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# THIRD CONCEPT

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- ❖ **Intolerance-Tolerance Debate**
- ❖ **Globalization & Higher Education**
- ❖ **Gandhi and 1940 Lahore Resolution**
- ❖ **Religion and Communalism**
- ❖ **Right to Information**
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**Third Concept** aims at providing a platform where a meaningful exchange of ideas can take place among the people of the Third World. The attempt will be to communicate, debate and disseminate information, ideas and alternatives for the resolution of the common problems facing humankind. We welcome contributions from academics, journalists and even from those who may never have published anything before. The only requirement is a concern for and desire to understand and take the issue of our time. Contributions may be descriptive, analytical or theoretical. They may be in the form of original articles, reactions to previous contributions, or even a comment on a prevailing situation. All contributions, neatly typed in double space, may be addressed to:

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### NSG Fiasco

Recent scuttling of India's bid for membership of the Nuclear Suppliers' Group (NSG) points towards many chinks in the Indian armour of nuclear diplomacy and foreign policy. This fiasco is serious enough to warrant a serious review of India's diplomatic and foreign policy strategy. Undoubtedly, China played a prominent role in scuttling India's NSG bid; nevertheless, Beijing played its cards openly and at this juncture, merely laying blame at China's door-step without a serious introspection of our own failures is unlikely to serve any useful purpose.

Some analysts tout this incident by far the real crucial test of PM Modi's foreign policy and diplomatic acumen which has fallen short of expectations and the big issues like seeking a permanent seat for India in the UN Security Council are still hanging afire. Undoubtedly, PM Modi in his recent interview with Times Now TV has asserted that foreign policy decisions are taken by the team as a whole. However, the sequence of events that preceded this fiasco tells a different story. Creation of too much hype around NSG bid without doing sufficient smart diplomatic homework is puzzling. Prime Minister as the Head of the Government is called upon to sign the deal when the entire groundwork is done by the diplomatic team and the topmost executive head is not expected to put his personal prestige at stake by raising the issue with his foreign counterpart at personal level.

While addressing public gatherings within India or in foreign lands, PM often plays to the gallery by indulging in free-wheeling rhetoric as if he is still in an election mode without realizing that such indulgence can work with the domestic audience to some extent, but its replication in foreign lands makes the mockery of the country being represented. As an analyst has pointed out, the so-called 'personal rapport' seldom delivers the goods because national interest is what decides as to which way the wind will blow. China's opposition to India's NSG bid was very well in the public domain many weeks prior to Indian move and Beijing had repeatedly issued statements that made it amply clear that it was in no mood to let India into the elite nuclear club. This could have alerted the top brass in the Ministry of External Affairs to advise the Prime Minister accordingly. How it happened will perhaps remain an unresolved puzzle.

China's opposition to Indian bid can be understood in terms of its unease with India's rise and its strategy of hyphenating India with Pakistan. What came as a complete shocker was Switzerland, which had earlier extended its complete support, opposed India's bid citing it being a non-NPT state. This comes as a jolt for India as earlier, during PM Modi's visit to Switzerland; the European nation had extended its complete support. India's induction into the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), an exclusive club of countries controlling exports in missile technology, which has come days after China stalled India's entry into nuke club NSG, is a welcome move. India's membership of the MTCR will enable it to deal in high-end missile technology. China is not a member of the MTCR, however. Beijing's application to join the MTCR is pending, affording an opportunity for New Delhi to use it as a bargaining chip with China.

In the wake of Chinese diplomatic manoeuvres in the light of its opposition to Indian bid to seek entry into the NSG and UN Security Council, New Delhi needs to follow well-concerted and farsighted diplomacy in general and with China in particular to harness optimum gains with minimal efforts. Instead of displaying its magnanimity, New Delhi needs to enhance its bargaining power on the 'give-and-take- basis and this can be attained through augmenting its economic and political clout domestically and externally. Major Powers, including the US and China, are known hard bargainers and possess a chequered record of 'arms-twisting', while granting some concessions to a developing country. While negotiating with these countries, their past history of diplomatic negotiations and pattern of bilateral relationship need to be taken due note of before finalizing the diplomatic strategy. Besides, the dispensation in power should take cue from the past and do enough homework before embarking on any diplomatic adventure. Those who ignore history are lost in its wilderness.

— BK