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ORAL HISTORY

The India-China Parleys (1979-82)

Eric Gonsalves

During his 35 years (1952–86) in the Indian Foreign Service, Ambassador Eric Gonsalves served as Ambassador of India to Japan, to Belgium, to the EEC and Luxembourg, and in senior positions at the Headquarters of the Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi.

During June 1978 to July 1982, he served, first as Additional Secretary (Asia), and, then as Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs, which included China amongst his areas of responsibility.

During those four years, he was personally involved in various efforts towards improving India-China relations – including the visit of the then Foreign Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, to China in February 1979, the visit of the Chinese Foreign Minister to New Delhi in June 1981, and the following two rounds of bilateral talks with China in 1981 and 1982.

In this conversation with the Journal[1], Ambassador Gonsalves recounts some of the discussions/negotiations, that perhaps sowed, after a few hiccups, the seeds of 'peace and tranquillity' on the border, which were to be achieved after many more rounds of visits and negotiations.

In his own words "The border dialogue has meandered on for decades, but tranquillity has been maintained, and even been codified".

Indian Foreign Affairs Journal (IFAJ): Your over four years stay in Delhi from June 1978 to July 1982, first as Additional Secretary, responsible for 'Asia' and then as Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs, saw some definite movement in India–China relations. During the second half of the Janata Government (from March 1977 to January 1980), we did see these relations inching forward – though arrested by a small hic-up – during the February 1979 visit of the then Foreign Minister Vajpayee. After Indira Gandhi's return to power in January 1980, there was a definite upswing in the interactions. You were a witness to these changes.

Let us begin with the Vajpayee visit. How did the visit come about?

[1] The Indian Foreign Affairs Journal is grateful to Ambassador Prabhakar Menon, former Ambassador of the India to Netherlands, Ireland, Senegal, (the then) GDR and Amabassador and Deputy Permanent Representative of India to the UN for assisting the Journal in conducting the tête-a-tête.

The Vajpayee Visit: February 1979

Eric Gonsalves (EG): When I returned to the Ministry from Tokyo in June 1978, I took charge of a new post - Additional Secretary (Asia), which included the East Asia Division. A visit by the Foreign Minister to China, the first bilateral high level visit after 1962, was already under preparation. The Foreign Secretary, Jagat Mehta, was in overall charge, and I slowly became more involved.

A little background may be in order. India and China had normalised relations, in mid–1976, restoring relations at the Ambassadorial level – after a 15 years gap. It was expected that this would give the necessary impetus for improvement in relations. However, the political scenario in India changed. Mrs. Gandhi lost the elections in 1977 and she was succeeded by the Janata Party Government. Wang Bingnan, Head of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign countries, visited India in March 1978 and met our new leaders. Foreign Minister Vajpayee met with the Chinese Foreign Minister Huang Hua at the United Nations in September 1978, and a visit by the Indian Foreign Minister to China was being mooted to revive formal high-level contacts.

Even in China, major changes had taken place. After the passing away of both Premier Chou Enlai and Chairman Mao in 1976, a group of leaders (to be later denounced as the Gang of 4) had come to power. Deng Xiaoping, purged in October 1976, had been rehabilitated in July 1977 (though the 'Gang of 4' was still in power.)

In the preparations for the visit, a recurring problem arose. The diplomatic establishment clearly saw that we had to make up for lost time in the India–China relationship; but in the political set up there was a wide range of opinion – including within the Janata party itself - regarding the extent to which, or whether we should at all, be improving or restoring relations with China. This divide also pervaded other circles such as the security establishment, academia, the media, and most intellectual groups in India. Although now the debate may be less vociferous, it nevertheless continues to the present day. (For instance, when I was Director of the India International Centre (IIC), at the request of Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), I had to do a lot of preparation to counter the somewhat negative climate that prevailed before the Rajiv Gandhi visit.)

Pushed by Foreign Secretary Jagat Mehta, Vajpayee wanted to take advantage of the relatively favourable situation outlined above. Prime Minister Morarji Desai did not seem overtly enthusiastic about this proposition and many, like Subramanian Swami, and others, mainly from the old Jan Sangh,

were sniping at Vajpayee. The other members of the governing coalition were not really interested in this exercise. And the Congress was, I think, still licking its wounds.

There was another factor in operation at this time: the growing friction between China and Vietnam. It had become very obvious that things were almost coming to a boil, and we were worried that this important visit of our Foreign Minister could get upstaged by the China – Vietnam hostilities. Considerable efforts were made to prevent this. Our UN Mission in New York as well as our missions in some other capitals were involved in pointing this out to their Chinese counterparts. Our Ambassador in Beijing had already told the Chinese that 'we hope that there would be no incident involving Vietnam during the visit as that would take away almost its entire purpose'. The visit commenced and there was no response from the Chinese side. We anticipated that the visit would not run into any serious trouble on this account. In retrospect, we turned out to be very naïve.

We had made general preparations for discussions on various subjects, including the border. Looking back, I suspect we were as much prepared to discuss the border as Nehru was prepared to discuss the subject in 1960! We had no clear position to put to the Chinese as to what could be an alternative solution, or what should be our final fall-back position. Frankly, we were only ready to respond in general terms whereas we should have made counter proposals to Chou Enlai's proposals made during the 1960 visit. However, it must also be noted that no such brief was likely to have obtained Cabinet approval at that time.

At the formal talks with the Foreign Minister Huang Hua, the boundary was naturally the central issue. Beyond re-stating the positions taken by both sides in the official discussions in 1960–61, there was little progress. During this meeting, Vajpayee also got carried away by the strong support the Chinese gave for the Pakistani position on Kashmir, and he wanted us to give them a 'fitting reply'. Again, on this we were not well prepared as we had not taken enough background material. It also wasted a considerable amount of time. Moreover, both during the formal bilateral talks and the meeting with the then General Secretary Hua Kuofeng, there was no change at all in the Indian or Chinese official positions on the border.

It was only on the last day of our stay in Beijing that the 'presumptive leader', Deng Xioping, had a meeting with Vajpayee. Deng came straight to the point and suggested acceptance, more or less, of the *status quo* as it was. This was not very different from what Chou Enlai had suggested to Panditji in 1960. It has since

been dubbed 'the package proposal'. This more or less accepted our position in the Eastern sector, and the de facto Chinese claim line in the Western sector. There has been little controversy in the Middle sector, except for the issue of Indian sovereignty over Sikkim which has since been practically resolved.

As I have already indicated, we were in no position to respond in any detail. We had no specific negotiating brief on this question. All governments in India had always maintained they were bound by the parliamentary resolution that no territory of India could be surrendered. Vajpayee responded generally, giving the Indian arguments based on culture, history, usage, etc. Deng then said that if his proposal was not acceptable, then this 'problem of history' should be set aside until it was possible for both sides to resolve it to their mutual satisfaction. In the meantime, both sides should endeavour to improve all other relations. India could only give an affirmative response, while reiterating that a settlement of the boundary would remain central to the relationship. It is, perhaps, significant that the first mention was made here of the need to maintain tranquillity on the border.

However, while no real progress was made – as we were not sufficiently prepared for it – the general atmosphere was good. Our hosts were courteous and considerate. A long period of public jousting in the diplomatic and media arenas was to be gradually set aside, and a bilateral dialogue, though not particularly productive, had been put in place.

IFAJ: It was a 'useful' visit in that you could hold reasonably amicable discussions at that high level; but although both sides felt there could be progress on the main issue of the boundary, they were unprepared to modify their stands sufficiently to enable any real progress….

EG: It was a useful visit as it restored normal relations, however cool, and put in place a dialogue. The border dialogue has meandered on for decades, but tranquillity has been maintained, and even been codified. There was also one other immediate positive outcome of the visit. Pilgrimages from India to Kailash and Mansarovar – discontinued since 1962 – were resumed.

Diplomatic and government to government relations have since returned to normal over the years. Summons to the Foreign Ministry in the middle of the night and walkouts at banquets do not occur any more. My own relations with the first two Chinese Ambassadors after normalisation were cordial, and my wife was often presented with vegetables from the Embassy garden despite protests from the gardener who was a party boss!

However, as you know, this visit had ended on a controversial note,

with the Chinese troops going into Vietnam while Vajpayee was still in the country.

IFAJ: That was yet to come and you did stay for some more time in China. How did that happen?

EG: We had, by then, left Beijing for Hangzhou. We visited all the major tourist attractions, including its famous Buddhist Temple. Here, Vajpayee was able to hold fort with his knowledge of the *Devanagari* script, and decipher the inscriptions. (The Chinese monks – who normally explain the texts – had not been allowed to return after the Cultural Revolution). The day ended after a very good dinner hosted in our honour. As we were coming home from dinner, we suddenly heard Hindi music. In retrospect, I think it was deliberately arranged! When we traced the source, we found it was an open air screening of the classic Indian film *Awaara* dubbed in Chinese. So, we watched it for a while and enjoyed ourselves. After returning to the hotel, we went to bed.

We were – at least I was – woken up about half an hour later by the *Times of India* correspondent (accompanying us) banging on my door. He told me that the BBC had announced that the Chinese had marched into Vietnam.

We had little choice but to tell our Chinese hosts of our displeasure, and that we would like to leave China immediately without completing the rest of the programme. The visit to Guangzhou was skipped. We took the ferry from Guangzhou to Hong Kong, and took a convenient Air India flight just leaving for Delhi.

IFAJ: What was the Chinese reaction to your abrupt departure?

EG: The Chinese officials who were with us were not very high up in the hierarchy, and were mostly protocol officers. Once they had spoken to Beijing and got the official line, they told us that it had really nothing to do with us. The visit was successful, and both sides recognised that considerable progress had been made, and nothing should be done to vitiate that. This was, of course, partly normal diplomatic speak. Given the highly centralised nature of the Chinese Government, inadvertence was out of the question. They certainly showed insensitivity, reflecting their 'middle kingdom' mentality.

IFAJ: Even before your arrival, Indian newspapers were reporting the 'snub'.

EG: On the flight from Hong Kong to Delhi, we drafted our statements trying to put the best face on what had transformed a very useful visit into a somewhat disastrous episode. In the long term, it did not matter too much. The knives were out for Vajpayee when he returned, but that was mostly domestic politics.

When we came back, both he and Jagat Mehta were pilloried in Parliament

– both in the relevant committees and in the open Parliament – about what they had done, not done, and not succeeded in doing, while in China. This development also served to thwart any further movement about improving relations with China during the Janata regime. It collapsed due to internal stress a few months later, and in the ensuing elections in January 1980, Mrs Gandhi came back to power.

Indira Gandhi's Return: January 1980

IFAJ: Mrs Gandhi's return to power also coincided with the Soviet entry into Afghanistan. She had initiated the 1976 normalisation of relations with China. The intervening Janata regime, as you have explained, did not – or could not advance it. You have also mentioned that she was now thinking of the larger picture, which included normalisation with China – and even perhaps Pakistan. On her return to power, you were still holding charge of East Asia. How did India – China relations and her efforts to advance them develop thereafter?

EG: In 1980, during the earlier part of her new Government, she seemed to be really thinking of broad approaches and changes in the domain of Foreign Policy. During a meeting with a visiting envoy of the American President, she explained how the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan had changed the geo-strategic positions faced by India. It was clear that she was thinking of restructuring relations not only in Afghanistan but also with Pakistan and China. By this time, my position in the Ministry had also changed. During the last days of the Janata Government, I was promoted to the rank of Secretary and, for the next three years, was responsible for relations with China and the USA, etc.

IFAJ: On the boundary question too, was there any indication ….

EG: As I have said, during the early period of Mrs. Gandhi's Prime Ministership in 1980, I did get the impression that her world view had altered somewhat, and she had come to terms with living in some sort of harmony and self-respect with all the major powers, including the Americans and the Chinese. In fact, she wanted to see whether we could do a deal with Pakistan. Her visit to Washington in 1982, which I had some part in arranging after negotiating a settlement over the Tarapur Atomic Power Plant, brought us a new rapport with President Reagan.

The whole argument over Afghanistan with the Americans was, in fact, an effort towards trying to ensure that the Pakistanis were reined in, and we

could have a 'live and let live' relationship with them. Unfortunately, I think the Americans did not get the message she intended to convey, given their obsession with destroying the Soviet threat and the need to maintain their alliances and bases for that purpose. I also suspect we have never fathomed the extent to which the Pakistani military had established a nexus with the American military and their conservative and neo-con allies in politics, the media, and academia.

On her return to Government in 1980, she spent lot of time on foreign affairs, as Sanjay Gandhi was mostly running the Government, and she was available for MEA officials to discuss issues in depth. It was possible to get access to the Prime Minister easily, with enough time to discuss issues in detail.

During one of those discussions, we did discuss how the Americans had moved from Ping-Pong to the visit of Kissinger, and then of Nixon, into what was to become at least a partial strategic partnership - and an enormous and mind boggling economic relationship, and how we could learn from that. So I think she was ready to face the new realities, and improve relationships with all major countries and our neighbours.

She seemed particularly interested in making a fresh start with China. She entrusted me with the task of taking Sino-Indian relations further. After one of these meetings, I came back with a feeling that she was thinking of some compromise. I was asked to go on an 'exploratory mission' to gauge the Chinese mood, and to see how we could continue the process started by the Vajpayee visit. That visit to Beijing took place in June 1980.

IFAJ: You must have tried to pick up the threads from where you left off in February 1979. Who was your interlocutor, and what were the subjects covered?

EG: My interlocutor was still Vice Minister Han Nien Lung. On the boundary issue, the situation was as it was earlier. Any movement needed fresh thinking at our end – and that was not to be!

Apart from the dispute on the boundary itself, there was yet another serious issue between India and China. Both were embroiled in cross border destabilisation activities. You will recall that, after 1962, we had begun to allow the West, particularly the Americans, some limited access to provide aid and assistance to the Khampas and others. The Chinese, on their part, right from 1949 had been openly supporting the Communists in India. They masked it under their (in)famous differentiation between state-to-state, party-to-party and people-to-people explanations. They had even supplied arms to some

revolutionary groups. In the North East, particularly in Nagaland, as and when our pressure on the insurgent groups became effective, the rebels sought and found material support, including weapons and training, from China.

These proxy wars did need to be addressed. I found that Han Nien Lung was receptive, and did agree in principle that stabilising the border was a desirable condition and a precedent to the actual resolution of the border question. Supplying arms and providing assistance to dissident groups on the other side of the border had to be discouraged, if not stopped.

From our side, we tried to pin this down into a written agreement. However, Han Nien Lung said that we should first try out an informal agreement, and attempt to discontinue such activities. Getting governments to formally commit themselves would have to come later. In his view, when we were just beginning to restore relationships, we should only attempt informal arrangements. We had little choice but to agree.

IFAJ: The 'exploratory' visit in mid-1980 did lead to a definite movement – and eventually to formal talks. The Chinese Foreign Minister visited India, and you led the official level talks in December 1981 and in May 1982.

EG: Chinese Foreign Minister Huang Hua, visited India in June 1981. Among the decisions reached during that visit, the key one was that the resolution of the border issue was at the centre of the bilateral relationship. It would be taken up along with other bilateral matters at meetings at the Secretary and Vice Minister levels. Five rounds of talks were held between December 1981 and September 1984. Before I moved out of Delhi in July 1982, I led the first two rounds of talks: in December 1981 in Beijing with Vice Minister Han Nien Lung, and in May 1982, with Vice Minister Fu Hao in New Delhi.

In the first round in December 1981, the Chinese tried to move ahead at a faster pace. My brief gave me no flexibility and very little room for compromise. I had no brief either way. The Government had not taken a position on the package proposal made by Deng. Indeed, it could not, because any compromise on altering our position on the border as well as on the 1954 Survey of India map could only be done after much preparation. The stand we had maintained ever since Chou en lai's visit in 1960 had been made into an 'act of faith' over decades with innumerable reiterations, and finally enshrined in Parliamentary resolutions. Convincing public opinion of the need for any change was a major task, and I doubt whether Mrs Gandhi was ready to 'bell the cat' immediately. However, my impression remains that she might have done so in the course of time.

Almost at the time we were holding official discussions, Deng Xiaoping, in an interview to the almost unknown defence journal *Vikrant*, reiterated the package proposal. We felt that this was to pre-empt the official talks, and immediately made a *demarche* to the Chinese Foreign Ministry warning them that this could undermine the official talks. Although the talks went nowhere, we parted amicably.

There was never any doubt in my mind that the package proposal was a serious effort by the Chinese to settle the problem. Our real problem was how to play it out in such a way that we could get back what was essential: that is, in terms of territory.

From the importance the Chinese attached to the talks, I can now see that Han Nien Lung was making one last effort to get the package through. He was to retire soon thereafter. I also was due to complete my tenure in 1982.

Unfortunately, the flexibility that we had in 1980 got circumscribed by the return to influence of some of the old guard in the government after Sanjay Gandhi's death, and the Prime Minister having to return to the more active management of governance. The Soviets were also negotiating their border with the Chinese, and did not want us to agree to any compromise that might weaken their negotiating position. Vice Minister Kapitsa visited Delhi on his way to Beijing to concert our positions. Soviet Ambassador Yuli Vorontsov hosted a quiet dinner for Kapitsa. He had also invited former Foreign Secretary T.N. Kaul and Ambassador G. Parthasarathy. They all told me: 'Don't make any concessions!' I also recall, G. Parthasarthy (who had taken over as Chairman of the Policy Planning Committee in the MEA), taking me aside separately before I went for the first round of border talks, and advising me that 'I should not betray Nehru and give away Indian territory'. There was, of course, no question of that happening. However, there was a need for us to have shown some flexibility over the Western sector where there were some doubts over our stand even in India. We were to do this in later rounds, including on one occasion when Shri Parthasarthy visited Beijing. But, by then the Chinese had lost their desire to settle, and perhaps found some benefits to be derived from raising new issues, such as Tawang in the Eastern sector.

In the demarcation of the border with Myanmar, the Chinese had accepted the McMahon line. So it did not seem to pose a major problem. The original line on the map did need to be delineated afresh, as it not in exact alignment with the watershed. I was sure we could have achieved this with references to traditional boundaries, thus eschewing any imperial imposition which was a

basic Chinese demand. Even today, in the discussions on connectivity along the BCIM Corridor, there are many references among Chinese experts to using the Pangsau Pass to improve surface transport links. This Pass leads into Arunachal Pradesh.

The problem was in the Western Sector. The Western sector was more complicated because it was evident that the Chinese would never relinquish the territory they had used to build their highway between Tibet and Xinjiang. Despite great efforts made by our officials at the official level talks in Rangoon and elsewhere to justify the 1954 western boundary, it must be admitted that some of us – who had had access to records - had some doubts about the full extent of the Indian claim. Even in security terms, the Karakoram watershed is far easier defended than the Kuen Lun watershed.

I had handled the first two rounds; the talks got stalled by the fourth round. They then needed a new political impetus. That could have come during the Rajiv Gandhi Government after his visit to Beijing. It did not, however, and soon thereafter China had to face the Tienanmen crisis.

Regarding the boundary issue, we have not moved ahead at all. The Chinese have moved away from the broad brush 'package' solution. I also fear that they are not confident the Government of India will be able to deliver on a compromise involving even notional surrender of territory. The travails over the transfer of enclaves with Bangladesh, which is eminently desirable in our own interest, may be relevant here.

IFAJ: Your interaction with Han Nienlung when both sides talked about keeping the border tranquil, as far as possible, is indeed a great achievement. This got eventually translated in to the 1993 and 1996 agreements on tranquillity on the border. So, between your two visits and discussions in China in 1993, there was a longish gap; but we presume that this was the time when the whole question of tranquillity on the border while the dispute itself awaited resolution, was being considered by both sides.

EG: In retrospect, I would say that the adventurism on the part of the Chinese, and their efforts to teach lessons to countries like India and Vietnam was not an everyday phenomenon, either from the political leadership, or of the PLA. The PLA plays a role in policy making. This role waxes and wanes; but ultimately decisions are made by the party leadership. What is happening in the East and South China Seas may seem like a repeat of the policy of 'teaching lessons', but it differs in that the land incursions were swift, sharp and ended quickly.

When I served in Korea, in 1953–55, as a part of the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission (NNRC), while dealing with the Chinese and the Americans, I never got the impression even then that the Chinese were as adventurous as their rhetoric would have us believe, and that they would stick their necks out in external military activity without a serious evaluation of the consequences. Like every other major nation, their history indicates that while they sought to protect their national interests assiduously, force was far from being their preferred choice. This is evident from the many strategies of diplomacy and deception outlined even in treatises on the conduct of war by Sun Tzu. The Great Wall is, I believe, their normal response. Now that they are on the verge of super power status, this is an aspect of their decision-making that must be probed. Unfortunately, we have never tried to study China in depth, and have fallen into accepting that its leadership is a monolith with adversarial intentions to all outsiders – a Western concept flowing from their dealings with China at the time of the Boxer Rebellion. McMahon provides a different attitude of a confident imperial power: the Government of India dealing summarily with an effete empire, somewhat against the wishes of its own metropolitan government, namely the Foreign Office in London.

IFAJ: In one respect, it seems that the seeds of the border tranquillity accord, signed later and formalised during the Rajiv Gandhi visit, were sown during your two visits in 1980–81, or perhaps, even during the Vajpayee–Deng meeting in February 1979! Did the phrase 'Peace and Tranquillity' come up?

EG: I cannot recall that precise phrase being used at that time. Nor did it occur specifically in the discussions that I held. However, there is no doubt that the attitude of both governments did flow from a desire to achieve just that. The Chinese were very pleased with the Rajiv Gandhi visit, as it was in this visit they got our acceptance of Tibet being a part of China – something we had never explicitly conceded before that.

All said and done, the Chinese have a clear concept about China, 'the middle kingdom'. Historically, the Chinese have never presented an expansionist outlook – they actually built a wall to keep the invaders out! They have an imperial attitude, but have demonstrated only a limited desire to extend it beyond the areas of the Han civilisation. Even the often mentioned Chinese maritime expeditions overseas, were undertaken by an Admiral from the land-locked Kunming region! And, I am not aware of attempts to gain colonial territories overseas. There was major Chinese emigration into South East Asia and the Americas; but these have had no political overtones. All this makes a considerable contrast to the Japanese imperial tradition which did model itself on its European predecessors.

IFAJ: This is very interesting, because the Chinese are essentially an inward looking people and, like all inward looking introspective people, they very often see provocation where none exists, and hit out when they perceive something is provocative.

EG: I think India has also had a similar 'middle kingdom' complex. We are not that aggressive once we go beyond the Indian civilizational area. However, I feel we do not consider problems in the same long term frame as China does. We tend to be sentimental, and fall for slogans like 'Hindi'–Chini bhai bhai, and then react violently when our expectations are dashed. If we could be firm and consistent, after incorporating a measure of flexibility into our position to give room for manoeuvre in following our pre-determined long term interests, and if we could eschew populism in foreign as well as national affairs, I am confident we would achieve our goals much more effectively.

IFAJ: The issue has now been consigned to Special Representatives – who have since held 16 rounds of talks, the latest being in June 2013. The Border is more or less peaceful, with occasional aberrations.

Even after retirement, you have been involved with various consultations, both formal and informal, on the subject with the Chinese. However, 20 years after your active involvement in the exercise described above, how do you see the situation today?

EG: Let me mention here some details of the last second round in Delhi, in May 1982. I had participated in the first round of formal talks at Beijing. I had already got my posting orders when the Chinese suggested that they would like to come to Delhi for the second round of border talks. We indicated that it might be better to wait for my successor which would ensure greater continuity. However, they insisted, and the second round of talks took place in May 1992. The Chinese side was led by the new Vice Minister Fu Hao who had been my colleague in Japan. We covered the same ground except that we went into greater detail about establishing more parameters or principles – and these are still being discussed!

Since then, there have been variations in the format of the border talks. The level of the leaders has been raised. The subject has been raised at the highest level, and by special Representatives who are supposed to have privileged access to their respective leadership – and thus be able to move it forward more effectively. They have met 16 times! However, let us accept the fact that these regular contacts at this high level have ensured 'Peace and Tranquillity' on the border over all these years.

In summing up the 1982 round, I had said the current brief will ensure

and endure over more rounds. That has proved true, because even twenty years later, we are no nearer to a final border demarcation or even delineation.

In 1989, I had led a delegation to China at the invitation of my old colleague Han Nien Lung, who had become the President of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries. This was part of the damage control after Tienanmen. A call was arranged on the current Vice Minister. Naturally, he brought up the border issue fairly early in the discussion. But, it became clear that, although the Rajiv Gandhi visit had left a favourable impression, there was no intention on the Chinese side of looking for any compromise, neither was there any desire to make any speedy progress. That was my last formal exchange with Chinese officials on this subject.

IFAJ: Thank you Sir, for sparing time and talking to us.