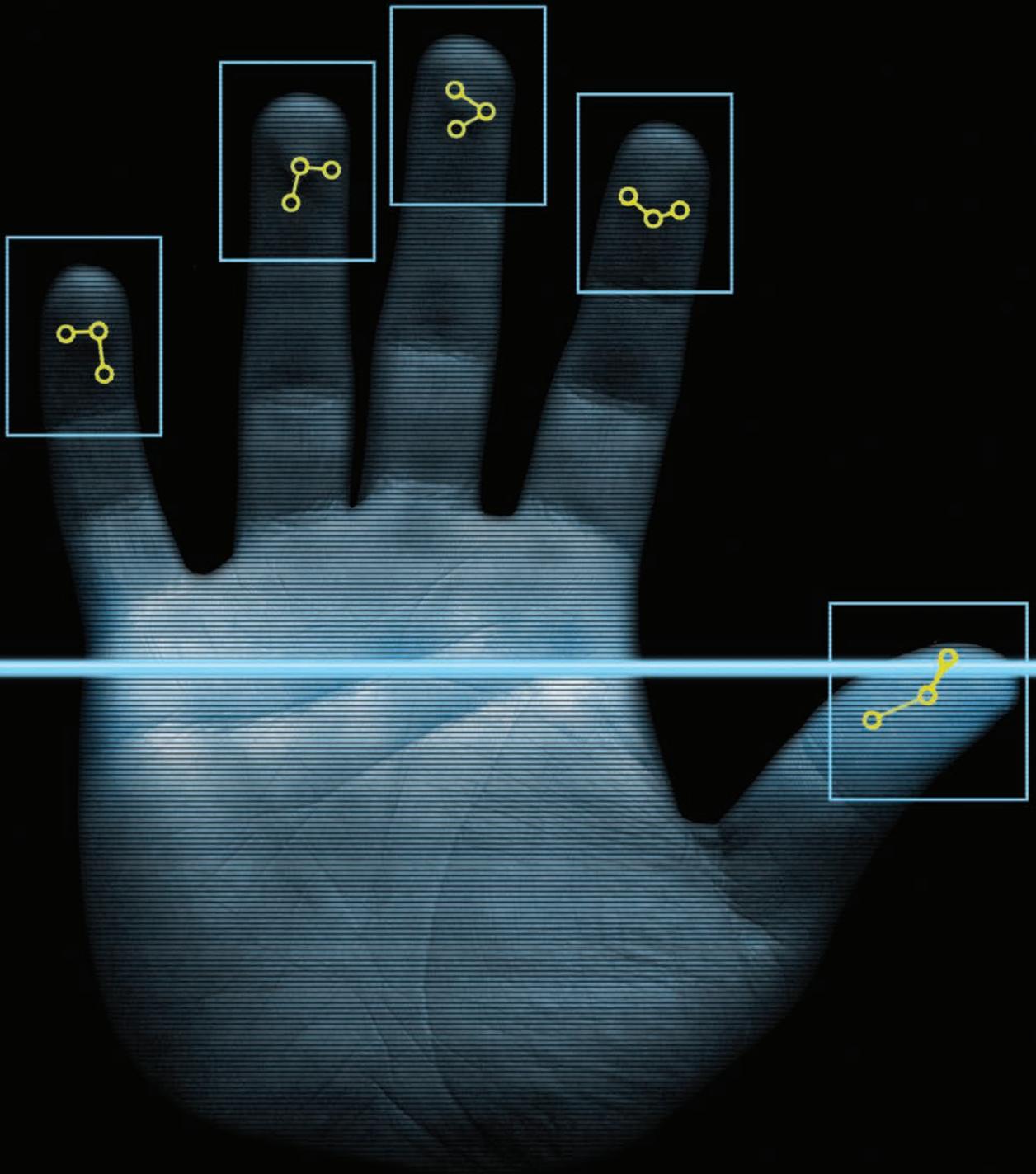
A plainclothes police officer opens the handcuffs of a terror suspect on trial in Jakarta, Indonesia, in November 2013 for his alleged role in a plot to bomb the Burmese Embassy. AFP/GETTY IMAGES

execute the specialized functions of terrorism prosecutions (practice 8).

The Rabat Memorandum does not call for the enactment of a separate system of counterterrorism laws and courts. There are some possible explanations for this omission. First, a criminal justice system will enjoy more consistently good results when it is based on a known system that is understood by its practitioners, rather than a new system that feels unfamiliar and imposed. Second, the use of a counterterrorism court system may prove unpopular with the commercial sector of society, which fears that a country's association with terrorism will result in lost tourism and

business opportunities. Civil society also may be concerned that a new criminal system might interfere with civil liberties and be inconsistent with national norms. Countries should instead focus on ways to improve their existing criminal justice systems to address terrorism.

Efforts against terrorism are not limited to distant battlefields. Terrorism is increasingly a global problem requiring coordinated solutions between countries. Responses to terrorism from national legal systems — based on the rule of law, respecting human rights, incorporating good practices, and conforming to national norms and values — will increasingly be important to counterterrorism efforts. □



BIOMETRICS

BUILD BORDER SECURITY

BY TOM ABKE AND JIRI KOMINEK

DATA SHARING STRENGTHENS ENFORCEMENT CAPABILITIES

“Jihadi John,” to thwart efforts to identify him, always wore a black mask, only exposing his eyes and the bridge of his nose before cameras, investigators and analysts successfully identified him in February 2015 as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terrorist and the organization’s media spokesman known as the Kuwaiti-born, United Kingdom citizen Mohammed Emwazi. They used biometric technology, including facial and voice recognition software, to unmask the suspect who, dressed in all black, appeared to behead Westerners in several ISIS videos.

Since the 9/11 terrorist attacks, governments around the world have recognized the need to adopt various forms of biometric technology to authenticate the true identities of holders of travel documents, national identity cards, drivers permits and other forms of personal identification that could be otherwise misused by individuals to commit acts of terror or other serious crimes, such as human smuggling, fraud or money laundering.

More than 80 countries worldwide — including Australia, Brunei, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Maldives, New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, Togo and the United States — employ electronic passport programs that incorporate biometric data. Many others mandate biometric enrollment of immigrants. Fingerprints, iris scans and facial characteristics are some of the data that help to identify individuals.

As nations across the Indo Asia Pacific accelerate their drive to further integration, they have recognized the need to address common issues such as international terrorism and organized crime whose actors endeavor to exploit this integration process and undermine collective security and effective economic cooperation.

Nations such as Australia, India, New Zealand and member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) view biometric technology as an indispensable tool in assisting in combating international terrorism and organized crime whether by ensuring safer borders or tracking the movement of money and goods.

IDENTITY AUTHENTICATION

Biometric technology allows the authentication of a person’s identity through physiological or behavioral characteristics that are specific or unique to every individual. What makes biometric identification so effective is that these physiological characteristics cannot be lost, forgotten, stolen or forged. Of the billions of people on Earth, no two possess the same biological markers, such as DNA, fingerprints or finger veins.

This type of authentication is critical. For example, terrorists are known to disguise themselves as refugees to cross borders. Biometric identification also helps authorities prevent human trafficking and identify stolen passports. Biometric border systems are even more useful when countries share information, widening the net to capture criminals.

In addition to fighting crime, biometric border security systems reduce delays for travelers at busy airports and land crossings. Border officials need not depend on unreliable



A Japanese researcher demonstrates a new biometric coding technology for extracting and matching the binary codes from palm vein images at Fujitsu's Tokyo headquarters.

AFP/GETTY IMAGES

photographs to verify a person's identity. Security and efficiency are enhanced.

EVOLUTION OF FINGERPRINT CAPABILITIES

More than a century ago, criminologists discovered the benefits of fingerprinting technology in helping to solve crimes and identifying perpetrators. The concept of establishing a database or catalog of fingerprints of known criminals was first developed in 1891 by Juan Vucetich, a senior police official in Argentina.

The capability has come a long way since then. The Pakistani government, for example, turned to fingerprint biometric data when in March 2015, it ordered all mobile service companies to acquire fingerprint scans of their subscribers by April 15, 2015. Subscribers who failed to comply had their mobile subscription terminated.

With more than 103 million active mobile subscriber identification module (SIM) cards circulating in the country, the Pakistani government is determined to tie these to their owners' fingerprints in an effort to stem the rising tide of terrorist attacks, such as the December 2014 incident in Peshawar. Taliban members attacked a school, killing more than 140 people, mostly schoolchildren.

What makes biometric identification so effective is that these physiological characteristics cannot be lost, forgotten, stolen or forged. Of the billions of people on Earth, no two possess the same biological markers, such as DNA, fingerprints or finger veins.

Pakistan is determined to prevent terrorists from using untraceable cellphone accounts to coordinate attacks.

Five of the six attackers in the Peshawar incident communicated with mobile phones that did not have legitimate or traceable owners, while the sixth used a phone registered to an innocent Peshawar woman who had no idea her name was registered with the mobile number. Pakistan was one of the first countries in the world to adopt biometric passports in 2004.

Today, all ASEAN-member nations, with the exception of Laos and Burma, have embarked upon programs to incorporate biometric technology into travel documents and other key pieces of personal identification.

Meanwhile, in 2009, India started building the world's largest biometric-based database in the form of the national ID program called Aadhaar. The program is based on fingerprint, iris scan and face photo technology along with demographic data (name, age, gender, address, parent/spouse name and mobile telephone number) of an individual. The program has approximately 550 million residents and had assigned 480 million Aadhaar numbers

through November 2013, the latest data available. The program aims to issue the national ID cards to all 1.25 billion citizens within a few years.

The program is voluntary and has not been approved by India's Parliament following a Supreme Court ruling that the program cannot be made mandatory until all constitutional shortcomings and illegalities have been resolved to protect citizens' civil liberties. The government, however, would like to make the technology mandatory for passports in the near future.

COMBATING INTERNATIONAL THREATS

Biometric technology and the subsequent centralized data it generates has been recognized by governments worldwide as a key instrument in helping to combat international terrorism, with particular focus on ISIS and related groups that have been using the Internet to recruit new members among Muslim populations around the globe.

Evidence suggests ISIS has been recruiting supporters from ASEAN-member nations that have considerable Muslim populations, such as Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines, as well as in other countries in the region, including Australia. Not only has ISIS been recruiting individuals to fight on its behalf in Syria and Iraq but also to commit acts of terror in their home countries.

Governments of Southeast Asia, Australia and New Zealand are the biggest spenders in the region on biometric technology-driven security systems and infrastructure such as border control and national ID programs. The public sectors are far ahead of the private sectors,

where such technology is also being implemented particularly in the banking and financial services sectors. The technology, however, is only effective if it is compatible with systems adopted by neighboring states and also if governments are willing and able to exchange the data efficiently.

"I am convinced that national governments throughout Southeast Asia and the greater region have recognized the need for [biometric] information sharing and intelligence sharing," said Nigel Phair, adjunct professor at the University of Canberra, and a recognized expert on cyber security. "Not only have the governments realized that such systems must be compatible in order to facilitate sharing of crucial information, they also realize that the process of actual sharing is reciprocal ... a quid pro quo that is vital to their national security and economic well-being," Phair added.

More and more governments are signing bilateral agreements to share data obtained from biometric travel and personal ID documents as part of an international effort to combat terrorism and transnational organized crime.



A customer provides a fingerprint scan to open an account at a Mumbai, India, bank. AFP/GETTY IMAGES



A customer scans his thumb for biometric verification on his cellular phone's subscriber identification module at a mobile counter in Karachi, India. REUTERS

EXPANDING DATA SHARING

Apart from government institutions agreeing to share vital data, international law enforcement agency Interpol in 2014 launched a pilot project called I-Checkit allowing commercial airlines to screen passport data against the Interpol database to prevent criminals or potential terrorists from traveling with fake or illicitly obtained travel documents.

Qatar Airways and Air Arabia were the first two commercial carriers to volunteer for the pilot project. Interpol officials said that, if successful, the program and data sharing could be extended to other airlines as well as financial institutions and hotels.

“Because of the limitations to access by the national authorities, then should we not consider providing access to the airlines themselves as well in a very controlled manner,” Michael O’Connell, director of Interpol’s operational police support directorate, told media during the launch of the project in March 2014.

Interpol has recognized that it must increase efforts to assist its members in combating international terrorism and organized crime, especially in cyberspace.

In September 2014, the agency opened its Interpol Global Complex for Innovation (IGCI) in Singapore. The center is designed to complement the agency’s headquarters in Lyon, France, and boost its presence in Asia by acting as a global hub for combating cyber crime. It will include a digital forensics lab and training center.

“Besides providing forensics support, it will act as a 24/7 network for various coordination efforts and ... will also provide forensic support for member countries,” said Dr. Madan Mohan Oberoi, IGCI’s director of cyber innovation and outreach.

Another area where biometric technology is being

used to enhance security is in the realm of simulation training and helping to coordinate responses of government agencies in real-time situations.

Singapore agreed to act as a test bed for the Safe Cities project, a research and development initiative led by NEC Corp., to enable government agencies to integrate and analyze data from existing sensors and network systems using advanced analytic and information sharing tools.

The sensors and network systems include facial recognition (visual biometric) and gait recognition (behavioral biometric) software as well as data from biometric travel and ID documents.

“Throughout partnership with NEC in the Safe City project, we hope to create and test solutions that will significantly improve the operational capabilities and efficiencies of our government agencies,” said Anselm Lopez, director of the Capability Development and International Partnerships Directorate, International Cooperation and Partnerships Division at the Singapore Ministry of Home Affairs.

The Safe City project will focus on the development of command-and-control system integration, prediction, modeling and simulation, which will influence the way information is shared among multiple sources, and ensure reliable access to real-time information to help identify potential security threats and trends.

Overall, biometric data, properly cataloged and shared with partner nations, promises to be one of the most useful tools to thwart international terrorists and criminals. Individuals with such malintent using stolen and phony passports to evade capture will have difficulty crossing border points as countries continue to enhance security using biometric technology and data sharing. □

Singapore's Founding Father Leaves Legacy of Stability



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Lee Kuan Yew, the founder of modern Singapore, was both feared for his authoritarian tactics and admired worldwide for turning the city-state into one of the world's richest nations while in power for 31 years.

The country's first and longest-serving prime minister, who died March 23, 2015, at age 91, guided Singapore through a traumatic split with Malaysia in 1965 and led the transformation of what was then a sleepy port city into a global trade and finance center. Although he could have remained in office for much longer, he stepped aside and handed over leadership of the ruling party, and the country, to a younger generation in 1990. Still, he remained an influential behind-the-scenes figure for many more years until his health deteriorated.

"In the end, my greatest satisfaction in life comes from the fact that I have spent years gathering support, mustering the will to make this place meritocratic, corruption-free and equal for all races — and that it will endure beyond me, as it has," Lee said in his 2013 book, *One Man's View of the World*.

U.S. President Barack Obama called Lee a "visionary" and "true giant of history." His "views and insights on Asian dynamics and economic management were respected by many around the world," Obama said in a statement. "No small number of this and past generations of world leaders have sought his advice on governance and development."

U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said he was "deeply saddened" by Lee's death. He noted that Singapore is marking its 50th anniversary of independence in 2015, and "its founding father will be remembered as one of the most inspiring Asian leaders," according to a statement released by Ban's spokesman.

Ban said Lee helped Singapore "transition from a developing country to one of the most developed in the world, transforming it into a thriving international business hub."

Lee's legacy includes an efficient government with little corruption, a successful public housing scheme, low tax rates to attract foreign investment, excellent schools and clean and safe streets, all of which have helped Singapore rank consistently near the top of surveys of the most livable cities for expatriates.

He faced criticism, though, for using tough tactics to consolidate power. He jailed some political rivals without trial for decades and brought defamation lawsuits against journalists and opposition politicians, which had a chilling effect on dissent.

Lee insisted that strict limits on free speech and public protest were necessary to maintain stability in a multiethnic and multireligious country that witnessed race riots in the 1960s. That stability, he added, was needed to enable growth and raise living standards in a country with few natural resources.

"I had to do some nasty things, locking fellows up without trial," Lee said in an interview with *The New York Times* newspaper published in September 2010.

“I’m not saying everything I did was right. But everything I did was for an honorable purpose.”

Lee, whose People’s Action Party has ruled Singapore since 1959, remained a powerful advisor with Cabinet minister status after stepping down as prime minister, and many Singaporeans, particularly older ones, viewed him as a wise, if strict, father figure.

Lee gave up his Cabinet minister post and resigned from the executive committee of the People’s Action Party after 2011 parliamentary elections in which the ruling party won its lowest overall vote percentage since independence.

One of his sons, Lee Hsien Loong, is Singapore’s current prime minister. He also is survived by another son, Lee Hsien Yang, and a daughter, neurologist Lee Wei Ling. His wife of more than 60 years, Kwa Geok Choo, died in October 2010.

Born September 16, 1923, Lee grew up speaking English in a Singapore that was part of the British colonial empire, and he was known as Harry during much of his early life. His university education was interrupted by the three-year Japanese occupation of the island in World War II, a time Lee said he learned how power could be wielded.

“The Japanese demanded total obedience, and got it from nearly all,” he wrote in his memoirs. “My appreciation of governments, my understanding of power as the vehicle for revolutionary change, would not have been gained without this experience.”

After completing his studies at Singapore’s Raffles College, Lee went to England to study law at Cambridge University. There, he married Kwa, a fellow student, in 1947. He returned to Singapore in 1950 and started the law firm Lee & Lee with his wife in 1955.

In 1954, Lee helped found the People’s Action Party in alliance with communist trade unionists — whom he would later break with — and he became Singapore’s first prime minister in 1959 when Britain granted self-governance in all matters except defense and foreign affairs.

Singapore declared independence from Britain in 1963, and Lee, believing his island couldn’t survive alone, brought it into the federation of neighboring states that became Malaysia. But the Malay leadership asked Singapore to leave after two years because of ideological differences. Lee wept on national television while announcing the breakup, which he later would call one of his biggest political regrets.



Singaporeans weep as the coffin carrying Lee Kuan Yew passes by on March 29, 2015.
GETTY IMAGES

He then turned to governing his tiny island state, imposing strict policies that some saw as micromanaging the daily lives of Singaporeans. Lee promoted English and Mandarin while banning other Chinese dialects from public schools, radio and TV. He also enforced ethnic integration by controlling the makeup of public apartment buildings, where 80 percent of the population lives. The micromanaging continued even under his successor, Goh Chok Tong, who banned the sale of chewing gum because people would stick it on subway doors.

“I say without the slightest remorse that we wouldn’t be here, we would not have made economic progress, if we had not intervened on very personal matters — who your neighbor is, how you live, the noise you make, how you spit or what language you use. We decide what is right. Never mind what the people think,” Lee said in 1987.

Lee also cracked down on organized crime and imposed harsh penalties for minor infractions, a policy that has helped Singapore maintain one of the world’s lowest violent crime rates. Drug couriers face mandatory hanging, vandals are sometimes caned — such as American teenager Michael Fay in 1994 despite a plea for leniency from then-U.S. President Bill Clinton — and litterbugs must pay a hefty fine.

Lee stayed active in his later years, commenting on domestic and international affairs and representing Singapore on frequent trips abroad.

CHINA + RUSSIA

A fleeting friendship?

The two nations have opportunities to forge cooperative agreements, but a history of grievances and different goals could hinder their relationship.

REUTERS

Recent joint naval exercises between Russia and China in the Black and Mediterranean seas, along with diplomatic exchanges with their presidents, highlight the growing ties between Eurasia's two great powers. Though they share key economic interests and oppose what they claim to be a U.S.-dominated world order, the two nations' relationship over time promises to be uneven and tense.

One crucial source of discord is that China is a rising power and Russia is not. Moscow may not be willing to accept a junior partnership with China, nor is China likely to treat Russia with the respect Moscow would assume as its right.

There is no doubt, however, that Sino-Russian ties are growing. Trade between the two countries is about U.S. \$100 billion a year (about one-tenth of Russia's trade with the world, and one-fortieth of China's). As part of China's Silk Road initiative that President Xi Jinping touted during his May 2015 meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin, China may invest in Russian infrastructure that could improve transport of Chinese goods across Russia to Europe and the Middle East. Moscow and Beijing have also agreed to pursue two huge projects that would bring Siberian gas to China, which would enable Beijing to supplant Europe as Russia's largest natural-gas buyer.

Still, uncertainties remain.

The projects will be costly. China is driving a hard bargain as Russia loses gas-market share in Europe, and China sees Russia as a risky investment. Moscow no longer expects that Chinese financing will replace Western capital markets, which Russia has less access to since sanctions were imposed because of Russian-supported armed intervention in Ukraine.

Fearful of reverse engineering, Russia had been reluctant to sell advanced military technology to China. Now in tighter straits, Moscow has agreed to offer its most advanced air-defense system. The S-400 would enable China to strike targets over Taiwan and even key parts of India.

China and Russia are sponsoring new regional institutions that could help or hurt their future ties. The Chinese-led Shanghai Cooperation Organization seeks to counter terrorism, extremism and separatism, mainly across Central Asia. All its members, including Russia,

fear infiltration of extremist fighters from Afghanistan and the Middle East.

The Russian-led Eurasian Economic Union builds on a previously established customs union and binds Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia. The group's high external-tariff walls will concern China. With more Chinese industry moving to the interior, overland exports across the Eurasian union will become more important. The China-led Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank is a major attraction in Eurasia, and as a founding member, Russia will hope for major financing.

Beijing and Moscow are also linked by a commitment to authoritarian political systems, backed by increasingly shrill nationalist rhetoric. Putin and Xi are unhappy with Washington's championing of more open political systems. This was reflected in Beijing's angry reaction to student demonstrations in Hong Kong, and in Moscow's claim that outside powers have manipulated Ukrainian politics to foster hostility toward Russia.

Despite their shared interests, long-term prospects for cooperation between Beijing and Moscow are less promising, as a quick look at history reveals. During the three decades of Sino-Soviet rift, from the mid-1950s to the late 1980s, ideological, political and leadership differences threatened serious hostilities. About 30 years ago, Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev and Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping had the shared wisdom to reverse those earlier trends.

Russia's diminished economic prospects weaken its ability to deal with China on an equal plane. China's economy is more than four times larger than Russia's economy, and the gap continues to widen. The collapse of energy prices, Western sanctions and statist control severely burden Russia's economy.

Population trends in Russia's far east also bode poorly for stable relations with China. Beijing long insisted that its border with Russia was unfairly delineated because of "unequal treaties" from the 19th century and earlier. The population inequity is evident in the presence of a few million Chinese "guest workers" in Russia's far east, backed by a population of hundreds of millions more in the northeast of China. Compare those numbers to the roughly 6 million



Frost covers the face mask of a People's Liberation Army soldier standing guard near the border of China and Russia in Heihe, Heilongjiang province, in December 2014.

REUTERS

Russians on Moscow's side of the border.

China and Russia face a "middle-income trap." To escape it, their economies must rely more on innovation and higher productivity and less on natural resources and inexpensive labor. If one or the other is unable to accommodate rising popular hopes that accompany higher income levels, the resulting unrest could spill across their border.

Both China and Russia are entering less stable periods in dealing with their other neighbors. Putin has used force against Ukraine and Georgia and is seeking to intimidate Europeans around the Baltic Sea. China is pushing territorial claims in the East and South China seas. These moves are causing a reinvigoration of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and are leading most of Asia to seek added U.S. military support.

Russia and China will seek to avoid impinging on each other's strategic priorities, but there are risks. Beijing sees little benefit in injecting itself into the Ukraine conflict, though Russia's actions contradict China's self-interest in the inviolability of internationally recognized borders and noninterference in internal affairs. For China, these are pillars that underpin Beijing's stances on Tibet, Taiwan and the Chinese region of Xinjiang. They are also the basis of the new nationalism that Xi is building under his "China Dream" rubric. Russia has fewer interests in the East and South China seas and will give China a bye there.

The West has no interest in fueling enmity between China and Russia. Expanded energy ties will diversify global sources of supply, and cooperative trade arrangements will boost economic opportunity. At the same time, the West has a strong interest in China and Russia not coercing smaller neighbors. Russian pressure on Ukraine and Chinese pressure in the East and South China seas are spurring the West to strengthen defenses and intensify diplomacy to avert conflict.

The United States has long sought constructive ties with China and Russia, despite their many differences. This should continue, even as Washington and its allies and friends take steps to resist coercion. America has an interest in a strong NATO and in being an Indo-Asia-Pacific power with a web of close bilateral and multilateral links, including the Trans-Pacific Partnership, a major trade deal now in final negotiation.

If Russia cannot find new sources of economic growth, it will lose its claim as a great power. Through pragmatism, especially in energy and trade, China and Russia have options to forge an essentially cooperative relationship. At the same time, limits to their partnership could grow over time, given the two nations' differing trajectories and historical grievances.

Moscow and Beijing have key decisions to make. Anti-U.S. posturing does not help either nation achieve its most important national goals.



Regional newspapers *booming in India*

STORY AND PHOTOS BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

An Indian newspaper vendor ties newspapers on his bicycle early in the morning at the old city area of New Delhi, India.

Rewatiraman Shukla, a young office worker living in a slum on New Delhi's outskirts, can't remember a time when his family did not have a newspaper delivered to their home. Even when home was a single room in a congested tenement without indoor plumbing. Even when his father was working long hours as the single breadwinner to provide the bare necessities.

The newspaper was what Shukla's father believed would open the world of opportunity for his three children. And now, families like his are firing the exceptional growth of regional newspapers in India.

At a time when scores of American newspapers have downsized or shifted to online editions, the Indian newspaper industry is booming. Media analysts say the regional language newspapers are expected to attain double-digit figures in the coming decade as millions of new literates choose newspapers as their primary source of information.



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ewspapers, especially in the regional languages, are a fast-growing space in India right now. We are bang in the middle of it, so we are very excited,” said Pradeep Dwivedi of *Dainik Bhaskar*, or *Daily Sun*, the most popular Hindi newspaper in the country, with about 3.57 million copies sold each day.

Democratic India has had a long history of print news; the first newspaper was founded more than 230 years ago. The government’s Registrar of Newspapers in India lists more than 82,000 newspapers. Nearly 33,000 of these are in Hindi, the language spoken by 41 percent of India’s 1.2 billion people. Thousands of others are in India’s many regional languages, and many of those also have circulations in the millions. Readership is even greater, because a single copy of a newspaper is often shared by many readers.

Overall, regional newspapers will grow 12 to 14 percent annually for the next several years, according to estimates by consulting firm KPMG India.

Media experts said the newspaper boom in the smaller towns is driven by its young and aspirational population. The enormous push for education over the past five decades has bumped up literacy rates, which grew from 65 percent to 74 percent in the decade ending in 2011. But there’s a long way to go, with the government predicting universal literacy will be achieved only in 2060.

In the West, the Internet has cut deeply into newspaper circulation and advertising revenue, but in India, it hasn’t happened yet. Though Internet access is rising rapidly in India, about 80 percent of the country still lacks it. Indian newspapers, which can be delivered for less than 120 rupees (U.S. \$2) a month, are much more accessible.

The plethora of television news channels in regional languages has surprisingly only increased newspaper readership, said P.N. Vasanti, director of the Center for Media Studies in New Delhi. “We call it the ‘appetizer effect.’ In a study of media habits of people, we found that the more that people watched television news, the more they were turning to the newspapers to check the facts,” she said. “In India, the credibility of newspapers and the written word is way beyond that of the television news channels.”

With the Indian economy picking up pace, advertising revenues are up. Up until now, the English language newspapers commanded a large chunk of the advertising budgets of merchandisers. But, those were confined mostly to India’s largest cities.

Now, advertisers have discovered the vast spread of the vernacular print media and its ability to reach customers in thriving medium-size towns. Driven by growing readership, and the increasing economic clout of a vernacular-speaking middle class, makers of fast-moving consumer goods are looking at smaller towns and rural India as potential boom markets, said Dwivedi.

“The real growth for the regional newspaper is in the smaller towns, where new literates are coming to the fore and where people still lead a slower-paced life, giving them enough time to peruse the day’s paper,” said Dwivedi.

Newspaper coverage, too, has changed with color supplements and extra pages on food, fashion and jet-setting lifestyles, catering to people with disposable incomes and a burgeoning young population.

As rapid urbanization erodes traditional familial networks, newspapers serve other purposes, too. The age-old role of the matchmaker to find a spouse for a young man or woman for a customary arranged marriage is now served by the classified advertisements in the local newspaper.

In a country where caste origins play a big role in determining marriage alliances, people see the regional newspaper as a convenient way of reaching out to their community members. On any given weekend, classified matrimonial ads running into several pages in many vernacular newspapers remain a real revenue-spinner.

Rewatiraman’s father, Ved Prakash Shukla, has been subscribing to a Hindi newspaper for 15 years for his children’s sake, even when tight finances made it something of a luxury.

“It was tough. My wife would scold me, saying, ‘Why are you wasting money on a paper when we don’t have money to buy food?’” Shukla said one recent morning as he sat on the stairs outside his tiny home with his paper and morning cup of tea.

“But I saw the newspaper as an investment in my children’s future. In my job as a chauffeur, I saw how the children of the rich speak English and know all about what’s happening in the world.”

Shukla’s investment appears to be paying off. Rewatiraman was recently promoted and has begun climbing the corporate ladder with some success. “All those years of reading the paper. It’s been worth it,” he said.



Rewatiraman Shukla, 24, reads his morning newspaper in his house in New Delhi, India.

PAST DISASTERS *Inspire* INNOVATIVE TOOLS FOR FUTURE RESPONSE

STORY AND PHOTOS BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mankind is powerless to prevent calamities such as typhoons and earthquakes. In Japan, however, where the devastating 2011 tsunami still looms large, there's a flourishing industry in devising ways to cope with catastrophe.

Some of the products on display at the March 2015 United Nations disaster conference in the northeastern city of Sendai featured high-tech innovations and new materials. Many were just inventive, practical solutions for the challenge of quickly getting people out of harm's way.

Products included Masayoshi Nakamura's Jinriki — custom-made handles designed for easily hustling wheelchairs over debris and up hills. "I just wanted to do something to help," said Nakamura, jumping into a wheelchair as he urged a visitor to give it a try.

The snap- and screw-on handles, which turn a wheelchair into a modern version of the rickshaws seen in old movies, enable a person to push or

pull a wheelchair over sand and snow, and up and down stairs with relative ease.

Nakamura knew early on that pushing a wheelchair can be hard work, having often pushed his disabled brother around as children during play with friends. He thought up the idea for the Jinriki while working on a tourism-related project, but he was only able to turn it into a reality after the March 2011 disasters.

Being able to quickly escape to higher ground was a life-or-death matter when a tsunami up to 40-meters high thrashed Japan's northeastern coast, including Sendai's port and coastal suburbs, killing more than 18,500 people.

Many of the elderly people living in Japan's seaside villages could not escape in time. Pioneer Seiko Co.'s people-carrier frame, something of a cross between a toddler backpack and an adult-size chair, can be used by an adult to carry another adult on his or her back.



Exact figures on disaster-related spending and manufacturing are hard to come by. The market spans both government and private spending and includes an entire universe of goods ranging from tarps and water containers to sophisticated early-warning systems for tsunamis and typhoons.

Globally, disaster-related spending is on the rise as losses from weather-related catastrophes surge. Heeding estimates that spending U.S. \$1 on prevention can yield up to U.S. \$36 in savings from losses, the World Bank allocated U.S. \$1.4 billion in 2012-14 on preparedness, nearly half the U.S. \$3 billion committed to post-disaster rebuilding.

Takahisa Kishimoto of Teijin Frontier Co., a subsidiary of textiles giant Teijin, was peddling a blanket with hand-holes that can be used to haul an injured person out of a disaster zone when a stretcher isn't handy.

Many of the exhibitors in Sendai traveled from Japan's western industrial center of Osaka, seeking to expand into northern Japan and beyond. That includes Takashi Torano, a disaster expert at Fujiwara Industry Co., a maker of tsunami escape towers, among many other types of disaster equipment. Fujiwara also makes beds fitted with overhead steel slats to shield up to three adults from falling debris.

"The idea is to create a safe space in the home," said Torano. Other offerings included an emergency kit for helping extricate people from collapsed houses and hard hats designed to look like baseball caps. "You can walk around town and not have to worry about a quake knocking something onto your head," Torano said.

On a larger scale, Nippon Steel & Sumitomo Metal Products Co. and contractor Shimizu Corp. have developed an "anti-seismic surgical floor" to keep operating tables steady in case of a quake.

As it strives to revive the sluggish economy, the government is aggressively peddling disaster-related technology. At the U.N. conference, the Japan Bosai

Platform Bureau, set up with support from the Land and Transport Ministry, was offering its one-stop online service center for major construction and building materials companies hoping to export their products and expertise.

The Japanese government announced plans in April 2015 for a 10-year risk management strategy intended to cut in half estimated deaths and damages in the earthquake-prone Tokyo region. Apart from retrofitting buildings and reducing congestion in fire-prone riverside districts, the government intends to stockpile 72 million meals, 6 million blankets and 54 million-use portable toilets.

While an earthquake simulator, all-terrain vehicles and other big-ticket items drew the biggest crowds in Sendai, some of the more innovative products were on a much smaller scale. One example was the Opticure Splint, made of a resin that, when exposed to LED light, hardens into a lightweight but strong cast for immobilizing broken limbs or even whole bodies in the case of an infant.

"Handling babies whose backs or necks are broken has always been a big problem because there is no neck brace to fit them," said Yoshikazu Matsumoto of Alcare Ltd. Medical Engineering Laboratory, a Tokyo-based startup.

On an even smaller scale, Icomes Lab Co. of Iwate, one of the areas hardest hit by the 2011 tsunami, displayed micropumps for feeding IV drips to a patient without having to keep the bag of solution high enough to rely on gravity.

One of the biggest exhibitors in Sendai was Japan's military, which was showing off an array of vehicles, tents, open air clinics and portable kitchens developed for use in disasters.

Soldier Kazuma Kita beamed as he explained the use of a huge, open-air public bath deployed during the 2011 crisis to help victims and rescuers keep clean, soothing both bodies and spirits. "We helped 120,000 people to relax," he explained.



FROM LEFT:

Staff of Teijin Frontier Co., a maker of specialty textiles, demonstrate at a disaster products exhibition in Sendai, Japan, how their blanket with hand-holes can be used as a stretcher in emergency situations.

Staff at the exhibition show how to use the Opticure Splint. The emergency cast hardens when exposed to LED light.

Masayoshi Nakamura, left, founder of Jinriki Co., explains how to use his invention to move people in wheelchairs across rough ground, sand, snow, and up and down hills.



AFRICA

ISTOCK

ALBINO HUNTERS BEWARE

Malawi has ordered police to shoot “dangerous criminals” who attack albinos to sell their body parts for witchcraft. “Shoot every criminal who is violent when caught red-handed abducting people with albinism,” the country’s police chief, Lexen Kachama, told officers.

Six albinos were killed in the poor southern African nation between December 2014 and April 2015, according to the Association of Persons with Albinism in Malawi.

Kachama told officers in Machinga district in the south of the country, where most of the attacks have happened, that “we cannot just watch while our friends with albinism are being killed like animals every day.” He said he does not want to “hear of a police officer chasing dangerous criminals, especially those abducting albinos carrying tear gas or any other soft weapon.”

“That is why I am ordering the police to use weapons in proportion to the gravity of the offense. We need to be secure from criminals,” he added.

Albinos have been the victim of a surge of attacks across Africa in recent months, with the United Nations warning that the situation was particularly acute in Tanzania, Burundi and Malawi.

The U.N. said the spike in violence against albinos in Tanzania may have been linked to general and presidential elections in October 2015, as political campaigners attempted to win over influential sorcerers. Agence France-Presse

POLAND/RUSSIA

ANSWERING THE CALL OF DUTY

NATO aircraft scream across Eastern European skies, and American armored vehicles rumble near the border with Russia on a mission to reassure citizens that they’re safe from Russian aggression.

These days, however, ordinary people aren’t taking any chances.

In Poland, doctors, shopkeepers, lawmakers and others are heeding a call to undergo military training in case of an invasion. Neighboring Lithuania is restoring the draft and teaching citizens what to do in case of war. Nearby Latvia has plans to give university students military training next year.

The drive to teach ordinary people how to use weapons and take cover under fire reflects soaring anxiety among people in a region where memories of Moscow’s domination — which ended in the 1990s — remain raw. People worry that their security and hard-won independence are threatened as saber-rattling intensifies between the West and Russia over the conflict in Ukraine, where more than 6,000 people have died.



Mateusz Warszczak, left, volunteered for military training in Warsaw, Poland. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

In Poland, the oldest generation remembers the Soviet Army’s invasion in 1939, at the start of World War II. Younger people remain traumatized by the repression of the communist regime that lasted more than four decades. It’s a danger felt across the European Union newcomer states that border Russia.

The Associated Press



SMARTPHONES CHANGE

Brain and Thumb Interaction

REUTERS

Typing text messages, scrolling Web pages and checking your email on your smartphone could be changing the way your thumbs and brain interact. That's according to researchers from the University of Zurich, ETH Zurich and University of Fribourg.

Dr. Arko Ghosh of the University of Zurich and ETH Zurich led the research that involved using electroencephalography (EEG) to measure the cortical brain activity in 37 right-handed people. The study, published in the Cell Press journal *Current Biology* in December 2014, included 26 touchscreen smartphone users and 11 users of old-fashioned cellphones.

Subjects wore an EEG cap with 62 electrodes to record how the brain processed touch from their thumb, forefinger and middle finger. Researchers then compared brain activity with the commands recorded by each individual's phone logs.

"We measured people's brain activity using a bunch of electrodes on the scalp, and what these maps indicate is essentially how much of the variance between people we could explain by just looking at the phone logs, so how much brain activity can be explained by looking at people's history of use on the phones alone," said Ghosh.

Pointing at brain scans on his computer, he added: "For instance, these red spots here indicate, when you measure the signals of these electrodes, a lot of the differences between one person and the next can be explained simply by how much phone they were using in the previous 10 days."

Electrical activity in the brains of smartphone users was shown to be enhanced when all three fingertips were touched. Activity in the cortex of the brain associated with the thumb and index fingertips was

directly proportional to the intensity of phone use, as quantified by built-in battery logs, according to research student Magali Chytiris.

"This activity is related to the amount of use from the past days of phone use," said Chytiris. "So we used the logs, the battery logs, from the phone and we found that if the EEG recording was just after the peak of high intensive use, then the brain activity was higher."

Ghosh said the results suggest that repetitive movements over the touchscreen surface reshape sensory processing from the hand, with daily updates in the brain's representation of the fingertips. He believes that cortical sensory processing in the contemporary brain is continuously shaped by personal digital technology.

"Most superficially what we found was that smartphone users have a brain that processes touch differently than people who don't use smart screen touch phones," said Ghosh. "However, if you dig a bit deeper into the data, what you essentially see is that the most recent usage that people accumulated on their smartphones that reflected on the way that brains processed information from their fingertips. So essentially these day-to-day fluctuations that we encounter through our daily lives, they imprint on the brain on the way that it processes information from your hands."

Ghosh said that smartphone use is an ideal way to explore the everyday plasticity of the human brain. "It gives us a very good excuse to go back and look into the phone logs in greater detail to understand how our digital histories could be used to understand brain function and develop real world solutions by studying the real world example of brain plasticity," he said.



REUTERS

Time stands still in Japan's SCARECROW VILLAGE



T sukimi Ayano made her first scarecrow 13 years ago to frighten off birds pecking at seeds in her garden. The life-size straw doll resembled her father, so she made more. Then she couldn't stop.

Today, the tiny village of Nagoro in southern Japan is teeming with Ayano's hand-sewn creations, frozen in time for a tableau that captures the motions of everyday life.

Scarecrows pose in houses, fields, trees, streets and at a crowded bus stop — where they wait for a bus that never comes. "In this village, there are only 35 people," said Ayano. "But there are 150 scarecrows, so it's multiple times more."

Nagoro, like many villages in Japan's countryside, has been hit hard by inhabitants flocking to cities for work and leaving mostly pensioners behind. Its graying community is a microcosm of Japan, whose population has been falling for a decade and is projected to drop from 127 million to 87 million by 2060.

Each of the 350 scarecrows crafted by Ayano over the years was built on a wooden base, with newspapers and cloth used to fill them out. They are often dressed in hand-me-downs, and the ones propped up outdoors are lined with plastic to keep them dry. Still, the weather plays spoilsport, and Ayano has often had to replace scarecrows exposed to the open air.

Sometimes, new ones are made to order, usually in the likeness of young people who have left Nagoro or residents who have died. "They're created as requests for those who've lost their grandfather or grandmother," said Osamu Suzuki, a 68-year-old resident. "So it's indeed something to bring back memories."

Tourists have started to come, too, drawn by the two lifeless delegates guarding the road leading to the village, next to a board identifying Nagoro as "Scarecrow Village." Reuters

ROBBER GETS PLASTIC SURGERY TO AVOID CAPTURE

Police in South Korea say a man who was jailed for theft a decade ago had plastic surgery to obscure his identity and embark on a nine-month robbery spree beginning in April 2014 that netted cash and goods worth more than U.S. \$479,000.

The 35-year-old man was arrested in March 2015 for 87 cases of robbery across the country, a police officer in the city of Incheon said by telephone.

The police officer said the suspect, who had been jailed for robbery in 2005, underwent surgery to alter the structure of his jaw and also had procedures to stretch his limbs to gain height.

The suspect confessed to the robberies but said he had the surgery because he did not like his appearance, the officer said.

South Korea is home to more



AFP/GETTY IMAGES

than 4,000 plastic surgery clinics and has the world's highest rate of cosmetic procedures.

The suspect devised his own tools to disable digital locks to break into houses, the police officer said. Reuters



PERFORMING WITH HONOR

Republic of Korea Air Force honor guards show their acrobatic skills during an event at the War Memorial of Korea in Seoul in early April 2015. The performance marked the resumption of a weekly show by the honor guards that is suspended in winter. The memorial, opened in 1994 on the former Army headquarters site, features six exhibit halls with more than 13,000 pieces of war memorabilia and military equipment, including 100 large weapons on the surrounding grounds, according to the memorial's website.

Photo By: **JUNG YEON-JE** | AFP/Getty Images

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