

outside interference."¹³ Accordingly, India has shown its willingness to intervene in local disputes where it identifies a real or potential risk to its security -- as in Sri Lanka and the Maldives. The implementation of the doctrine is clearly in keeping with India's perceived national interest: the exclusion of external powers from regional problems.¹⁴

International acceptance of the doctrine demands that there be a public invitation from the smaller state before India can intervene. Although there was an invitation to intervene in Sri Lanka, India had made it abundantly clear that it was going to impose on the crisis anyway. New Delhi first attempted to send relief supplies by sea to the Jaffna peninsula, where Tamil rebels were under seige by Sinhalese forces, but when the Sri Lankan Navy frustrated this effort, India then air-dropped token supplies to the Tamils under cover of Indian Air Force fighter escort.

In the Maldives, where a small band of Tamils attempted to overthrow the government, there was an indisputable cry for help but there simply was no threat to India's internal stability or security from the coup attempt. In fact, the intervention in the Maldives reflects India's interest in regional stability in its purest form and demonstrates that New Delhi has developed considerable aplomb in its ability to manage regional affairs. This is potentially a dangerous illusion, however, because Pakistan and China would certainly resist further Indian pretensions in, for example, Azad Kashmir or Aksai Chin.¹⁵ In any event, the aggressive pattern

¹³ See: Data-Ray, Sunanda K. "The Rajiv Doctrine: India as a mini superpower?" *Statesman*, New Delhi, November 13, 1988.

¹⁴ See this author's: "Indian Foot In Sri Lanka Part Of A Bigger Struggle," *Globe And Mail*, Toronto, September 14, 1987. This effort is not confined to excluding superpowers activities. India is also intent on limiting the involvement of other Indian Ocean states in the region.

¹⁵ Other recent examples of India's military assertiveness were potentially much more serious and were clearly designed to prove Indian military potential to Pakistan and China. Operation Brass Tacks, at the end of 1986, was an unnerving war-game involving the largest army manoeuvres ever held by India. It took place only a few miles from the border with Pakistan and involved some 2,500 tanks and 150,000 troops. Other divisional strength military exercises also took place near the Chinese border in 1986.