

“INDO-US RELATIONS AND REBUILDING WORLD ORDER AFTER 2014”

Dr. Bina Rai*

ABSTRACT:

The two largest democratic countries India and U.S.A.'s relationship is as complex as it is varied, and is distinguished by a largely unsuccessful search for common ground.

Three main parameters have played a role in India-US relations over the years- **Ideology, Strategy and Values**. Varies, over time, they have had the effect of creating incentives for divergence or convergence in the relationship.

The emphasis is clearly to be seen. In the last 4 years, India's proactive and pragmatic diplomatic initiatives have led to high-level engagement with unprecedented number of countries. Prime Minister Modi has focused specifically on strengthening Indian-American economic, political and security ties.

Prime Minister Modi often employs the concept of 'three Ds'- Democracy, Demography and Demand- in his speeches about India's rise and inherent strengths.¹

The Modi magic or his ice-breaking style or even the freeze selfie moments are structurally conditioned wherein the strategic, economic and demographic forces frame the context of his decision- a natural internationalist, advocating greater political and economic cooperation.

KEY WORDS:

CAATSA, Chabahar Port, India First, Indo-Pacific Region, Terrorism, Vashudhaiva Kutumbakam

* **Associate Professor & Head of the Department Raghunath Girls' (P.G.) College Meerut, Uttar Pradesh India**

Introduction:

We live in an increasingly interdependent world. It is the task of our foreign policy establishment to ensure that our engagement with other countries takes place on as favourable terms as is possible, in a manner that is consistent with our national interest. Like the USA, India is primarily inward oriented.

The two largest democratic countries India and U.S.A.'s relationship is as complex as it is varied, and is distinguished by a largely unsuccessful search for common ground.

Three main parameters have played a role in Indio-US relations over the years- **Ideology, Strategy and Values**. Various, over time, they have had the effect of creating incentives for divergence or convergence in the relationship. The brief evolution of these three parameters is better understood if, for analytical convenience, we divided modern Indian history into three broad time periods: the Nehruvian era (1947-66), the Indira Gandhi & post Indira Gandhi years (1967-89), and the contemporary period (1990 onwards). In the first period, ideological differences dominated the discourse of relations. Finally, the period following the end of the Cold War saw a shift in the focus of India's foreign policy from ideology to pragmatism, coloured by India's growing economic success and ambition. This created space for the rediscovery of common interests and shared political values between the USA and India, after sixty years of uneasy relations.

Modi's Vision of Foreign Policy:

After May, 2014 Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, foreign policy has been high priority. In a fast changing multi-polar world to which India is intricately connected, no Indian leader has shown such remarkable understanding to simplify an otherwise complex situation.

The underpinnings of Modi's foreign policy vision could be found in the BJP Election Manifesto 2014:

“The vision is to fundamentally reboot and reorient the foreign policy goals, content and process, in a manner the locates India's global strategic engagements in a new paradigm and on a wider canvass, that is not just limited to political diplomacy, but also includes our economic,

scientific, cultural, political and security interests, both regional and global, on the principles of equality and mutuality, so that it leads to an economically stronger India, and its voice is heard in the international fora”.2

Modi’s approach to global affairs is based on linking India’s foreign policy to domestic transformation. While on the one hand, his policies seek to attract foreign capital, technology and open foreign markets for Indian products, on the other; the policies are geared towards regional stability, peace and prosperity. He has earnestly pursued the NDA government’s flagship programmes like- Make in India, Digital India, Smart Cities, Clean Ganga, Swachh Bharat, Skill India and Startup India. There is a development story in Modi’s foreign policy.

One of Modi’s remarkable accomplishments has been to energize and enthuse the Indian diaspora. The diaspora has emerged as a significant factor in domestic politics of several countries including USA and UK. The most notable achievement has been an emphasis towards **‘India First’.****Modi achievement is that India is equally important for USA, Russia, and China.**

Modi began by openly consolidating India’s regional base. By inviting South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) leaders to his inauguration. Through this action India’s new Prime Minister showed not only the region, but also the world, that ‘India is back’ and that Modi’s India was going to be very different than the one of the world had seen in recent decades. Modi emphasized that India wasn’t looking for just any partners. It’s looking for the right partners. And USA was the first country that welcomed this concept. That allowed him to secure major gains for India.

Indo-U.S. Relation in Modi Era:

It is a matter of fact that we live in a unipolar world with a fringe of multipolar world, in which the politics and economy of the US sets the global agenda.

Prime Minister Modi’s emphasis on building relations with the U.S., including his unprecedented invitation to US President Barack Obama to serve as chief guest at the 2015 Indian Republic Day

celebration, demonstrates his interest in distancing his government from the traditional non-alignment patterns of Indian foreign policymaking.

This question is natural that why the US is giving so much importance to India?

Answer is in the Morgenthau's theory of international politics- "There is no permanent enemy and there is no permanent friend in international relations"³The most important is National Interest. Indian is taking decisions as per its national interests even though Indian decisions are clashing with US global agenda. In view of this emphasis on the following keystones are important so as to bring India and America closer:

❖ **6 Main Keystones deal with Indo-U.S. Relations:**

1. **Indian Diaspora:** PM Modi's foreign policy prioritization and actions, he implicitly reifies a fourth 'D' that is turning out to be no less integral to the story of India's growing influence in the world, namely, diaspora. There is a symbiotic relationship that the Indian Prime Minister has fertilized with the vast panorama of Non Resident Indians (NRIs) and Overseas Citizens (OCIs) of India, who include those formerly known as Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) spread out across the world. The diaspora is oxygen for Modi as a world leader and Modi is the lodestar for the multitudes that departed India physically but not emotionally and culturally.

2.

The depth of Modi's reappraisal of India's role in the world and the corollary place of its 25 million-odd diaspora is evident from a phrase he used for the homeland in one of his many electrifying speeches before dotting NRIs and OCIs in September 2016: *Bahuratna Vashundhara* or a land rich with priceless gems that can keep giving generously for the well-being of the universe.⁴To Modi, India is an unsung hero for the plethora of gifts it has showered in international affairs like the ethos of *Vashudhaiva Kutumbakam*, Vivekananda's gospel of spiritual oneness of humankind, Mahatama Gandhi's ideologies of Non-Violence and ecological conservation, and the Indian model of 'live and let live' and multicultural coexistence. He has left no stone unturned to heap praise on the Indian diaspora as keepers of the flame who have been ideal migrants in their host nations by investing sweat and blood to develop those countries. The effort of this effort has been remind host countries that people of Indian origin are invaluable assets to them and, by inference, that the bilateral relations with the Indian state are leavened by

this incomparable human resource factor. Modi's diasporic support today is broad and adequately representative of India's socio-economic, ethnic and religious diversity. Simultaneously, it has made the Indian diaspora more harmonious and capable of coming together to lobby for Indian interests in their respective countries of abode. Modi's notion of 'brain gain' through give-and-take between the homeland and the diaspora had been circulating for years in India.

3. Trade War between China and U.S.A.& Balance of Power with China: The Trump administration has been using a mix of diplomatic, strategic and trade measures against its trade partners for better flow of goods and services to those markets, while reducing U.S. imports. It is also redefining the U.S.'s relations with countries like China, the EU and Canada."The most important thing will be the U.S.'s stand on India's \$10 billion oil imports from Iran (a country facing US trade sanctions),"The U.S. can't readily go to war with China with Pericles at the helm of its fighting fleet. China not only has nuclear weapons aplenty, but also \$1.7 trillion in U.S. Treasury Bonds. It's difficult to go to war with someone who has large chunks of your economy in his pocket.

China is challenging US supremacy with its massive Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) with its land and sea routes, thus extending Chinese influence well beyond the "golden age" of the Tang dynasty. Today's BRI has acquired a reputation for creating debt traps and virtual takeover of sovereign territory in return. Under the current circumstances, China and India need to deepen their cooperation to fight trade protectionism. India had been the first country to publicly criticize the Belt and Road Initiative, asserting that international connectivity programs should be transparent and financially viable. United States has been pushing India to be more proactive in building a new security paradigm in Indo-Pacific, which Beijing views with wariness.

4. New World Order based on Indo-Pacific Region: Another irritant has been the U.S. stance towards China's role in South Asia. Every Indian prime minister in recent memory has rhetorically committed to ever more cooperation and alignment with the United States, but in practice, strategic convergence has lagged far behind. At the Shangri-La Dialogue in June, for instance, Prime Minister Narendra Modi highlighted the importance of promoting a common "rules-based international order" in the Indo-Pacific within which all nations can thrive as "equal and sovereign" entities — a decisive affirmation of the U.S. vision for regional security.⁵

Notably, Indian strategists are adamant that the United States' concept of free Indo-Pacific Strategy also contains the word "inclusive" to ensure that it is framed as a broadly affirmative agenda for all countries in the region, rather than one aimed against any single actor.

In 2018, the U.S. Defense Department's renaming of the U.S. Pacific Command to the "Indo-Pacific Command" highlighted the significance of India's role in maintaining global stability and security. And the U.S. government's reaffirmation of India's status as a "Major Defense Partner" in the recently enacted National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2019 cemented the importance of the U.S.-India defense partnership amid converging threat perceptions vis-à-vis China.

5. Control of Middle East through Afghanistan and South Asia Policy: Now India is important for U.S. South Asia Policy for Afghanistan. The reason is simple- the growing sense of uncertainty that prevails. A year after U.S. President Donald Trump unveiled his new Afghanistan policy, the stalemate continues. The objective of the U.S. policy announced last year were to break the military stalemate on the ground by expanding both the presence and role of U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan.

The Trump's administration, Iran is another hurdle of realizing its South Asia Policy. Iran is neighbours to both Afghanistan and Pakistan and any action against Tehran will have consequences on the region. Second the new American push to sanction and isolate Iran will undoubtedly shift the focus from the task of resolving the situation in Afghanistan. And finally Iran is also an alternative route for landlocked Afghanistan's trade routes to the sea, which ties in with India's desire to circumvent Pakistan by developing the Chabahar port.

This is why U.S. President Donald Trump's earlier objectives of "winning" in Afghanistan have been quietly put aside. In this situation next, India must focus on assisting, Afghanistan in every manner possible to ensure that the country's elections are as peaceful and participative as possible. India's development assistance has been the source of its considerable influence and goodwill among Afghan citizens, and this is not the time to make cuts. On the military front as well as engineering tech support for Afghan hardware. India's plans at Chabahar are equally important to its efforts at keeping lines to Afghanistan independent of other considerations.

The U.S. has taken a well-thought-out decision to exempt India from sanctions regarding the development of the strategically located Chabahar port in Iran. The construction of the railway line connecting Afghanistan with Iran will also remain exempt from Washington's punitive sanctions. This significant decision by the Donald Trump administration is a clear vindication of the role India has been playing in developing Chabahar, and its strategic value for Afghan reconstruction and development. Trump's decision will undeniably go a long way in safeguarding both Indian and American interests in Afghanistan. After a long set of discussions, India, Iran and Afghanistan signed a pact in May 2016 that entailed the establishment of a transit and transport corridor among the three countries using Chabahar port as one of the regional hubs. The first trilateral meeting reviewing the implementation was held last month in Tehran.

It is also hoped that once fully operational, the Chabahar port will be able to counter Pakistan's Gwadar port, which is backed by China. Tehran seeks to benefit the most from the Chabahar Port, as it will be able to connect Iran with international community and recover from the crippling sanctions that have been re-imposed upon it. Afghanistan is keen to renew ties with India, besides becoming less dependent on Pakistan in terms of trade. An important factor that seems to have motivated the Trump administration to grant a waiver to the Chabahar Port is that if Afghanistan becomes a theatre of U.S.-Iranian confrontation, any politically negotiated settlement with the Afghan Taliban will become even more difficult.

Thinking strategically, the Trump administration has been wise in not imposing sanctions on the Chabahar port, as its successful operation would bring Afghanistan and India closer, theoretically curtailing the influence of Pakistan and China. The exemption for Chabahar is linked to the port's importance for both India and Afghanistan, and likewise the importance of India and Afghanistan to U.S. foreign policy aims.

Now the first phase of the Chabahar Port was inaugurated in December 2017, after that India had sent its first consignment of wheat to Afghanistan through this port. India has written history with its engagement in Chabahar and is now leading the regional cooperation and joint efforts to support landlocked Afghanistan. This is also seen as a feeder port to the International North-

South Transport Corridor (INSTS) that has sea rail and road routes between India, Russia, Iran, Europe and Central Asia.

6. Control of Arms Market & To Control Pakistan's Nuclear & Terrorism Threat: Prime Minister Modi enterprising foreign policy, Prime Minister Modi has focused specifically on strengthening Indo- American economic, political and security ties and visited the U.S. thrice in less than two years.

The recent hiccup in the relationship over U.S. F-16 sales to Pakistan notwithstanding, the U.S. and India are poised to make additional progress on defence and security cooperation in the remaining months of the Obama administration. So while U.S. officials emphasized their desire to see India play a larger role in East Asia as part of the U.S. Asia rebalance strategy, the previous Manmohan Singh government reacted cautiously to the U.S. public overtures and appeared conflicted about a strategy to deal with rising China. One example of this more forward-leaning posture was the January 2015 signing of the 'Joint Strategic Vision for the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean', committing the U.S. and India to cooperation outside of South Asia.

Defence Trade and Technology Initiative (DTTI), Jet engine technology, aircraft carrier systems and co-production of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and specialized equipment for military transport aircraft are example of the Indo-U.S. security relations. Making their progress on maritime security cooperation, Indian Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar in December 2015 made the first-ever visit by an Indian Defence Minister to U.S. Pacific Command. During that same trip, U.S. Secretary of Defence Ash Carter and Minister Parrikar flew together on a V22 Osprey to the deck of the USS Eisenhower to discuss and assess advanced carrier cooperation.

A potentially significant step in improving India-U.S. strategic ties perhaps the greater since the passage of the 2006 Hyde Act in support of U.S. –India civil nuclear cooperation was the introduction in late March 2016 of the U.S.-India Defence Technology and partnership Act. These steps include, among other things, designating a point person to coordinate the interagency policy process regarding defence, trade and technology transfer with India; facilitating the transfer of advanced technology for combined military planning with the Indian military on humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, counter piracy, and maritime domain awareness;

coordinating with India on contingency planning on mutual security threats; and amending the Arms Export Control Act to streamline the export control and arms notification process for India, putting it on par with NATO countries and other key U.S. military allies. Now U.S. is treating India same as a NATO partners, primarily because India is continuing close military links with Russia and its concern about technology control. But U.S. must also factor in the evolving security situation with regard to China and the need for countries like India to play a key role in helping to maintain the balance of power in Asia and to ensure freedom of the seaways. To fulfill its role in helping to stabilize and secure the Indo-Pacific region, India needs adequate defence capabilities and access to advanced military technology.

The continuing global and regional terrorists threats demand that New Delhi and Washington build a better foundation of trust when it comes to homeland security cooperation and intelligence sharing. India and the U.S. stand mutually benefit by expanding their counterterrorism cooperation in terms of sharing best practices for preventing terrorist attacks, countering the ideology that drives terrorism, disrupting terrorist recruitment via social media and working together on the diplomatic front to delegitimize terrorism. Even U.S. stopped annual aid of 1.3 million \$, and military aid of 30 million \$, amidst the good news and bonhomie on the India-U.S. front, after the U.S. F-16 bane to sale Pakistan, after Indian objection.

14th February 2019, Pakistan supported terrorist group Jaish-E- Mohammad attacked in Pulwama, which killed 44 CRPF personnel. After this terrorist activity, all over the world criticized strongly, USA supported India's sovereign right to counter cross-border terrorism. Britain, France, Russia, Japan, Australia, Islamic Countries criticized Pakistan. Even China indirectly opposed Pakistan's terrorist activity. After Pulwama, India countered air strike on 26th February 2019 and attacked on 3 Jaish terrorist camp in Pakistan. Again entire world stood with India against terrorism. I want to say that India is changing its soft image under leadership of Modi government and countering against terrorist activities. It's indicated that India is becoming new centre for fight against terrorism in the world. It's the victory of Indian diplomacy.

The greater challenge today is to understand that existing nuclear arms control instruments can only be preserved if these evolve to take new realities into account. The U.S.'s 2018 Nuclear

Posture Review (NPR) reflects a harsher assessment of the security environment faced by the U.S. and more envisages a more expansive role for nuclear weapons than in the past. China is identified for the first time as a strategic competitor seeking regional hegemony in the Indo-pacific region in the near-term and displacement of the U.S. to achieve global pre-eminence in the future.

The key difference with today's return of major power rivalry is that it is no longer a bi-polar world, and nuclear arms control is no longer governed by a single binary equation. There is multiple nuclear equations- U.S.-Russia, U.S.-China, U.S.-North Korea, India-Pakistan, India-China, but none is stand-alone. During Modi's first two years in office, he has taken great pains to strengthen strategic ties with Washington, raise India's international profile and signal his country's readiness to help keep the broader Asia-Pacific region stable, secure and open.

7. Big market with democratic setup with India: India-U.S. bilateral trade in goods and services increased from \$104 billion in 2014 to \$114 billion in 2016. Both countries have made a commitment to facilitate actions necessary for increasing the bilateral trade to \$500 billion. The bilateral merchandise trade is showing an encouraging growth trajectory in 2017. India and the U.S. have set up a bilateral Investment Initiative in 2014, with a special focus on facilitating FDI, portfolio investment, capital market development and financing of infrastructure. U.S. firms will be lead partners in developing Allahabad, Ajmer and Vishakhapatnam as Smart Cities. USAID will serve as knowledge partner for the Urban India Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) alliance to help leverage business and civil society (Gates Foundation) to facilitate access to clean water, hygiene and sanitation in 500 Indian cities. 6

Modi's clarion call in Davos was "India Means Business". India has made tremendous strides in creating greater tax certainty, predictability, and transparency as the Government integrates GST into the economy. A significant positive step toward improving the investment climate would be to further reduce tax uncertainty for multinational companies and institutional investors, especially in areas such as resolving transfer pricing disputes, updating the U.S.-India bilateral tax treaty, and overhauling tax litigation and administrative processes, among others.

Conclusion: India –US relationship has moved past the stage of the usual rhetoric of extolling ‘large democracies’. The 2+2 dialogue – a format the U.S. employs with some of its closest allies including Japan, Australia, has given the impression that India has come within the U.S. orbit influence, detaching itself further from Russia. This impression is further heightened by India signing on to the Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) recently, however, is that India still fancies a close relationship with Russia, one of its and most dependable allies. The onus is on the U.S. to find a way out on CAATSA if it is really serious about taking forward the strategic partnership. India had made it clear that it would go ahead with S-400 Triumpf missile system deal with Russia even as U.S. sanctions loom larger. In October 2018, Russian President Putin’s visited New Delhi. The summit between the Indian Prime Minister and the Russian President is now an annual event, in the long pending sale to India of the Russian aircraft could be resolved and, in the latest instance, the inking of the \$5.4 billion S-400 Triumpf Missile Defence System.

The 2+2 dialogue, for its part, marks a paradigmatic change in the nature of India U.S. relations. As a prelude to this, the U.S. had renamed the Asia-Pacific as the Indo-Pacific. The most important bait was India being accorded the status of a major defence partner.

The underlying theme of the 2+2 dialogue, notwithstanding all this, seems however, aimed at forging a possible containment of China strategy, with India partnering the U.S. in this effort. The U.S. at present, perceives China as posing a major challenge to its supremacy, and ‘the most significant threat to U.S. interest from a counter-intelligence perspective.

The rise of China’s economic power and its growing military might and the re-emergence of Russia are significant pointers to this situation. The U.S. hence, no longer holds all cards. Additionally the threat to the rules based international order today comes as much from within existing democracies.

In last in all above situations India needs to ponder deeply on what is in its best interests. It should not allow itself to be easily persuaded in the belief that democracies, by and large, offer better choices. It should not reject, without due consideration, what is in its best interest. India

must keep its options open and multi aligned, even as the U.S. forms a key part in that scheme of things. Indian Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said, "India has maintained its sovereignty as regards to its relationship with countries. We shall maintain it in all earnestness."

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