

**FROM ESTRANGEMENT TO STRATEGIC  
COOPERATION: INDIA-US RELATIONS  
(1998-2022)**

**THESIS SUBMITTED FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (ARTS)**

**AT**

**JADAVPUR UNIVERSITY**

**BY**

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**2023**

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**FROM ESTRANGEMENT TO STRATEGIC COOPERATION : INDIA - US RELATIONS (1998-2022)** submitted by me for the award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Arts at Jadavpur University is based upon my work carried out under the supervision of **DR KAKOLI SENGUPTA** and that neither this thesis nor any part of it has been submitted before for any degree or diploma anywhere/elsewhere.

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**Dated:**

*Dedicated to Jonai - my baby girl*

*... my newfound strength and joy*

## **Acknowledgement**

I consider myself very fortunate and blessed to have experienced this journey of researching and writing my Ph.D. thesis. I have been enriched by guidance, help, cooperation and insights from many people whom I would like to cordially thank.

Foremost, I would like to express my sincere and heartfelt gratitude to my supervisor Prof. Kakoli Sengupta for the continuous support, motivation, and encouragement to sail through all the impediments in the completion of my research work. Her constant guidance and supervision has considerably helped me in the course of my research and writing of this thesis. Words are not enough to convey my humble gratitude towards her.

I would also like to thank Prof. Iman Kalyan Lahiri, the Head of the Department of International Relations, Jadavpur University for his kind cooperation and guidance. I further express my gratitude to all the respected Faculty members of the Department of International Relations, Jadavpur University for their encouragement towards my work.

I acknowledge my sincere regards and thanks to the Librarians and staff associated with National Library of India, Kolkata, General Library of Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Kolkata, Scottish Church College Library, Kolkata, Presidency University Library Kolkata, American Centre Kolkata, Central Library, Jadavpur University, Kolkata, Tarak Nath Das Research Centre, Jadavpur University, Departmental Library of International Relations, Jadavpur University, Kolkata., for their kind cooperation.

I am immensely grateful to Sri Surajit Kar Purkayastha, IPS (Retd.) ,Chairman, Satyendranath Tagore Civil Services Study Centre, Government of West Bengal, for his kind cooperation, encouragement and blessings which made this journey meaningful. I

am indebted to Prof. Jyotirmoy Pal Chaudhuri, Ex- Vice Chancellor, Vidyasagar University for his selfless support and encouragement.

I cannot express enough thanks and gratitude to my friend Dr. Kaushik Ghosh, for his selfless help, encouragement, which made this whole experience a memorable one.

My friends, seniors and existing and ex-colleagues have always been the driving force of my life, my research work is no exception to that. In this regard I would like to thank Dr. Debalina Ukil , Dr. Damayanti Sen, Dr. Pradipta Roy, Dr. Suvasish Chakraborty, Sri Mithun Mazumder, Samrat Roy, Sanghita Brahma, for having faith in my potential.

I fall short of formal words of thanks when it comes to my family. My grandmother Late Padma Lakshmi Roy, had always been an inspiration for higher education. I wholeheartedly thank her for her divine blessings. My father Sri Asoke Kumar Roy has been my sharpest critic along with being a constant source of inspiration and encouragement, supporting spiritually throughout my life. He has lived this experience with me. My mother Smt. Rita Roy has been there by my side through thick and thin, without letting me feel the heat of taking care of any household chores. I am inexplicably grateful towards her. My uncles, aunts, cousins have been there for me throughout. My husband, Rajarshi has proved to be a real friend, a very understanding and patient life partner throughout this journey. His presence and constant encouragement meant a lot to me.

## Preface

India and the United States of America (USA) are constitutional democracies and share mutuality in their international outlook over the decades. The foundation of this mutuality is based on respect for diversity and commitment to democratic values. However, the international relations and foreign policy of the two countries have not adequately reflected this mutuality. For a considerable part of the last seventy-five years, both the countries have not been under favourable terms, whether in relation to the Cold War era global politics or on the question of a more equitable international economic order or on the issues related to nuclear proliferation. The two countries have also differed with each other in the past on major issues of war and peace, whether in Indo-China (Mainland South East Asia) or in West Asia. India and the U.S. have adopted opposing international stances repeatedly on questions related to democratization of international institutions and on the question of interference in the domestic affairs of UN Member States. Most importantly, however, both India and the U.S have adopted a diametrically opposite stand on issues related to disarmament and nuclear proliferation. While the U.S has insisted on an independent course and sought to build a massive arms and weapons structure for its defence and protection of its allies in its quest for supremacy.

The disintegration of the Soviet Union in the late 1980s and the end of the Cold War led to a reordering of international relations on a grand scale. Consequently, the foreign policy orientation of India also underwent certain changes that were in consonance with friendly ties with the U.S. Since the mid-1980s, India had started focusing on technology in its bid to modernize the country and possible U.S. help and collaboration was increasingly viewed positively in India. This aspiration was in consonance with the

relative opening of Indian economy in response to unprecedented financial crisis in India in the early to the mid-1990s.

There was an expanded area of cooperation between the two countries and included bilateral trade, technology transfer, human resources and defence purchases. India's decision to test its nuclear weapon in Pokhran in 1998 delivered a huge jolt in relations which otherwise had enormous positive potential.. For all practical purposes, India had declared itself as a nuclear weapon power. The U.S. considered itself as the guardian of the non-proliferation regime and India's open defiance of what it always regarded as a discriminatory regime, took the India-U.S. relations to a new low. The U.S imposed severe sanctions against India and attempted to broaden its ambit by an active international campaign.

The above analysis of the trajectory of India-U.S relations up to the Pokhran nuclear weapon test by India in 1998 provides the backdrop of the research undertaking on India-U.S strategic relations.

The thesis is time specific and specific to the context. Despite the possibilities of a compact strength between the two countries, in the aftermath of the disintegration of Soviet Union and India adopting liberalisation in its economy, India-U.S relations suffered a major setback in 1998. The Pokhran nuclear test of 1998 and the consequent sanctions against India resulted in a very fast deterioration in relationship. The starting point of the thesis therefore is 1998 constituting the "low". In 2022, the relationship has not only improved but both the countries are committed to "strategic partnership". This transformation, covering about a quarter century from 1998 to 2022 is the period of study for this thesis.

# Abbreviations

ABM	:	Anti Ballistic Missile
AEC	:	Atomic Energy Commission
AH	:	Advanced Attack Helicopter
AI	:	Artificial Intelligence
AICC	:	The All India Congress Committee
AIDS	:	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
AIT	:	Assembly Integration and Testing
AK	:	Automatic Kalashnikov
AL	:	Awami League
AN	:	Anotov
ANO	:	Abu Nidal Organisation
ANYOLP	:	Organization for the Liberation of Palestine
APEC	:	Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation
ARC	:	Arab Revolutionary Council
ARF	:	Regional Forum ('A'=?)
ASEAN	:	Association of South East Asian Nations
ASEM	:	Asia Europe Meeting
ATA	:	Anti-terrorism Assistance
AUKUS	:	Australia, The United Kingdom, The United States
BECA	:	Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement
BHN	:	Basic human needs
BJP	:	Bharatiya Janata Party



BRI	:	The Belt and Road Initiative
BRICS	:	Brazil, Russia, India , China and South Africa
BUILD ACT	:	Better Utilization of Investments Leading to Development Act
BWR	:	Boiling Water Reactors
C4ISR	:	Command, Control, Communications, Computers (C4) Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance
CAATSA	:	Countering America’s Adversaries Through Sanctions Act
CANDU	:	Canada Deuterium Uranium
CAPF	:	central armed police forces
CAT	:	Covert Apprehension Technique
CCIT	:	Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism
CENTRIXS	:	Combined Enterprise Regional Information Exchange System
CEO	:	Chief Executive Officer
CERT	:	Computer Emergency Response Team
CH	:	Chinook Helicopter
CIA	:	Central Intelligence Agency
CLNDA	:	Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act
COMCASA	:	Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement
COVID	:	Corona Virus disease
CPEC	:	China– Pakistan Economic Corridor
CRS	:	Congressional Research Service

CSCAP	:	Council on Security Cooperation Asia Pacific
CT	:	Counterterrorism
CTBT	:	Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty
CTFP	:	Combating Terrorism Fellowship Program
CTITF	:	Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force
DAE	:	The Department of Atomic Energy
DDP	:	Department of Defense Production
DIPP	:	Department of Industrial Promotion and Policy
DPG	:	Defence Policy Group
DPP	:	Defence Procurement Procedure
DPSU	:	The Defence public Sector units
DRDO	:	Defence Research and Development Organisation
DTTI	:	Defence Trade and Technology Initiative
EDGE	:	Enhancing Development and Growth through Clean Energy
ESG	:	army executive steering groups
EU	:	European Union
EXIM	:	Export-Import Bank of the United States
FATF	:	Financikal Action Task Force
FBI	:	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FBR	:	Fast Breeder Reactors
FDI	:	Foreign Direct Investment
FFC	:	Friendly Foreign Countries
FMCT	:	Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty

FOEMS	:	Foreign Original Equipment Manufacturers
FOIP	:	Free and Open Indo-Pacific
FRC	:	Fatah Revolutionary Council
FRUS	:	Foreign Relations of the United States
FY	:	Financial Year
GCC	:	Geographic Combatant Command
GDP	:	Gross Domestic Product
GE	:	General Electric
GOI	:	Government of India
GOP	:	Government of Pakistan
GSOMIA	:	General Security of Military Information Agreement
HAL	:	Hindustan Aeronautics Limited
HSPD	:	Homeland Security Presidential Directive
HUA	:	Harkat – ul- Ansar
HUJI	:	Harakat ul-Jihad-I-Islami
HUM	:	Harakat ul-Mujahadeen (HuM)
IAEA	:	International atomic Energy Agency
IB	:	Intelligence Branch
ICT	:	Informations & Communications Technology
IED	:	Improvised Explosive Devices
IFI	:	International Financial Institutions
IGMDP	:	Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme
INC	:	Indian National Congress
INS	:	Indian Naval Ship

IORA	:	Indian Ocean Rim Association
IPEF	:	Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity
IRG	:	Iranian Revolutionary Guards
ISI	:	Inter-Services Intelligence
ISIS	:	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
ISTAR	:	Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance
ITER	:	International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor
JEM	:	Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM)
JKLF	:	Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front
JSF	:	joint strike fighter
JV	:	joint venture
JWG	:	Joint Working Group
JWS	:	JSON Web Signature
KAPS	:	Kakrapur Atomic Power Station
KK	:	Kudankulam
LEMOA	:	Logistic Exchange Memorandum of Agreement
LET	:	Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT)
LoC	:	Line of Control (LoC)
LRMC	:	Long Range Marginal Cost
LTTE	:	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam
MCOCA	:	The Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act
MDP	:	Management Development Programme

MKI	:	Transfer of Capability
MLA	:	Martial Law Authorities
MRO	:	Maintenance Repair and Overhaul
MSC	:	Maritime Sealift Command
MTCR	:	Missile Technology Control Regime
NAM	:	Non-Aligned Movement
NAPS	:	Narora Atomic Power Station
NASA	:	National Aeronautics & Space Administration
NASAMS	:	Raytheon's National Advanced Surface to Air Missile System
NATO	:	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCTC	:	National Counter-Terrorism Centre
NEA	:	Nuclear Energy Agency
NIA	:	National Investigation Agency
NNWS	:	non-proliferation of nuclear weapons
NPT	:	Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty
NRC	:	National Register of citizens
NSCN	:	National Socialist Council of Nagaland
NSG	:	The Nuclear Suppliers' Group
NSSP	:	The 'Next Steps in Strategic Partnerships
NSSP	:	Next Steps in Strategic Partnership
NYC	:	New York City
ONGC	:	Oil & Natural Gas Corporation
OPIC	:	Overseas Private Investment Corporation

OVL	:	ONGC Videsh Limited
PAC	:	Patriot Advanced Capability
PFI	:	Popular Front of India
PFLP	:	Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine
PIF	:	the Pacific Islands Forum
PKK	:	Kurdish Workers Party
PLA	:	People's Liberation Army
PNE	:	Peaceful Nuclear Explosion
POTA	:	Prevention of Terrorism Act
PPP	:	Pakistan People's Party
PRC	:	People's Republic of China
QUAD	:	Quadrilateral Security Dialogue
R&AW	:	Raw and Analysis Wing
RAF	:	Red Army Faction
RAPS	:	Rajasthan Atomic Power Station
RAW	:	The Research and Analysis Wing
RB	:	Red Brigades
RCEP	:	Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership
ROK	:	Republic of Korea
SAARC	:	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SDGT	:	Specially Designated Global Terrorists
SEAL	:	Sea Air & Land
SHFJ	:	Sam Hormusji Framji Jamshedji

SLOC	:	Sea Lines of Communication
SSBN	:	Submersible Ship Ballistic Missile Nuclear
SSN	:	Submersible Ship Nuclear
STOBAR	:	Short take-off, barrier-arrested recovery
TADA	:	Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act
TAPS	:	Tarapur Atomic Power Station
TASL	:	Tata Advanced System Ltd
TDA	:	Trade and Development Agency
THAAD	:	Terminal High Altitude Area Defense
TISS	:	Tata Institute of Social Sciences
TOC	:	Transfer of Capability
TSC	:	Terrorist Screening Centre
TW	:	Terawatt-hours
UAPA	:	Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act
UAS	:	Unmanned Aerial System
UK	:	United Kingdom
ULFA	:	United Liberation Front of Assam
UN	:	United Nations
UNCIP	:	UN Commission for India and Pakistan
UNCLOS	:	UN Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNGA	:	UN General Assembly
UNIPOM	:	United Nations India-Pakistan Observation Mission

UNMOGIP	:	United Nations Military Observer Group in India & Pakistan
UNSC	:	United Nations Security Council
UPA	:	United Progressive Alliance
U.S.	:	United States
USA	:	United States of America
USAID	:	United States Agency for International Development
USD	:	United States Dollars
USDA	:	United States Department of Agriculture
USG	:	U.S. government
USS	:	United States Ship
USSR	:	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WMD	:	Weapons of Mass Destruction
WTC	:	World Trade Centre



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# **Introduction to the Thesis**

## **The Research**

The present research has attempted to chart out the course of India-U.S. strategic relations over the period 1998 to 2022. From a low in bilateral relations and overshadowed by the U.S. sanctions in 1998 in the aftermath of the nuclear tests at Pokhran by India, the relationship has turned a full circle with unprecedented advances in strengthening mutuality and defence and strategic relationship. The focus of the research work is on how to best understand and analyse the transformation in the relationship. This exercise was carried out with reference to certain milestones in this transformation like the Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement between the two countries, joint collaborative measures in fighting international terrorism, enhanced defence cooperation including the COMCASA agreement and increased cooperation between the two countries especially in Indo-Pacific. The research was expected to cover the period from 1998 to 2018. However, certain recent advances in the last few years including the increased level of strategic symmetry over Indo-Pacific region and the framework of cooperation through QUAD necessitated an extension of the period of this research and consequently the scope of the work has also been expanded accordingly till 2022.

## **Backdrop**

India and the United States of America (USA) are constitutional democracies and share mutuality in their international outlook over the decades. The foundation of

this mutuality is based on respect for diversity and commitment to democratic values. However, the international relations and foreign policy of the two countries have not adequately reflected this mutuality. For a considerable part of the last seventy-five years, both the countries have not been under favourable terms, whether in relation to the Cold War era global politics or on the question of a more equitable international economic order or on the issues related to nuclear proliferation. The two countries have also differed with each other in the past on major issues of war and peace, whether in Indo- China (Mainland South East Asia) or in West Asia. India and the U.S. have adopted opposing international stances repeatedly on questions related to democratization of international institutions and on the question of interference in the domestic affairs of UN Member States. Most importantly, however, both India and the U.S. have adopted a diametrically opposite stand on issues related to disarmament and nuclear proliferation. While the U.S. has insisted on an independent course and sought to build a massive arms and weapons structure for its defence and protection of its allies in its quest for supremacy, India's approach to disarmament has focused, in the beginning, on the universality of disarmament, and since the late 1960s, against the discriminatory nature of nuclear non-proliferation efforts. Moreover, India was always critical of the U.S.' geo-strategic goal of Cold War that possibly necessitated an active courting of Pakistan since 1950s by incorporating Pakistan in its alliance system. India has insisted that the U.S.' attempts to artificially bring about parity in the sub-continent by bolstering Pakistan through military aid and political support has destabilized political order in South Asia and that the U.S. has been oblivious of the challenges posed by a nuclear China in insisting India's accession to Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). This

understanding informed and guided the Indian foreign policy measures and to a large extent contributed to the downside in India-U.S. relations through 1970s.

A major fallout of the acrimony and distrust between the two countries emerged in the form of opposition and even hostility in the early 1970s when India was compelled to intervene in the humanitarian crisis in east Pakistan and later on militarily respond to Pakistan's attack. The reorganization of political order in South Asia with the emergence of a new sovereign entity Bangladesh demonstrated India's preeminence in the region but it was much later that the U.S. could reconcile itself to the changed reality.

These manifold factors dictated the pathways of India-U.S. relations for a long period of time. Even though the U.S. was appreciative of the democratic structures that India had built and its struggle to overcome abject poverty and adverse economic conditions, the U.S. was reluctant to consider India as a friend. While India's potential role as a counterweight to China in the early 1960s did figure in the U.S. calculations, India's overall political stand on Cold War and its leadership role in the Non-aligned Movement (NAM) was a dampener for the U.S.. The bilateral ties in regard to trade as well as the U.S. economic aid to India was very much on the table but these did not help chart a new pathway for India-U.S. relations on stronger terms. The USSR's intervention in Afghanistan in December 1979, in fact, further delayed the emergence of symmetry between the two countries. While America went ahead with an active political and military support role for the domestic forces in Afghanistan opposed to the Soviet Union and the political regime it fostered, India took a much more cautious and nuanced approach. It did not support the counter-military opposition in Afghanistan led by Pakistan with the active military support of

the U.S. India argued that this would bring in Cold War politics into South Asia and economic and military aid to Pakistan would be liable to be misused and directed against India's interest. In effect, developments centered on Afghanistan denied India and the U.S. the opportunities to forge better ties which had already strained due to the peaceful nuclear explosion test carried out by India in Pokhran in May 1974.

The disintegration of the USSR in the late 1980s and the end of the Cold War led to a reordering of international relations on a grand scale. Consequently, the foreign policy orientation of India also underwent certain changes that were in consonance with friendly ties with the U.S. Since the mid-1980s, India had started focusing on technology in its bid to modernize the country and possible U.S. help and collaboration was increasingly viewed positively in India. This aspiration was in consonance with the relative opening of Indian economy in response to unprecedented financial crisis in India in the early to the mid-1990s. Liberalization of economy and other structural reforms initiated in India during these years was considered favourably by the U.S. and both the countries initiated measures to boost ties. These measures were now part of an expanded area of cooperation between the two countries and included bilateral trade, technology transfer, human resources and defence purchases. While the relationship was going to take off in a positive direction with enormous future possibilities and potential, India's decision to test its nuclear weapon in Pokhran in 1998 delivered a huge jolt in relations. For all practical purposes, India had declared itself as a nuclear weapon power. It had in effect challenged the international nuclear non-proliferation regime led by the 5 nuclear weapon powers. The U.S. considered itself as the guardian of the non-

proliferation regime and India's open defiance of what it always regarded as a discriminatory regime, took the India-U.S. relations to a new low. The U.S. imposed severe sanctions against India and attempted to broaden its ambit by an active international campaign.

The above analysis of the trajectory of India-U.S. relations up to the Pokhran nuclear weapon test by India in 1998 provides the backdrop of the research undertaking on India-U.S. strategic relations.

### **The 1998 Moment**

The 1998 moment is the starting point for the research work done here. The aftermath of the Pokhran test resulted in widespread curbs on India in the realm of defence and technology, constraining the country severely. At the same time, in retrospect the 1998 decision to go nuclear can also be seen as the starting point of a newer understanding of India based on its strength and enormous economic and political clout which the U.S. could hardly overlook. Since then, both the countries have worked hard to fashion a new and enhanced relationship that is developing in many directions over the last more than two decades. The 9/11 terrorist attack on the U.S. led to the "war on terror" waged by the U.S. and allies. This also led to the need for cooperation and collaboration with India, a country facing terrorist attacks repeatedly and raising the issue of threat from terrorism as a major plank of its foreign policy especially with Pakistan. The U.S. could now readily see and appreciate the Indian stand on terrorism and the need to take resolute measures at the international level. The convergence between the two countries on the issue of terrorism helped in downgrading the hostility the U.S. had displayed in the wake of

the 1998 nuclear test. At the same time India was taking several measures to assuage the U.S. and other countries of its own commitments for preserving the nuclear order. One of the aims was to reduce the vulnerabilities from the sanctions and simultaneously work toward its eventual withdrawal.

## **Civil Nuclear Cooperation**

The major contention of India against the sanction was that it did not distinguish between India's civil nuclear programme and the nuclear weapons programme . While the former was a feature of India's scientific quest since the 1950s and received international support and collaboration, the nuclear weapons component was strictly indigenous and was in response to the threat it faced from both Pakistan and China. India agreed that the country may not avail and that it has never availed international support for its nuclear weapon programme but there was no need and rationale for severance of international cooperation for the development of nuclear programme in the civil domain.

This is a necessity for the country's energy security and hence arbitrary measures to block India's access to international market for goods and technology for civil nuclear energy purposes is irrational and discriminatory. Consistent effort by both the Vajpayee Government as well as the subsequent Manmohan Singh Government, to highlight the distinction and underline its commitment not to use the nuclear weapons except to retaliate when faced with nuclear weapon attack, was recognized and eventually paid off when India and the U.S. embarked on the path of a lengthy and tortuous journey to conclude the civil nuclear cooperation agreement in 2006

and added to the strength of their cooperation by several other complementary measures.

## **2022 Situation**

More recently India and the U.S. conducted 2+2 dialogue, between the U.S. Secretary of State and Secretary of Defence on the one hand and Indian Minister of External Affairs and Minister of Defence on the other. The closer bilateral, security and strategic ties built between the two countries over the last two decades, after the freeze in the relationship in 1998, is significant in many respects. Not only have the two countries signed the Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA), they have opened up a series of initiatives that binds the two sides on a much more secured framework in defence and strategic cooperation. The 2+2 dialogue has further firmed the defence and security ties between the two countries. In 2022, President Joe Biden and Prime Minister Narendra Modi met each other twice- first on the sidelines of the QUAD summit in Tokyo and again on the margins of the G-20 Summit in Bali, Indonesia. Additionally, there was 2+2 Ministerial Meeting in Washington DC and several visits by senior members of the Governments of the two sides.

## **Objectives of the Research**

1. Analysis and interpretation of the transformation in India-U.S. strategic relations from the “low” of 1998 to the “high” of 2022.



2. To delineate the course of transformation in bilateral relations in four identified areas: nuclear cooperation, counter-terrorism, defence relations and Indo-Pacific security.
3. To identify the divergences in approach and discord in mutual relations impacting the content, quality and direction of the relationship.
4. To understand and answer the question if the transformation in relationship is confined to a strengthened bilateral partnership or it could transcend the relationship of both the countries with other states and actors.

## **Scope**

The thesis is time specific and specific to the context. Despite the possibilities of a compact strength between the two countries, in the aftermath of the disintegration of Soviet Union and India adopting liberalization in its economy, India-U.S. relations suffered a major setback in 1998. The Pokhran nuclear test of 1998 and the consequent sanctions against India resulted in a very fast deterioration in relationship. The starting point of the thesis therefore is 1998 constituting the “low”. Initially it was proposed that the thesis would focus on the period 1998-2018. However, subsequently the scope of the research work had to be extended, to cover the period up to 2022, both because of the continued high-level bilateral engagements as well as due to the growing emphasis on the Indo-Pacific region by both the two countries. Several milestone developments in this respect encouraged the researcher to expand and extend the scope of the work so as to present an updated account in what seems to be a fast evolving bilateral relationship within the

framework of a dynamic, multilateral and a multipolar world. In 2022, the relationship has not only improved but both the countries are committed to “strategic partnership”. This transformation, covering about a quarter century from 1998 to 2022 is the period of study for this thesis.

## **Review of Literature**

Given that the international relations and foreign policy of both the U.S. and India is of paramount interest not only to the scholars and policy makers of the two countries but is keenly watched by international observers and experts, an extensive literature to describe, analyses and examine the India-U.S. strategic relations is constantly produced and is easily available. At the same time, closer scrutiny of the transformation in the relationship is crucially missing especially in the strategic domain. There are not many good accounts of the interconnected aspects and issues as the focus of most of the studies is on one or the other aspect of the relationship highlighted by this research work. An examination of the comprehensive “transformation” of the relationship proposed here has been attempted only by some select publications. A lot of these publications, however, are based on secondary sources and as such do not meet the academic requirement of thoroughness and rigour needed to understand the relationship in all its interconnectedness. Nonetheless, a few of these studies is reviewed here for their contribution to the subject of this present work.

An overwhelming number of analysts subscribe to the view that India’s decision to keep alive its nuclear option and finally to carry out the nuclear explosion in 1998,

declaring the country as a nuclear weapon state was indeed a response to the security challenges facing the country. However, the attempt to locate the rationale for India's decision to go nuclear is not necessarily driven by security considerations. The May 1998 decision was no less driven by domestic factors impacting foreign policy decisions. These domestic factors emanated not only from the competitive political dynamics at play in the country but also derived from the world view of a democratic country which was deeply dissatisfied with the existing arrangement of the international system based on the differentiation between the "nuclear haves" and "nuclear have nots". It is instructive to refer to the views of George Perkovich who has written a comprehensive account of India's journey as a nuclear weapon power (**George Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb: Impact on Global Proliferation*, 2002, California University Press**). The book presents a comprehensive history of how India grappled with the twin desire to have the bomb as well as the desire to renounce the bomb at the same time. India's moral antagonism to the nuclear bomb was faced with the reality of security challenges facing the country. Perkovich maintains that domestic factors including moral and political norms have been more significant in determining India's nuclear policy. India's colonial past and postcolonial identity played a crucial role in the evolution of Indian thinking and finally the decision to go for the nuclear weapon status in 1998. Therefore, Vajpayee Government's decision to conduct the nuclear tests at Pokharan in May 1998 was actuated by the demands of the public opinion as well as encouraged by both short term and long term considerations related to security of the country. The timing and the domestic fallout including the questions related to electoral dividend may always be raised but there is but little doubt that the policy

decision on nuclear weapon status of the country was in fact a continuation and logical culmination of the determination and planning of both the security as well as the scientific community of the country.

In his book **The U.S.- India Nuclear Pact: Policy, Process and Great Power Politics (Oxford University Press, 2011) Harsh V. Pant** attempts to locate a series of factors at the structural, domestic political and individual level which have shaped the India -U.S. relations. In respect of “Structural Determinants of the U.S.-India Entente”. It has been highlighted that in the aftermath of the 1998 nuclear test by India, U.S.-India cooperation on strategic issues continued to grow due to convergence of their interests on a number of issues. These included the fact that the U.S. is India’s largest trading and investment partner and the desire of the U.S. for an “alliance” with India to act as a “bulwark against the arc of Islamic instability running from the Middle East to Asia and to create much greater balance in Asia” (p-22). The cooperation between these two countries got a boost as both the countries are multi-ethnic democracies. Congruence between Indian and American interests flows from the desire of the two states to have “an open Asian order, not threatened by any regional hegemony that either overawes the region or prevents other states from enjoying access to Asia’s productive economic machine” (pp-34-35). This convergence of mutual interest culminated in the U.S.-India Civilian Nuclear Energy Co-operation agreement signed by both the sides on 5 July 2005.

As regards *domestic determinants of the U.S.-India Entente*, it has been analysed that the Bush administration looked upon India as a natural and strategic ally instead of sidelining it for its not being a signatory to the Non-proliferation treaty considering

India's impeccable proliferation credentials. Besides, both the states having the tradition of civilian control of military, their mutual strategic cooperation would go a long way towards spread of democracy world- wide. Additionally, their "security interests converge in so far as central issues of their respective foreign policies are concerned- terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, international crime, narcotics and climate change" (p-41).

The author underlines that the changed international political scenario, with the collapse of Soviet Union at the end of Cold War, prompted India to adopt a pragmatic foreign policy in place of its traditional emphasis on non-alignment. India found in the U.S. a "strategic ally and a positive force" to give a fillip to its bid for a prominent role in international affairs. Its dwindling economy emboldened Prime Minister P.V.Narasimha Rao in 1991, to open the public sector to private capital and liberalize foreign investments and imports and thereby made India an attractive trade partner for the U.S. which turned into India's main export and import destination.

Regarding defence ties between India and the U.S., mention has been made of India's support for the U.S. proposal for Ballistic Missile Defence and series of discussions on the same in the Indo-U.S. Defence Policy Group (DPG). The signing of the 'New Framework for the U.S.-India Defence Relationship' in 2005 has been described as a "significant manifestation of the strategic dimension of India-U.S. relations" and is aimed at exploring ways of reducing dependence and promoting inter-dependence and mutual stake-holding in defence collaboration" (p-52). It has been clarified by the author that key individuals played a leading role in shaping the

trajectory of Indo-U.S. ties. This included the former U.S. President, George W. Bush himself.

The book also dwells on “*Negotiating process*” between the two sides. Here the author deals with two issues: India’s “Two – Level” Negotiations and America’s Engagement with a Nuclear India. Analysis is focused on the U.S. and the modus operandi of both the U.S. and India to deal with the domestic groups at the national level and the critics at the international level. Difficulties faced by the Bush administration to convince America’s various constituencies including the U.S. Congress that the deal would serve American interest was a major challenge.

The author points out that “the fundamental difficulty in negotiating the Indo-U.S. nuclear pact owed its origin to the conflict between the two competing imperatives of the U.S. foreign policy: great power politics versus nuclear non-proliferation”. According to Pant: “Whereas the Bush administration viewed the pact primarily as a means to build a strategic partnership with India, many in the U.S. Congress would support it only to the extent it contributed to the non-proliferation objectives”. The Indian Government viewed the nuclear deal as a means to reorient its foreign policy priorities and enter the global nuclear mainstream but the critics “viewed it as ploy by the U.S. to constrain India’s nuclear options” (p-113)

**Sumit Ganguly’s** edited book **India’s Foreign Policy: Retrospect and Prospect (Oxford University Press, 2010)** deals with India’s relations with most of its immediate neighbours, the key states in the international order and India’s nuclear, economic and energy policies. Attempt has been made to chart out how the U.S.-India bilateral relationship got transformed “from one of mutual suspicion and

distrust to one based upon a convergence of strategic interests and growing cooperation” (p-6). It has also been indicated how a convergence of structural, domestic and individual leadership factors has transformed Indo-U.S. relations. *At the structural level*, the end of the Cold War forced Indian leaders to rethink their attitude towards the U.S. while freeing Americans from the need to view India through an anti-Soviet lens. *At the domestic level*, India’s economic failings made clear that its socialist development mode was no longer tenable, spurring a raft of market- oriented reforms that brought India closer to the U.S.. And “*at the individual level*, Indian and American political leaders took the difficult and sometimes risky political steps necessary to create an environment in which an Indo-U.S. partnership could take root. Together these factors radically altered the nature of Indo-U.S. relations in the post-Cold War era” (pp-251-252).

In his book, **Samudra Manthan: Sino-Indian Rivalry in the Indo-Pacific (Oxford University Press, 2013)**, **C. Raja Mohan** has argued that the U.S., China and India- the three maritime powers in the Indo-Pacific, would determine the security in the region in the years to come. This triangular relationship would be changed as India will shed its present ambivalence towards its relation with the U.S. and forge strong ties with the U.S. due to growing Chinese assertiveness and aggressive behavior. According to him, India has tried its best to maintain a balanced relationship with China through the settlement of boundary dispute between them but the multiple efforts in this direction has failed to achieve its objective. Author maintains that “India’s deepening defence and security cooperation with the United States in the second term of the Bush Administration (2005-2009) and the civil nuclear initiative of July 2005 strengthened Beijing’s logic to delay the resolution of the boundary

dispute” (p-18). The author has further argued that “China seemed to do everything that it could do to derail the Indo-U.S. civil nuclear initiative. Once the Nuclear Supplier Group approved the Indo-U.S. Nuclear deal in September 2008, China began the effort to construct a similar deal for Pakistan. Despite the lack of international support, China announced that it would go ahead with supplying nuclear reactors to Pakistan in violation of the guidelines of the Nuclear Suppliers Group” (p-23).

The issue on expansion of security dilemma of India and China to the maritime domain has been dealt with by the author. He points out that “as its dependence on Indian Ocean sea lanes is increasing, Beijing has begun to agonize over what is now called the “Malacca Dilemma”. Given the fact that most of China’s seaborne trade with Africa and the Middle East passes through the Strait of Malacca, China has a natural interest in ensuring there are no threats to its energy and resource lifeline. As Beijing’s maritime profile rises in the Indian Ocean, New Delhi would like to hedge against China’s potential acquisition of military bases and naval facilities and prevent Beijing’s maritime encirclement of India. Meanwhile, India’s trade and other interests in the Western Pacific are growing and New Delhi has launched naval engagement with China’s neighbours that is of some concern to Beijing” (p- 33-34). The prospects for mitigation of the maritime rivalry in the Indian and Pacific Oceans and its impact on the related policies of the United States have also been examined in this book. According to him, “the growth in Chinese military power and its increasing political influence on its Asian periphery have begun to raise fundamental questions about the future of U.S. primacy in Asia and the sustainability of its



regional alliances”. He notes that “China is the main challenge for the United States and India is a potential strategic partner” (p-238).

A significant point has been raised by the author in his analysis: “with the growth in weight of Chinese and Indian economies, China cannot be dealt with by U.S. in the manner Soviet Union was contained by it, and India also cannot be treated by U.S. in the manner its other allies in Asia are treated by it”.

An important aspect of the analysis offered in this book is the comparative and relative weight of the relationship between India and the U.S. and that between the U.S. and China. The author points out that the interdependent nature of economic ties between U.S. and China are compelling whereas it is not so as yet between India and the U.S. In his words “the engagement with India, while desirable and important, generally falls short of being compelling because neither Washington nor New Delhi has yet been able to deepen the relationship to a point where a failure of the partnership would end up costing both sides dearly” (p-239).

The book **The U.S. Counter-terrorism: From Nixon to Trump – Key Challenges, Issues and Responses** (CRC Press, Taylor and Francis Group, Boca Raton, New York, 2018) by **Michael B. Kraft and Edward Marks** deals with the evolution of counter-terrorism measures in the USA. The authors have raised the fundamental question as to whether terrorism is an ‘existential threat’ to the U.S. with the perspective of the “war against terrorism” initiated by the George W. Bush Administration after 11<sup>th</sup> September, 2001, or a ‘serious problem’ enmeshed in the wider foreign policy concerns of the United States as perceived by President Barack Obama. The book provides a comprehensive account of the U.S. policy and

measures over the decades on the question of terrorism with a special focus on Bush administration's push for adding an international dimension to its efforts.

Varghese K. George's book, **Open Embrace: India-U.S. Ties in the age of Modi and Trump** (Penguin Viking, 2018) deals with the issue on the state of Indo-U.S. relations in the Modi-Trump era. The author also discusses the "Hindutva Strategic Doctrine" and India and U.S. policy differences on China, Pakistan and Afghanistan. An analysis has been made in the book of the impact of a growing sense of nationalism in India and in the U.S. and how this is impacting the conduct of diplomacy.

## **Research Gap**

Most of the publications on India and U.S. strategic relations are good account of different facets and aspects of the relationship. However, an analysis of interdependent factors and variables significant to the relationship is missing. For example, there is hardly any literature that focuses on the gaps and shortcomings of the civil nuclear cooperation agreement as it failed to take into account the structural and legal constraints in the implementation of the agreement. Therefore, much of the analysis and literature is devoted to salutary and congratulatory aspects of the "breakthrough" without adequately analyzing the questions that were left unanswered and which consequently had an adverse impact on the success of the agreement.

Similarly, even though much has been written about the India-U.S. synergy in anti-terrorism goals but the focus on differing approaches to the sources of terrorism as

well as how best to confront or engage the lead players in sponsoring of terrorism has hardly received the deserved focus. India-U.S. cooperation in this domain is crucially dependent on the U.S. policy toward both Pakistan and Afghanistan but the interdependent context is seldom analyzed in depth. In the context of defence relationship too, while much attention is drawn to enhanced level of cooperation and purchases, the issue related to transfer of cutting edge technology has been missing from the discourse. In regard to approach toward Indo-Pacific, much attention is focused on the “containment” of China but the nature and extent of interdependence between the U.S. and China is not examined. Similarly, much focus on India-China discord and a possible rivalry between the two sides have been highlighted but the impact of extensive and fast growing economic relationship between the two sides and the mitigating nature of such ties on strategic rivalry has not been analyzed adequately.

## **Research Questions**

The following set of research questions covering the entirety of relationship of the two countries as well as questions related to specific areas have been raised in the research work:

Broad Questions:

1. Is it possible to contextualize the India-U.S. strategic relationship as a global partnership or is it best to understand it as a strengthened bilateral partnership?

2. Is it possible for India-U.S. strategic partnership to overwhelm and overshadow U.S.-China and U.S.-Pakistan relationship?

#### Issue Specific Questions:

1. Have there been substantive changes in the level of collaboration between India and the U.S. on counter-terrorism efforts?
2. Have India and the U.S. been able to overcome the structural and legal constraints for achieving enhanced cooperation in the civil nuclear domain?
3. How are India and the U.S. conducting their defence ties and strategic cooperation?
4. What is the outlook and approach of the two countries toward Indo-Pacific region?

The structure of the thesis has been designed as to respond to the above broad and specific set of questions. The thesis in general attempts to answer the two broad research questions throughout the six chapters and the four specific research questions are addressed in the last four chapters of the thesis.

### **Research Methodology and Sources**

The present thesis is an attempt to answer the research questions related to the bilateral relationship between India and U.S. within the context of the dynamic multilateral relationship of the two countries. As such, the discussion and analysis, flowing from the extensive primary sources have been supplemented by secondary sources that attempt to interpret the dynamics involved. Description, analysis and

interpretation from the content of the thesis and as such a historical-descriptive approach and qualitative methodology has been adopted in the preparation of this thesis. The primary sources consisting of Congressional record and parliamentary proceedings, national policy documents and agreements and statements have been consulted. Historical records of the dynamics of the relationship have been analyzed based on extensive consultation of the declassified papers of the U.S. state department. Secondary sources in the form of books and scholarly articles in various journals as well as commentary by well recognized experts in newspapers and on online platforms have also been consulted.

## **Chapters**

The research work has been carried out by distributing the content in the six broad chapters, following the introduction to the thesis.

### **Introduction to the Thesis**

The present Introduction to the Thesis situates the context and the chapter-content of the thesis; its significance and objectives; the review of the pertinent literature; research questions addressed by the proposed thesis and the research methodology followed in the preparation of the thesis.

### **Chapter 1: India and the U.S. –Formative Years and Beyond**

This chapter provides an extensive backdrop of the relationship between India and the U.S.

The focus of the First Section of the Chapter has been the U.S. stance and policy on the question of India's freedom, the dynamics between the U.S. advocacy for India's freedom and the felt necessity of maintaining good relations with Great Britain. The U.S. support for economic development and its appreciation of democracy in India is recorded even while its ambivalent position on the Kashmir issue is analyzed. Official documents presently unclassified have been extensively analyzed to chart out the initial phases in the relations between the two countries in the first section of this chapter.

Second Section of the Chapter details the divergences between the two countries in the aftermath of India's independence. This period also saw the emergence of the Cold war and the multilevel efforts on the part of the super powers to draw various countries to their respective camps. India's reasoning in favour of a policy of non-alignment and stance against bloc politics is also analyzed. Cold War centered ideological differences between the two countries was manifest on a number of occasions and the relationship was never on a steady and firm footing.

The Third Section of the chapter summarizes certain aspects of the relations between the two countries from the standpoint of India's peace advocacy, and the debate over the U.S. support for India's membership in the Security Council.

The Fourth Section briefly analyses the U.S. policy vis a vis India's relations with Pakistan, its war with Pakistan in 1949, 1965 and in 1971. The American stand during the 1962 war between India and China is also discussed.

The Fifth Section of this Chapter analyses the civil nuclear program of India, the role of the U.S. and how that role changed in the aftermath of the first Pokhran Nuclear Test in May 1974 and how the U.S. started dithering on supply of nuclear fuel for the Tarapur nuclear plant. Lastly, the chapter attempts to chart out the views and policy of the different U.S. administration vis a vis India in the backdrop of the Pokhran test and in the aftermath of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan.

## **Chapter 2: The 1998 Moment: Pokhran Nuclear Tests and the Sanctions**

This Chapter analyses the political and security backdrop of India's decision to test its nuclear weapon capacity through explosions carried out at Pokhran in 1998, its significance for India's security as well as the challenge it posed to the world nuclear order. The aftermath of the explosion saw an international response unfavourable to India's test and involved sanctions imposed by the U.S. The nature of the sanctions has been examined especially on the question of high-end technology transfer to India and India's access to hitherto open international markets for dual-use technology. The sanctions imposed adversely affected such access and also served to deny India technologies that were necessary for non-nuclear research, pharmaceutical and industrial sector. One of the most damaging parts of the sanctions was that it rested on denial of a difference between technology required for peaceful purposes in terms of energy security and those that may pertain to weapon manufacturing/up-gradation. The chapter takes into account these factors and attempts to assess the efforts made by both the sides to defuse the situation in order to normalize relations.

India's apparent nuclear hibernation of 24 years since its first nuclear explosion on the 18<sup>th</sup> May, 1974 at Pokhran gave rise to the world speculation about remote possibility of India's going nuclear. Such impression gained ground in the backdrop of India's preference for a non-alignment policy dovetailed with its campaign for global disarmament and world peace. So, the world at large, specifically the super powers, received a heavy jolt at the Pokhran-II nuclear tests conducted by India on 11th May, 1998 (three nuclear tests) and on 13th May (two nuclear tests). As expected, fierce condemnation was heaped on India followed by instant economic sanction and sanction on military supplies imposed on it by the five nuclear-powered nations, the permanent members of the United Nations' Security Council and fourteen other nations in tandem, under the leadership of the United States.

The Pokhran-II nuclear explosion being a *fait accompli*, the United States was bent on mending fences with India to stem any further proliferation of India's nuclear weapon program. India's geo-political edge over other Asian countries in the Indo-Pacific region made India a potential country in the U.S.' bid to contain China's burgeoning clout in the Asian region. So far as the Indo-U.S. trade was concerned, the lucrative market of India was also the cynosure of the United States. Those issues coupled with India's diplomatic overtures for cooperation in nuclear non-proliferation issue and its self-imposed moratorium on nuclear explosion post-Pokhran-II nuclear exploration, prompted the United States to take steps towards relaxing in phases, the sanctions imposed on India.

On October 27, 1999, sanctions on a few entities relating to Export-Import Bank Loans, International Military Education and Training programs etc. were waived by



President Bill Clinton, being empowered by the permanent waiver authority, conferred by Congress, which was signed into law on October 25, 1999.

A series of visits by the political dignitaries and high-level officers of India and the U.S. after the commencement of President Bush's tenure paved the way for normalization of Indo-U.S. relations through restoration of financial loans, military supplies, trades promotion etc.

The September 11, 2001 terrorist attack on the United States galvanized the U.S. Government to the imperative need of collective resistance to thwart the attempt of the terrorists to destabilize the peace and progress of the U.S. and the world at large. The geo-political importance of India prompted President Bush to take steps to improve the Indo-U.S. relations. Consequently, the President, in exercise of the authority granted to him in the Defense Appropriations Act, FY2000, lifted on September 22, 2001, all nuclear test-related economic sanctions against India. The most remarkable and crucial role in the process was played by the Foreign Minister of India, Jaswant Singh and U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott. These two dignitaries had 11 rounds of talks to arrive at the favourable outcome. The discussions were related to a number of mutually beneficial issues e.g., fighting terrorism, promoting human rights and protecting the environment, in addition to the nuclear issues. The Pokhran-II explosion was a master stroke given by India to elevate its position in the comity of nations as a nuclear-powered country to be reckoned with.

### **Chapter 3: Making of the Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement**

The highpoint of positive growth in India-U.S. relationships is generally attributed to the successful conclusion of civil nuclear cooperation agreement between the two countries in 2005 and additional support to the cooperation that came about in the wake of successful conclusion of related agreements over the years. The U.S. had adopted a strict stand vis a vis the Pokhran explosions and imposed sanctions on India. However, even with the sanctions in force, both sides continued to explore avenues for supporting their mutuality. One important aspect of this mutuality was definitely trade and investment. India was not only one of the fastest growing markets; its policy reform aimed at liberalization was expected to be a big boost in the economic domain, foreign trade and as a destination for investment. The U.S. therefore was not interested in isolating India and was ready to calibrate its non-proliferation concerns in a way that India gets the necessary breather. India was also interested in ending its isolation and wished to gain access to international markets and as such both sides decided to leave enough room to maneuver and negotiate. The civil nuclear agreement was an outcome of parleys over with the years undertaken by the Vajpayee Government in India and the Bush administration in the U.S. The 9/11 attack on the U.S. territory also made it a necessity for the U.S. to pool into all available sources in its “war on terror” and India’s support in this endeavor was considered quite important by a growing number of policy planners in the U.S. However, the non-proliferation lobbies in the U.S. were adamant that any leeway or concession to India should not be construed as an endorsement of India’s

defiance of international non-proliferation regime. It was against this backdrop that intense negotiations had started.

The chapter analyses the different steps involved in the hard negotiations which had started by the Vajpayee Government but well continued with Manmohan Singh's stewardship of the Government since 2004. The chapter also delves deep into the different approaches adopted by the various actors and factors including the intense lobbying within the U.S. Congress- House of Representatives and the Senate. The chapter highlights the context and content of India-specific enabling legislations that the U.S. Congress finally agreed. The significance of the agreement for furtherance of India-U.S. relations is easily understood but there are a number of contentious limitations that India was subjected to agree. Critics have maintained that the distinction between the peaceful use and the military use of the nuclear facility is rather thin and it is not possible to adhere to a strict demarcation. While the Indian critics saw this as constituting limitations on India's nuclear weapon development especially in the absence of a credible deterrence, the American critics considered the agreement as a sellout of non-proliferation principles. Moreover, the operationalization of the agreement has faced several setbacks especially the difficulties in regard to Indian legislation concerning liabilities in case of accidents etc. in civil nuclear plants set up in India by the U.S. companies. Also, the U.S. support to India in gaining access to international nuclear market has been substantive but has not resulted in helping India gain access to groupings such as Nuclear Suppliers Group etc. These relevant issues are analyzed in this chapter.

The highpoint of positive growth in India-U.S. relationships is generally attributed to the successful conclusion of the civil nuclear cooperation agreement between the two countries in 2005. It was an outcome of parleys over the years undertaken by the Vajpayee Government in India and the Bush administration in the U.S. and it continued with Manmohan Singh's stewardship of the Government since 2004.

The 'Next Steps in Strategic Partnerships (NSSP)' between India and United States, announced in January 2004, seeking augmentation of cooperation in civilian nuclear activities, civilian space programmes, high-technology trade, and missile defense saw its culmination with the visit of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to the United States in 2005.

President Bush was committed to facilitate the conclusion of the civil nuclear agreement through adjustment of the U.S. laws and policies and international regimes with the consent from the U.S. Congress and in collaboration with the friends and allies of the United States.

As a reciprocal gesture, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh also made a slew of commitments e.g., phased segregation of India's civilian and military nuclear facilities; placement of civil nuclear facilities under International Atomic Energy Agency; adherence to India's unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing; refraining from transfer of technologies relating to enrichment and reprocessing of nuclear materials, to any country which is not conversant with such technologies etc. India declared 14 thermal power reactors, out of 22 such reactors in operations, to be under the civilian list and agreed to put them under IAEA safeguards.

In order to circumvent the stipulations of the U.S. Atomic Energy Act of 1954 for Nuclear cooperation with India, Bush administration passed the Hyde Act on 18 December, 2006. The passage of Hyde Act attracted strong opposition from the Indian political parties and scientists, as some of its provisions were at variance with the Indo-U.S. joint statement issued on the July 18, 2005. However, through a series of negotiations, the issues were settled and the agreement was signed on 3<sup>rd</sup> August, 2007.

The proposal for Indo-U.S. Civil Nuclear Deal received criticisms from India's Left wing and Right-wing political parties. The scientific community of India also took umbrage for not being taken into confidence before clinching the deal. The nuclear scientists urged the Indian Government not to put the fast breeder reactors under the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards. In order to gain the support of the scientists, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh declared in the Parliament that the U.S. had agreed to exclude the fast breeder reactors from the purview of inspection of IAEA. Ultimately Prime Minister Manmohan Singh could convince the Bush administration to put the India's fast breeder reactors beyond IAEA safeguards. Manmohan Singh Government took another bold step of parting with the Left parties who were coalition partners in his Government as they were averse to the clinching of the Civil Nuclear deal.

The smooth implementation of the deal was facilitated by the victory of President Barack Obama in the 2008 Presidential election and that of Manmohan Singh's Indian National Congress Party in the 2009 Parliamentary election.

The Civil Nuclear Deal enabled India and the U.S. to retrieve their relations from the state of estrangement and to place it in the state of engagement, defying all seemingly insuperable oppositions. The deal restored supply of earlier restricted materials e.g., nuclear materials, equipment, dual use technologies etc. and went a long way to meet the burgeoning energy needs of India on harnessing the nuclear energy in the power sector.

#### **Chapter 4: India-U.S. Cooperation and Synergy in Counter-terrorism**

Cooperation and synergy in taking measures against terrorism has been a distinct feature of bilateral engagement between the two countries. India has been a victim of terrorist attacks, especially from across the country's international border. India's consistent espousal of need and necessity to take effective international action against terrorism did not receive much traction in the 1990s. However, in the post-9/11 scenario when the danger of international terrorism was seen and realized worldwide, the counter-measures against terrorism became a rallying point with the U.S., now a victim, taking the lead. Since then India and the U.S. have been more or less on the same page on this issue. The U.S.' experience and difficulties in Afghanistan added further to the necessity of effecting cooperation in approach toward terrorism and terrorist violence. The chapter analyses the approaches of the two countries on terrorism, their counter-terrorism measures, and the bilateral cooperation on the issue and the differing perspectives on engaging with terrorist outfits. A major part of the analysis is centred on India-U.S. cooperation in multilateral forums including the United Nations. The U.S.' approach to Afghanistan and its relations with Pakistan from the prism of America's overall policy toward

terrorism is another significant variable in India-U.S. cooperation in counter-terrorism. A lot of attention has justifiably been focused on terrorist outfits of different hues and varieties that use the Pakistani territory to mount terrorist attacks on Jammu & Kashmir in India and border areas into Afghanistan. Government of India has been persistently vocal against terrorists getting direct political and even military support for their anti-India operations and has sought to mobilize international opinion against such support. A lot of progress in this respect has been achieved at the international level with the gradual recognition of Pakistan-supported militancy and terror network as a menace that needs to be curbed and curtailed by international action. Support of the United States in this respect has been increasing and the India-U.S. Joint Statement out of the 2+2 dialogue in September 2018 bears this out. The chapter analyses these developments within the framework of growing ties and commonality between India and the U.S.

India's vulnerability to terrorism has been exposed through a number of terrorist onslaught e.g., the December 2001 attack on Indian Parliament, the November 2008 attack on Mumbai's hotels, January 2016 attack in Pathankot and a good number of attacks in different states of India taking a toll of many human lives and causing heavy damage to the infrastructure. However, much before these attacks, India had suffered extensively due to the repeated terrorism activities directed against the country since late 1980s.

United States have been under the attack of terrorist groups such as ISIS, Al-Qa'ida, and Hezbollah. In 1995, a bomb was exploded by an anti-Government violent extremist at the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, taking a toll of

168 people – including 19 children – and injuring hundreds of others. In the September, 11, 2001, Al- Qaeda attack on the twin towers of World Trade Centre in New York resulted in the death of more than 3000 persons and injury to about 25,000 people.

The beginning of the Indo-U.S. cooperation in counter-terrorism can be traced to 1981 when some Sikh organizations acting in the cause of an independent Khalistan in Punjab, started engaging in terror acts, including the hijacking of aircraft. Some of these organizations, such as the Babbar Khalsa, the Dal Khalsa and the International Sikh Youth Federation, had an active clandestine presence not only in Punjab, but also in the U.S., Canada and West Europe.

The modus operandi of India and the U.S. Government in containing terrorism has been a two-pronged approach since the year 2000- a) in respect of policy issues, the concerned Departments [ Joint Working Groups (JWG)] are involved and (b) the confidential areas of operations are manned by the intelligence agencies of India and the U.S. i.e., by RAW and CIA respectively.

But, with the assumption of office in 2009, President Obama's unilateral policy decision to start withdrawal of American troops from Afghanistan presented the possibility of intensification of terrorism directed against India. However, as the first State Guest of President Obama's administration, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh declared India's earnest desire to sustain Indo-U.S. counter- terrorism cooperation. As a reciprocal gesture, President Obama hailed India as a rising and responsible global power. He even exhorted Pakistan to be wary and prevent breeding of terrorism on the soil of Pakistan.



United States adopted White House National Security Strategy in 2010 with the objective of curbing the terrorism perpetrated by Al-Qaida and its terrorist affiliates. The Homeland Security Dialogue of 2011 between India and the U.S. was another step forward on the counter- terrorism issue. A Joint Statement issued during the visit of the U.S. President Barack Obama to India from 25-27 January, 2015 as the Chief Guest at India's 66th Republic Day celebrations contained the mutual pledge of strengthening counter-terrorism measures. However, the response of President Obama to India's frantic call for declaring Pakistan as a terrorist state was lukewarm.

During P.M Narendra Modi's visit to Washington DC in 2017, the two countries agreed on specifically delineated counter-terrorism strategies. The joint statement containing the agreement affirmed the need of implementation of the same seeking cooperation from other countries as well. Pakistan was called upon to dissuade itself from abetting terrorism and to mete out punishment to the concerned terrorist groups, the perpetrators of the 26/11 Mumbai, Pathankot, Uri and other cross-border terrorist attacks.

In all the four 2+2 dialogues held among the External Affairs Ministers and the Defence ministers of India and those of the U.S. on 6th September,2018; 9th December,2019; 27th October,2020 and 11th April,2022 respectively, the issues on bilateral counter-terrorism measures have been discussed. Pakistan's abetment of cross-border terrorism and offer of shelter to the terrorists in the Pakistani soil were condemned. Pakistan was also asked to dissuade itself from abetting terrorism and sought to be persuaded to bring to justice the perpetrators of terrorist acts. They called for concerted action against all terrorist groups, including groups proscribed

by the UNSC 1267 Sanctions Committee, such as Al-Qa'ida, ISIS/Daesh, Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (LeT), and Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM), and Hizbul Mujahideen.

## **Chapter 5: India-U.S. Defence and Strategic Cooperation**

The “New framework for the India-U.S. Defence Relationship”, a defence partnership agreement signed in Washington DC, in 2005 between the U.S. Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and Indian Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee, opened up a new vista for multilateral defence collaboration between India and the U.S. which included expansion of two-way defence trade, increasing opportunities for technology transfers and co-production. In this chapter, a probe has been made into what leverages can India have in gearing up its defence capability through its access to advance defence system in the wake of renewal of the said agreement in 2015 and signing of a Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) with the U.S. during the 2+2 dialogue, held in New Delhi on the 6<sup>th</sup> September, 2018 between the U.S. Secretary of State and Secretary of Defence on the one hand and Indian Minister of External Affairs and Minister of Defence on the other.

The India-U.S. cooperation in the field of defence had received the initial momentum with the visit of Lieutenant-General Claude M. Kicklighter, commander-in-chief, the U.S. Army's Pacific Command, to India in 1991. In conformity with the Kicklighter proposals, army executive steering groups (ESGs) were established in both countries to intensify military-to-military cooperation which followed the formation of navy and air force ESGs in March 1992 and August 1993. Joint Training Exercises were held with Indian and the U.S. army and air force paratroopers in February, 1992 and thereafter in October 1993. Three joint Naval

Exercises were conducted by the Indian and the U.S. Navies as the first initiative, known as Malabar I, II, and III Training Exercises in 1992, 1995 and 1996 respectively.

In 1995, 'Agreed Minutes of Defence Relations' was signed between the U.S. Defence Secretary William Perry and Indian Minister for Defence Mallikarjun. This agreement did not contain any provision for the transfer of technology, joint technology development and sale of arms by the U.S. to India. However, coordination among the Army, Air Force and Navy of India and the U.S. was ensured through exchange of military trainers, doctors and sale of some Precision Guided arms. The relations between the two countries took a nose dive in the wake of the 1998 nuclear tests at Pokhran. However, soon, both the two countries started dialogue in June, 1998. The visit of the U.S. President Clinton to India on 6<sup>th</sup> March, 2000 was indicative of a positive inclination of the U.S. Government to give a positive momentum to the Indo-U.S. relationship encompassing the common interests in a number of sectors viz. defence and security, trade and economy, health, science & technology, education and culture eschewing the divergence in opinion as to the issues like Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), Fissile Material Cut Off Treaty (FMCT) etc. The Joint Statement issued on 15<sup>th</sup> September, 2000 bore the bilateral commitments on these issues.

In January, 2004 the two countries adopted "Next Steps in Strategic Partnership (NSSP)". Under this initiative, "the United States and India agreed to expand cooperation in three specific areas: civilian nuclear activities, civilian space programmes, and high-technology trade. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of NSSP, discussions were

held that tangible achievements were made in areas on Biotechnology, Nanotechnology, Advanced Information Technology and Defence Technology.

DTTI (Defence Trade and Technology Initiative) in 2015 was taken to facilitate the involvement of the senior leaders of both the countries to contribute to the growth of the bilateral defence relationship.

The LEMOA (Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement) was signed in August, 2016, to ensure military related facilities e.g., port calls, joint exercises, training etc. and to enhance the capability of the Indian Army to extend facilities like humanitarian assistance and disaster relief etc. in case of any catastrophe. Signing of Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) enabled the U.S. to legally transfer to India the state-of-the-art defence equipment related to encrypted communication network. Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA) was also signed to ensure exchange of geospatial information.

Due to rivalry with Russia, the United States President Trump warned India that purchase of S-400 (Surface-to-air Missile Defence System) from Russia will attract American sanction under 'Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA). But this caution has failed to deter India from purchasing S-400 as it is indispensably required by India to protect its border with China and Pakistan.

## **Chapter 6: Strengthening Cooperation in Indo-Pacific**

India is considered as central to the America's Indo-Pacific strategy. India is an essential component of Indo-Pacific security architecture, according to the U.S.

National Security Strategy. Both India and the U.S. hold the common strategic vision for a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific region.

Relationship between the U.S. and China is the crux of the discourse on Indo-Pacific security. The U.S. - India growing cooperation especially with a focus on freedom of high seas and policy statements of these two countries against domination of the region by China in the Indo-Pacific provides the context of analysis presented in this chapter. The Indo-Pacific region has become very important in respect of political, strategic and economic issues with reference to two very vital developments:

1. Meteoric rise of China in the Asia-Pacific and beyond, requiring balance of power to be maintained by other regional powers in the region.
2. The relative decline of the U.S. influence in the region, which has necessitated that other powers like Japan, Australia and India play their due role in this region.

The notion of ‘the two seas of Indian and Pacific Oceans’ for ‘a new broader Asia’ was coined by Japanese Prime Minister, Shinzo Abe, in 2007. However, the concept of the Indo-Pacific seems to have received renewed impetus when the U.S. President, Donald Trump, underscored the U.S.’s ‘vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific’ in his remarks at the APEC CEO Summit in Vietnam in November 2017.

As the founder of the concept, India has been strongly endorsing and pursuing it to serve its national security and development. The stakeholder countries of the Indo-Pacific region are keen to harness the potential of the region to their strategic, economic and political requirements. The European Union has also deemed it

imperative to subscribe to the Indo-Pacific strategy to serve its economic interest and also to work with its allies and strategic partners in Asia to ensure global security.

The 'QUAD' (Quadrilateral Security Dialogue between the United States, Australia, India and Japan) was initiated in 2007 by Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. However, it was discontinued after the withdrawal of Australia under the Premiership of Kevin Rudd. Thereafter, it was revived in November, 2017 in Manilla at a meeting of senior diplomats from the four nations on the side-lines of the ASEAN summit with the commitment to maintain a free and open order in the Indo-Pacific.

However, India, Australia and Japan are not confident about steadfastness of the U.S. commitment to the security of Indo-Pacific region. They are also wary of causing any provocation to China. Besides, India is always chary of aligning itself with any country through alliance in the fear of undermining its independence. India is also keen to maintain a cordial relationship with ASEAN member states through its 'Act East' policy.

Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) has been launched on 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2022, in Tokyo, Japan, by President Biden. The initial partners are: "Australia, Brunei, India, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. There is a lot of momentum centering on Indo-Pacific and both India and the U.S. are strengthening their relations through multiple partnerships and interdependence in the region.

# CHAPTER-1

## India and the U.S.: Formative Years and Beyond

### Introduction

The United States of America has consistently championed the cause of freedom and had taken a stance against colonialism. It was therefore, expected that the U.S., being persuaded and rather even forced to go to the Second World War after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour in 1941, would champion the cause of India's independence from the yoke of British colonial rule. It is instructive to understand the policy of the U.S. toward India's freedom struggle, particularly through the lens of fast changing developments in the 1940s. The U.S. strongly advocated for the decolonization of India. However, the question is whether the U.S. was ready to support India's cause at the expense of its relations, particularly during the World War and in the immediate aftermath, with the British. The British were not only allies in the War but they were also part of the western resistance against the Axis forces. The U.S. needed Britain and the British were appreciative of the U.S. advocacy of India's freedom but were not enthusiastic about the same.

It is in the backdrop of this- India-Britain and the U.S. relations, especially in the 1940s that certain fundamental aspects of India-U.S. relations could be ascertained and analysed. Accordingly, the present chapter details the development of the U.S. stance and policy on the question of India's freedom. Official documents presently

unclassified have been extensively analysed to chart out the initial phases in the relations between the two countries in the first section of this chapter.

Second section of the chapter details the divergences between the two countries in the aftermath of India's independence. This period also saw the emergence of the Cold war and the multilevel efforts on the part of the super powers to draw various countries to their respective camps. India's reasoning in favour of a policy of non-alignment and stance against bloc politics has been analysed.

The third Section of the chapter summarizes certain aspects of the relations between the two countries from the standpoint of India's peace advocacy, and the debate over the U.S. support for India's membership in the Security Council.

The fourth section briefly analyses the U.S. policy vis-a-vis India's relations with Pakistan, its war with Pakistan in 1949, 1965 and in 1971. The American stand during the 1962 war between India and China has also been analysed.

The fifth section of this Chapter analyses the civil nuclear programme of India, the role of the U.S. and how that role changed in the aftermath of the first Pokhran Nuclear Test in May 1974 and how the U.S. imposed sanctions against India.

## **Initiation**

Diplomatic relation between India and the U.S. dates back to 1792 when President George Washington appointed Benjamin Joy as Consul in Calcutta, the then capital of British India. Thereafter, liaison between these two countries was sustained through the activities of the American missionaries who were keen to disseminate their religion among the Indians and also to set up schools in India. American authors, Emerson, Thoreau, Whitman, and American Sanskrit scholars like Hopkins,



Lanman and Whitney highlighted India's rich cultural heritage through their writings and compositions in the middle of the nineteenth century. In 1893, Swami Vivekananda's speech on Hinduism in the World Parliament of Religion in Chicago in the U.S. stole hearts of the Americans and the people of the world at large and catapulted India into a place of prominence in the realm of humanity and spiritualism.

The visit of Lala Lajpat Rai, the first political leader of India, to the U.S. in 1905 for impressing upon the Americans the imperative need of India's independence from the British rule ushered in an attempt to mobilise the world opinion in favour of cessation of British colonialism in India. The U.S. had a close acquaintance with Indian culture, philosophy, literature and life-style through the interaction with Rabindranath Tagore and his literary works during his stay in America during the periods: 1912-13, 1916-17, 1920-21 and in 1930.

Indian political leaders sought to garner the political and moral support of the American people towards India's aspiration for independence being inspired by the values of liberty and self-determination nurtured by the American people who emancipated themselves from 176 years (1607-1783) of British colonialism, through a long struggle. The formation of India Home Rule League of America by Lala Lajpat Rai in 1917 evoked sympathetic response from many eminent Americans such as Mr. Checker (founder president of the India League of America), Justice William O. Douglas, Senator Hubert H. Humphrey, Senator Mundt Philip Randolph,

Albert Einstein, Congressman Celler of New York, Congressman James Fulton of Pennsylvania, Pearl Buck and her husband Richard Walsh, and others.<sup>1</sup>

These happenings speak volumes about a bond of bonhomie that was growing between the Indians and the American people during the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

### **Dissecting the Diplomatic Papers: Pragmatism versus Idealism**

However, it must not be lost sight of the fact that instead of a firm and spontaneous support of the U.S. towards India's struggle for freedom, the policy of the then American Government towards India leaned more towards the U.S. interest in keeping the British Government in good humour to maintain the strength and unity of the Allied Forces to defeat the Axis Powers in the then prevailing conditions of the Second World War than to lay due stress on the grant of freedom to India by the British. The U.S. President Roosevelt occasionally requested the British Prime Minister Churchill to consider according at least Dominion Status to India as an interim measure to secure India's all-out cooperation in the war and to consider granting total independence and sovereignty to India after the war. But, initial lukewarm response and subsequent outright rejections of Roosevelt's request by Churchill coupled with Roosevelt's apprehension of consequent breach in the U.S.-British co-operation over the said issue deterred Roosevelt from steadfastly upholding India's independence issue in contrast with its avowed principle of liberating all nations of the world from colonialism.

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<sup>1</sup> Kumar, D. (2009). Indo-U.S. Relations: Historical Perspectives. *Strategic Insights. III* (3). Retrieved from [www.hsd.org](http://www.hsd.org). Accessed on June 13, 2020.

Thus, the United States preferred pragmatism to the professed idealism in developing its relation with India, the then British colony. The observation of Sumner Welles, the U.S. Under Secretary of State, in response to the suggestion of Wallace Murray, the Chief of the Division of Near Eastern Affairs of the U.S. Foreign Affairs Department, for an informal approach by President Roosevelt to Prime Minister Churchill for grant of Dominion Status to India by the British, bears testimony to the said the U.S. stance towards India:

“For all these reasons I recommend against the intervention of this Government at this time in the manner proposed unless we are convinced that some step of this character is imperatively required from the standpoint of our own national policy and of our national defence.”<sup>2</sup>

In this letter, President Roosevelt proposed to Churchill for the formation of a temporary Dominion Government in India. President Roosevelt was of the opinion that at the helm of such temporary dominion Government, there should be a small representative group, consisting of different castes, occupations, religions and geographies. His contemplation was that any administrative move would be made from London so that the British Government would not face any criticism. President Roosevelt apprised Prime Minister Churchill of his unwillingness to be directly

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<sup>2</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers. (1941). *Memorandum by the Under Secretary of State (Welles) to the Secretary of State, November 15, 1941. III* (136). Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1941v03/d136>. Accessed on November 10, 2021.

involved on this issue. He, however, expressed his commitment to be an ally of Britain in the war against the Axis power in the world war.<sup>3</sup>

The U.S Government was very keen not only to uphold its image but also that of the British, its ally, in the eyes of the citizens of America by adopting strategies apparently beneficial for the people of India but caring little for their actual benefit. In connection with the failure of Cripps's Mission, it was the impression of the U.S. citizens that the failure was due to the unwillingness of the British Government to concede to the Indians the right of self-government. In order to dispel the said impression of its citizenry, the Acting U.S. Secretary of State, Welles, advised Winant, the U.S. Ambassador to the U.K., to make a last ditch effort to prevent the breakdown of negotiations by postponing the departure of Cripps from India. He stressed on resuming negotiations with an alternative offer i.e. India might be given an opportunity to set up a nationalist Government akin in essence to that of the U.S. Government under the Articles of Confederation. Eventually then India would set up its own form of constitution and determine its future relationship with the British Empire.

The purpose of the U.S. Government behind this strategy was clarified to Winant by Welles:

“If you made such an effort and Cripps were then still unable to find an agreement, you would at least on that

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<sup>3</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers. (1942). *Letter of President Roosevelt to Prime Minister Churchill, March 10, 1942. I* (510). Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1942v01/d510>. Accessed on November 25, 2021.

issue have public opinion in the United States satisfied that a real offer and a fair offer had been made by the British Government to the Peoples of India and that the responsibility for such failure must clearly be placed upon the Indian people and not upon the British Government.”<sup>4</sup>

After the collapse of the Cripp’s Mission, Nehru shared with President Roosevelt, his disappointment and the notion of Indians about the U.S. leadership.

“The failure of Sir Stafford Cripps’ mission to bring about a settlement between the British Government and the Indian people must have distressed you, as it has distressed us. To your great country, of which you are the honoured head, we send greetings and good wishes for success. And to you, Mr. President, on whom so many all over the world look for leadership in the cause of freedom, we would add our assurances of our high regard and esteem.”<sup>5</sup>

The gist of the reply of President Roosevelt represented a predilection towards a win in the war and silence over India’s dejection consequent upon the failure of Cripp’s Mission. The concern of the U.S. administration to restore the British Government’s credibility to the Indian leaders subsequent to the failure of Cripp’s Mission, is writ large in the telegram message of the Personal Representative of the U.S. President in

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<sup>4</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers. (1942). *Letter of the Acting Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the U.K. (Winant), April 11, 1942. I* (530). Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1942v01/d530>. Accessed on November 20, 2021.

<sup>5</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers. (1942). *Telegram of the personal representative of the U.S. President in India (Johnson) to the Acting Secretary of State (Wells) conveying the text of the Letter of Nehru to Roosevelt, April 13, 1942. I* (532). Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1942v01/d532>. Accessed on November 20, 2021.

India (Johnson ) to the U.S. Secretary of State .Strategy was contemplated to strengthen Nehru's hand through issuing joint statement by Britain, China and United States on Pacific war aims , specifically including freedom, self-determination for India and resolution for defending India at all costs. It was deemed absolutely necessary to add weight of America, China to British promises to overcome Indian distrust of British which deepened since Cripps' failure.<sup>6</sup>

It is also worth noting that instead of urging the British Government to adopt effective measures towards India's freedom, the U.S. administration was keen to maintain a semblance of concern for India's emancipation from British rule. It appears that this subtle diplomacy of the U.S. remained unfelt by the then Indian leaders. The half-hearted nature of the U.S. Government's effort towards making the Cripps' Mission successful was laid bare in the remarks of Cripps himself. Sir Cripps remarked that Colonel Louis Johnson, head of an economic mission of the United States of America and representing the U.S. President directly in that matter, during the mission's visit to India, met Pandit Nehru and did his best to give what help he could do to the parties. He proposed to offer assistance out of his own volition and purely in his personal capacity and in no way under American intervention.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers. (1942). *Telegram from the Personal Representative of the President in India (Johnson) to the Secretary of State, April 21, 1942. I (537)*. Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State.<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1942v01/d537>. Accessed on November 20, 2021.

<sup>7</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers. (1942). *Telegram from the Secretary of State to the Personal Representative of the President in India (Johnson), April 27, 1942. I (543)*. Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1942v01/d543>. Accessed on November 21, 2021.

In order to secure the defence of India against the impending Japanese attack, the spontaneous cooperation of the Indian people was indispensable which necessitated formation of a National Government in replacement of the Executive Council. Discussions on this required the participation of the Congress and the Muslim League. Colonel Johnson tried to draw the support of the U.S. In reality, the British Government was not eager to adopt well-planned and strong strategic measures to defend India against the probable Japanese attack speculating that even in the event of India's defeat; India will be returned to the British. Repeated appeal of Colonel Johnson for a prompt intervention of the U.S. President to revamp India's defence fell flat on the U.S. administration.

The sequence of events, so far discussed, reveals that United States Government showed only apparent concern for salvaging the Cripps' Mission from its failure and it had least interest for India's freedom, though it professed itself as a pioneer of liberty and freedom.

Gandhi's call for a civil disobedience movement against the British was misinterpreted by the American Government as an attempt to thwart the war aims of the Allied Forces. The U.S. failed to appreciate the desperate bid of the Indians to attain freedom and Indian's opposition to the Japanese aggression. The message of Colonel Johnson in reply to Nehru's letter bears testimony to this:

“I have the greatest sympathy for you in your position. I am very happy over the speeches that you have made advocating continued opposition to Japanese aggression. I want you to know that I have in no way changed my personal opinion and I shall act in accordance therewith on my return to Washington. I believe you should know

that Mr. Gandhi's statements are being misunderstood in the United States and are being construed as opposing our war aims"<sup>8</sup>

The sharp incoherence between preaching and practising the concept of individual freedom and democracy by the United States was laid bare in the letter written by Gandhi to President Roosevelt. Gandhi branded the Allied declaration as a fight to make the world safer haven for individual freedom and democracy, until India and Africa were exploited by Great Britain and the U.S. was facing the Negro problem in home.<sup>9</sup>

While commenting upon a statement of Gandhi in connection with his proposed launching of civil disobedience movement against the British, the slighting remarks of the U.S. officer-in-charge at New Delhi (Merrell) speaks volumes about the U.S.'s scant regard for Indians' imperative need of freedom and its myopic view about simmering mass discontent of the Indians against the British Rule.

Gandhi, in his statement to the press, clearly established how there was scope left in the proposal for either withdrawal or negotiation. Merrell, Officer-in-charge at New Delhi responded to Gandhi's statement by interpreting it as '*pure bombast*' ,given that , Congress according to him , would be ready for a compromise if it was in consonance with the demands during negotiations with Cripps and consequently

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<sup>8</sup>Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers. (1942). *Telegram of the Secretary of State to the Officer in Charge at New Delhi (Merrell). June 18, 1942. I (572)*. Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1942v01/d572>. Accessed on November 22, 2021.

<sup>9</sup>Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers. (1942). *Letter from Sri M.K. Gandhi to President Roosevelt. July 1, 1942. I (575)*. Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1942v01/d575>. Accessed on November 22, 2021.



would establish a National Government, keeping the present constitution intact, only if it adhered to the agreed upon conventions.<sup>10</sup>

In his telegram, Merrell, the U.S. Officer-in-Charge at New Delhi, drew attention of the U.S. Secretary of State, to the following off-the record remarks of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, a senior leader of Indian Congress, during an interview by an Indian journalist :

“(1) Let Britain make absolute promise of independence after war and let United Nations or President Roosevelt alone guarantee fulfilment of this promise, and (2) let United Nations or President Roosevelt alone offer to arbitrate question of interim settlement and he (Azad) guarantees that he will get Congress to accept offer and agree beforehand to accept whatever interim plan is submitted by United Nations or President Roosevelt alone.”<sup>11</sup>

Persuasion of Merrell to secure the approval of the President for his proposed mediation focussed on the imperative need of the U.S.’s apt arbitration against the backdrop of Indian leader’s trust in the power and responsibility of the U.S. President for settling the brewing crisis. The same dire necessity of President

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<sup>10</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers. (1942). *Telegram of the Officer in Charge at New Delhi (Merrell) to the Secretary of State. July 14, 1942. I (577)*. Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1942v01/d577>. Accessed on November 22, 2021.

<sup>11</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers. (1942). *Telegram of the Officer in Charge at New Delhi (Merrell) to the Secretary of State. July 21, 1942. I (583)*. Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1942v01/d583>. Accessed on November 22, 2021.

Roosevelt's intervention reverberated in no less sonority in the letter of His Excellency Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek of China to President Roosevelt.

General Chiang wrote that United Nations should do their best, to prevent the occurrence of such an unfortunate state of affairs. He referred to the role of the United States 'as leader in that war of right against might'. He also reminded President Roosevelt that his views were always given due importance in Britain. As regards Indian people's expectation from the United States, General Chiang stated that the United States was expected to take a stand on the side of justice.<sup>12</sup>

Generalissimo's another frantic appeal to President Roosevelt was to utilise United State's acknowledged leadership in democracy to defuse the Indo-Britain problem. He expressed the hope that the U.S., as the acknowledged leader of democracy, would advise both Britain and India to arrive at a reasonable and satisfactory solution, as that had an impact on the welfare of mankind and had a direct role in upholding the good faith and good name of the United Nations.<sup>13</sup>

One finds in the reply of President Roosevelt to Gandhi's letter dated July, 1, 1942, all the diplomatic niceties and bragging about the U.S.'s avowed policies of democracy and establishing freedom throughout the world, while remaining meticulously taciturn about any commitment from the U.S. to help India in its struggle for achieving freedom against the imperialist Britain from whose colonial

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<sup>12</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers. (1942). *Letter of Generalissimo Chiang-Kai-shek. July 25, 1942. I* (587). Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1942v01/d587>. Accessed on November 22, 2021.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

rule (1607-1783), the U.S. had also to emancipate itself through the American Revolutionary War (1775-1783).

Taking cue from the non-interfering and reluctant attitude of the U.S. Government to play a mediatory role for reconciliation between India government and the Indian National Congress, the British Government harboured the notion that the U.S. Government had a tacit support in their favour. Being impelled by this assumption, the British Government explicitly sought the acquiescence of the U.S. Government in their bid to thwart the Civil disobedience movement through unleashing a reign of oppression on the leaders and the masses participating in the movement.<sup>14</sup>

Again, a protagonist of the British views is discovered in President Roosevelt, to the detriment of India's aspiration and struggle for independence, while one goes through his reply to the letter of Chiang Kai-shek. President Roosevelt's view was that the British Government would deem, at that moment, any suggestion from other members of the United Nations as undermining to the authority of the only existing Government in India and would push India to a deeper crisis beyond redemption.

The U.S. Government's lip service towards Indian's aspiration for freedom while professing freedom for all in consonance with the political provisions of the Atlantic Charter was too evident. This diplomatic stance of the U.S. President got exposed to the Indian leaders as evinced in the remarks of Mahatma Gandhi in the *Harijan* August 9, 1942

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<sup>14</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers. (1942). *Message of Mr. Clement Attlee, Deputy British Prime Minister, to the President Roosevelt. August 7, 1942. I* (593). Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1942v01/d593>. Accessed on November 22, 2022.

“You (Americans) have made common cause with Great Britain. You cannot, therefore, disown responsibility for anything that her representatives do in India.”<sup>15</sup>

In his memorandum, Special Assistant William Philips wrote to the Secretary of State on 19 April 1945 that given the Atlantic Charter and the statements of President Roosevelt, Indians are expecting support and sympathy of the U.S. The American policy has been not to disturb its relations with Britain and the British Prime Minister Churchill is highly sensitive on any subject pertaining to that country. According to Philips, Churchill regards India as ‘Britain’s backyard’, and would not like any new approach. The Assistant Secretary felt that the British should be conveyed that the President was disturbed by the reports of an increasing resentment among the Indian people against both Anglo-Saxon powers. He also thought that in the interest of mutual joint military effort and for the prestige of the white races in Asia, another effort to break the Indian deadlock should be attempted.<sup>16</sup>

The United States refrained itself from taking any positive approach for facilitating the grant of independence to India by the British Government under the pretexts that they could not take sides in the matter and that they would accord priority to the defence issue for India compared to the Independence issue for India.

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<sup>15</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers. (1942). *A telegram from the Officer-in-Charge. I* (601). Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1942v01/d600>. Accessed on November 23, 2021.

<sup>16</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers. (1945). *Memorandum by Mr. William Phillips, Special Assistant to the Secretary of State, to the Secretary of State April 19, 1942. VI* (127). Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v06/d127>. Accessed on November 20, 2021.

It is worth mentioning that while many of the American officials in India were vociferous in support of India's freedom struggle, the U.S. President was lukewarm in his response and the British Government was bent on bending the interpretation of principle of universal freedom of Atlantic Charter to its imperialistic outlook and advantage. Colonel Johnson's frantic appeal for the U.S.'s mediatory role for removing the stand-off between INC and the British Government is a case in point.

Consequent upon Gandhi's taking recourse to 21 days' fasting subsequent to his arrest along with other important leaders of Congress Party by the British Government, William Phillips, the Personal Representative of President Roosevelt in India, constantly kept the U.S. administration apprised of the prevailing tense situation in India and beseeched intervention of the President. He said that the pressure on him as the President's representative to do something to save Gandhi's life was increasing hourly. Their own press as well as the Indian press and constant visitors showed impatience at what was regarded by them as failure on their part to appreciate the seriousness of the situation. Indians seemed to feel that pressure by the United States was their last hope.

He added:

“I suggest that if the President could exert friendly pressure on the British Government through Halifax as former Viceroy, I believe our record would be strengthened. But there is no time to be lost”<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers. (1943). *Telegram from Mr. William Phillips, Personal Representative of President Roosevelt in India, to the Secretary of State, February 19, 1943. IV* (213). Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1943v04/d213>. Accessed on November 23, 2021.

The above appeal of Mr. William elicited indifferent response from the U.S. Department of State. The response was that the comments as had been observed in American press regarding Gandhi's fast and the consequent situation was mostly based on facts and not emotional. There had been very little reaction from the American people at large.<sup>18</sup>

The utter disappointment and doubt of the Indians regarding willingness of the U.S. to facilitate India's attainment of independence had been reflected in the communication of Mr. William Phillips to President Roosevelt. It was candidly revealed by Mr. William Phillips that Indians lost their trust in the 'American gospel of freedom of oppressed peoples'. Indians started harbouring the view that America's stand was none other than the repetition of the old British assurances. The United States was chary of coming forward to support India in its struggle against freedom from the British Rule. It dawned upon the Indians that America strongly supported the British in the past, and stands with the British at present and in future as well the United States would subscribe to the Indian policies of the British Government.<sup>19</sup>

The superficial concern shown by the U.S. towards India's freedom and welfare which was already exposed to the Indian leaders did not escape the notice of the

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<sup>18</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers. (1943). *Telegram from the Secretary of State to Mr. William Phillips, Personal Representative of President Roosevelt in India, February 20, 1943. IV* (216). Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1943v04/d216>. Accessed on November 24, 2021.

<sup>19</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers. (1943). *Letter from Mr. William Phillips, Personal Representative of President Roosevelt in India, to President Roosevelt, September 9, 1943. IV* (341). Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1943v04/d34>. Accessed on November 24, 2021.

British Administration also. This is revealed from the remarks of P.J. Patrick, British Assistant Under Secretary of State for India, in the context of the lukewarm reception which the Wavell Plan had received in the British Parliament:

“ ..that those responsible for policy making in India had frequently been admonished by their American friends regarding the necessity for *doing something* toward a settlement in India but without specifying what that *something* should be. Well, the Viceroy was now following the *do something* policy and it remained to be seen how it would work out.”<sup>20</sup>

With the assumption of charge by Harry S. Truman as the U.S. President on April 12, 1945, suggestions were offered to the U.S. Secretary of State by William Phillips, and then designated as Special Assistant to the Secretary of State. It was reasoned that, unlike the past the U.S. policy of not disturbing relations with Churchill for the Indian cause, British Government should be apprised of the U.S. President’s perturbation over the rising resentment of the Indian people against the British Administration. It was also suggested that Britain should be persuaded to make another effort in order to break the deadlock in discussion.

## **Cultural Cooperation**

Cultural cooperation between India and the United states was initiated with the visit of Dr.J.M. Kumarappa, Director of Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) as the

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<sup>20</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers. (1945). *An extract of the observation of P.J. Patrick (British Assistant Under Secretary of State for India) sent by the Ambassador in the UK (Winant) to the Secretary of State, July14, 1945. VI (133).* Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v02/d133>. Accessed on November 18, 2021.

first guest from India of the Department of State under the programme of Cultural cooperation, on a 3-week stay. Dr. J. M. Kumarappa, Director of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences at Bombay, India's leading institute for the education and training of workers in social welfare visited the U.S. as the first guest from India under the Department of State's program of cultural cooperation.<sup>21</sup> Many eminent Indian scientists also met the scientists in the United States particularly in the field of Physics and Chemistry. A group of seven leading Indian scientists visiting the U.S. included Dr. Nazir Ahmad, Colonel S. L. Bhatia, Sir Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar, Sir Jnan Chandra Ghosh, Professor S. K. Mitra, Professor Meghand Saha and Professor J. N. Mukherji.<sup>22</sup>

Informal talks were also initiated between the Government of India and the United States to explore the feasibility of introducing Civil Aviation after the war. A confusion, as to whether the agreement in respect of the concerned issue should be bilateral or multilateral, was ultimately resolved that a bilateral agreement should be made keeping provision for converting the same into a multilateral agreement.

In order to develop and upgrade the communication system between India and the United State, arrangements were made to establish transmitter connection between

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<sup>21</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers. (1944). *Press Release issued by the Department of State, December 16, 1944. V (295)*. Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1944v05/d295>. Accessed on November 23, 2021.

<sup>22</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers. (1944). *Press Release issued by the Department of State, December 11, 1944. V (294)*. Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1944v05/d294>. Accessed on November 23, 2021.



India and America. There was reciprocal exchange of appreciations between the concerned officials of Government of India and the U.S. Government.

## **Commercial Ties**

An issue arose regarding elevation of status of the Representatives of the United States in India and that of India in the United States. It was discussed at the appropriate level in India and the U.S. regarding upgradation of the status of Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai (Agent General for India in Washington) to that of a fully accredited Minister. The U.S. Government however did not accept the proposed elevation as stated by J. Lampton Berry. Berry was an Assistant Chief, in the Division of Middle Eastern Affairs at the U.S. State Department. Exchange of fully accredited Ministers at this time would have meant a lot to India when it was struggling for self- government but this would not consistent with the situation and facts in the opinion of Mr. Berry. Such a decisive step, Mr. Berry felt would denote America's acceptance that India is already self- governing and this not being reflected in actual situation would only raise false hope.<sup>23</sup> Here, we again find a defensive and hesitant approach on the part of the U.S. Government on any issue which is even remotely connected with India's struggle and aspiration for freedom.

Contrarily, however, the U.S. Government was keen to enter into a treaty for commerce and navigation with the India Government to give a boost to its export to India. This led the U.S. to start negotiations for resumption of a similar treaty which

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<sup>23</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers. (1945). Interest of the United States in the political situation in India, VI. Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v06/ch4subch1>. Accessed on November 12, 2021.

was suspended in 1942. But, the stand of Indian Government on this issue being not that much liberal, the U.S. was in doubt about immediate gain, as desired.

On February 24, 1945, in a conversation, Sir Ardeshir Dalai, member of the Executive Council of the Governor-General for Planning and Development, told Dr. Charles F. Remer of the Department and Mr. Mills of the Mission that India intended to make sure that foreign interests in the coming days did not acquire majority ownership or possess control over India's industries. The implication was that India would be able to function without foreign capital if the latter was unwilling to come to India on a minority basis. With the existence of both Indian business interests and the Indian elements in the Government in a hyper-nationalistic mindset, the prospect of the U.S.' negotiation of a treaty (which might be advantageous for the U.S.) of commerce and navigation with India posed doubts.<sup>24</sup>

But, Government of India adopted two different import policies towards the U.S. in respect of essential and non-essential goods to safeguard its economy, which evoked mixed reactions from the U.S. Government.

The U.S. immigration and naturalisation laws were very much discriminatory for the Indians. However, although it was revealed from a memorandum that President Roosevelt was against such discrimination, no tangible measure was taken until it dawned upon the U.S. Government, that future trade of the U.S. with India might face a setback due to their discriminatory immigration and naturalisation laws

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<sup>24</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers. (1945). *Letter from the Secretary-in-charge at New Delhi (Merrell) to the Secretary of State, Secretary to the Government of India in the Commerce Department, N.R. Pillai. February 27, 1945. VI (150)*. Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v06/d150>. Accessed on November 25, 2021.

against Indians. It was pointed out that some of India's post-war trade plans with the United States might be affected in case the Indians could not succeed in entering the United States because of the immigration laws of the latter. Hence, action on the immigration bill might have an impact on the future trade relations of the United States with India.<sup>25</sup>

The British Government renewed its request to the U.S. Government for reconsidering its earlier proposal for upgradation of the status of the Agent General of India to that of a fully accredited Minister. The U.S. Commissioner in India (Merrell) expressed his opinion in favour of the proposed raising of status as that would constitute a step ahead toward independence of GOI from Whitehall and make its way for an appointment of Indian member for external affairs.<sup>26</sup>

But the U.S. Government did not agree to the proposal bringing forth the reason that it was not the appropriate occasion and the U.S.'s acceptance of the proposal would draw flak for the U.S. approval of the then unrepresentative Government of India. As such, the proposed exchange of fully accredited diplomatic representatives with

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<sup>25</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers. (1945). *Telegram from the Secretary in charge at New Delhi (Merrell) to the Secretary of State, February 26, 1945*. VI (161). Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v06/d161>. Accessed on November 25, 2021.

<sup>26</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers. (1946). *Telegram from the Commissioner in India (Merrell) to the Secretary of State, January 9, 1946*. V (43). Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v05/d43>. Accessed on November 25, 2021.

India would be interpreted as indicating the U.S. approval of the then unrepresentative GOI.<sup>27</sup>

The alternative suggestion offered by the U.S. for raising the status of the Indian representatives to the U.S. and vice versa was that the U.S. Government would accept such proposal from the imminent new Indian Executive Council (Cabinet). It was clarified that if the new Government desired to have fully accredited representatives, the U.S. Government would welcome an ambassador in Washington DC and readily send an American ambassador to New Delhi.<sup>28</sup>

In the foregoing paragraphs, it has been discussed how the U.S. Government used to profess high democratic ideals for emancipation of India from the British bondage but in reality, the U.S. always extended tacit support to the British Policy towards India which was inimical to India's interest. The U.S. never played any active and effective role to facilitate India's aspiration for freedom. But, with the launching of Cabinet Mission Plan by the British, the U.S. Government started expressing overenthusiastically its interest for effecting a solution to the Indo-British political impasse. This U.S. approach, hitherto uncharacteristic of itself, evoked adverse comments from the political circle not only in India but from Britain also.

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<sup>27</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers. (1946). *Telegram from the Acting secretary of State (Acheson) to the Commissioner in India (Merrell), January 14, 1946*. V (44). Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v05/d44>. Accessed on November 25, 2021.

<sup>28</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers. (1946). *Memorandum by the U.S. Acting Secretary of State, Dean Acheson to the President Truman, August 30, 1946*. V (53). Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v05/d53>. Accessed on November 25, 2021.

Mr. Asaf Ali, the appointed Ambassador of India to the U.S., called upon the U.S. Secretary of State and very aptly presented the ground reality of India. He mentioned that provided, India was adequately prepared, the war would have been continued less than two years. He also added that if India became strong it would be a bastion for the world against the great northern neighbor which now cast its shadow over two continents, Asia and Europe. The U.S. Secretary of State remarked that Mr. Asaf Ali might find the discussions on budget, international relations as complex one. But, he would clearly understand the integrity of American foreign policy<sup>29</sup>

In order to safeguard its political and economic interest, the U.S. Government was very keen to adapt its foreign policy to any change in the political or economic scenario of the world. In tune with this flexible foreign policy, the U.S. Government expressed its concern regarding purported plans of Hyderabad State to establish direct relations with the British Crown and to maintain a status completely separate from that of the rest of India. The United States was of the view that if there had been a change in British Policy, the United States might have to reconsider their own position with regard to India.<sup>30</sup>

Against the backdrop of Cabinet Mission Plan for partition of India into Hindu Dominion and Pakistan Dominion, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the Leader of the All-

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<sup>29</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers. (1947). *Memorandum of conversation by the Secretary of State, February 26, 1947. III (92)*. Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v03/d92>. Accessed on November 27, 2021.

<sup>30</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers. (1947). *Telegram from the Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in the U.K. April 4, 1947. III (94)*. Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v03/d94>. Accessed on November 27, 2021.

India Muslim League, expressed his own views as well as the views borne by the Indian Muslims about the U.S. Government. Jinnah declared that he realized the open-mindedness of the United States about Pakistan. But most Indian Muslims felt Americans were against them (a) because most Americans seemed opposed to Pakistan and (b) the U.S. Government and people backed Jews against Arabs in Palestine.<sup>31</sup> It may be construed that Jinnah's above comment was designed to keep the U.S. Government in good humour to ensure political, economic and military support from the U.S. in future.

However, Nehru explicitly expressed his expectation to receive expert assistance from the U.S. Government, although nothing specific was mentioned regarding projects.<sup>32</sup>

The British Government always received support from the U.S. Government in all its activities relating to the movements of the Indians for their freedom. While the partition of India into Hindu and Pakistan Dominion was on the anvil, the British Viceroy approached the U.S. Government for an early U.S. assurance to Jinnah regarding establishing diplomatic relation with Pakistan by the U.S. to facilitate the partition process, the brainchild of the British to leave India after weakening it politically and economically.

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<sup>31</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers. (1947). *Telegram from the Charge in India (Merrell) to the Secretary of State, May 2, 1947. III* (96). Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v03/d96>. Accessed on November 28, 2021.

<sup>32</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers. (1947). *Telegram from the Ambassador in India (Grady) to the Secretary of State, June 27, 1947. III* (99). Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v03/d99>. Accessed on November 28, 2021.

It is worth noting that the U.S. Government although expressed its concern for the unity and integrity of India, it hailed the reasons of partition, as laid down in the Cabinet Mission plan. This dichotomy in the U.S. policy towards India's unity gets revealed again in the statement of the U.S. Ambassador in India, Mr. Grady to the effect that he sees no reason as to why the two Dominions, would not receive prompt recognition by Washington.<sup>33</sup>

India's foreign policy and its relation with the U.S. were synoptically clarified by Nehru that India's foreign policy was not to align itself with any particular block. India was always in favour of refraining from meddling and avoiding war. India was concerned about the United States' economic penetration although it desired friendly relations with the U.S. India needed to conserve dollars to import food cutting down imports of consumer goods.<sup>34</sup>

### **India-Pakistan War over Kashmir 1947-48**

Ever since India and Pakistan came into existence, the U.S. Government adopted the policy of pitting one country against the other, given the inherent acrimony between those nascent dominions and their primary economic dependence on the U.S. This was surfaced when Jawaharlal Nehru persuaded the U.S. Government for providing

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<sup>33</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers. (1947). *Telegram from the Ambassador in India (Grady) to the Secretary of State, July 7, 1947. III* (102). Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v03/d102>. Accessed on November 28, 2021.

<sup>34</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers. (1947). *Telegram from the Ambassador in India (Grady) to the Secretary of State, July 9, 1947. III* (104). Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v03/d104>. Accessed on November 29, 2021.

10 Army Transport planes to for evacuating the refugees from Peshwar to Amritsar subsequent to the attack on 500 Non-Muslim Refugees by the Muslims. The response of the U.S. Government was that President and Acting Secretary had considered GOI request and Air Dept studying technical problems involved. President and Acting Secy was sympathetic but held the opinion that the U.S. could act only if request was made by GOI and GOP jointly.<sup>35</sup>

India-Pakistan war of 1947-48 or the first Kashmir war was fought between the two countries over the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir. The two newly independent countries were completely dissatisfied over the status of Jammu and Kashmir as the princely state under Raja Hari Singh was unreconciled to the possibility of joining either of the country. Rather he was interested in maintaining an independent status. This was not acceptable to Pakistan which precipitated the war a few weeks after its independence by launching tribal militias from Wazaristan. The aim was to capture Kashmir. Maharaja Hari Singh was facing an uprising in Poonch and lost control of the western districts of his kingdom. On 22 October 1947, Pakistan's militias crossed the border of the state. These local tribal militias and irregular Pakistani forces moved to take the capital city of Srinagar. They took to plunder in Baramulla. Maharaja requested for India's assistance which was accepted to be offered on the condition that Maharaja should sign an Instrument of Accession to India. Once the Instrument of accession was signed, Indian forces were airlifted to Srinagar. All these developments snowballed into a full-fledged war between India and Pakistan.

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<sup>35</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers. (1947). *Telegram from the Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in India, October 9, 1947. III* (114). Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v03/d114>. Accessed on November 30, 2021.



The blatant aggression of Pakistan into Kashmir was not denounced by the United States in tune with its policy of appeasement towards Pakistan. But, India was dissuaded from taking appropriate defensive measures against the invader Pakistan under the plea of referring the dispute to the United Nations.

The United States regretted that India Pakistan themselves could not solve the Kashmir problem bilaterally. It was also expressed that the Security Council of United Nations would take up the issue soon in the interest of sustaining world peace. The United States added that in that event, being a permanent member of the Security Council, it would be under obligations to toe the line of action of the UN Security Council to maintain world peace. The strategy suggested by the United States was that till the settlement of the dispute through the intervention of the Security Council, both the Government of India and the Government of Pakistan should refrain from provoking one another. Besides, other irresponsible persons on both sides should also be restrained to cause any provocation.<sup>36</sup>

Prime Minister Nehru believed that UN would compel Pakistan to withdraw and this belief led him to refer to the matter to the United Nations. On 1 January 1948, Nehru wrote a letter to the UN Security Council arguing that under Article 35 of the Charter of the United Nations, any member might bring to the notice of the United Nations Security Council, any such situation which might have the potential to hamper the maintenance of international peace and security.

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<sup>36</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers. (1945). *Memorandum by Mr. William Phillips, Special Assistant to the Secretary of State, to the Secretary of State, April 19, 1945. VI (127)*. Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v06/d127>. Accessed on November 30, 2021.

Pakistan had written to the UN Security Council rejecting India's claims and shared details of its own status in Kashmir. The UN Security Council passed a resolution on 17 January 1948:

“..calls upon both the Government of India and the Government of Pakistan to take immediately all measures within their power (including public appeals to their people) calculated to improve the situation and to refrain from making any statements and from doing or causing to be done or permitting any act which might aggravate the situation...(It)...further requests each of these Governments to inform the Council immediately of any material change in the situation which occurs or appears to either of them to be about to occur while the matter is under consideration by the Council and consult with the Council thereon.”<sup>37</sup>

India was much disappointed as the UN Security Council did not order Pakistan to withdraw. Westcott has summarized the subsequent developments. An UN Commission for India and Pakistan (UNCIP) was established by the Security Council in January 1948 which was mandated to investigate facts and mediate between the two countries. Yet another task of the Commission was to resolve the dispute. Combat operations had resumed in February and the UN Security Council once again passed a more detailed Resolution on 21 April 1948. Essentially the resolution called upon Pakistan to secure the withdrawal of its proxies and it was expected that Indian would withdraw its troops. The resolution further provided for

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<sup>37</sup> Westcott, S. (2020). The Case of UN Involvement in Jammu and Kashmir Chapter. *E-International Relations*. <https://www.e-ir.info/2020/05/29/the-case-of-un-involvement-in-jammu-and-kashmir/>. Accessed on August 20, 2020.

the establishment of a temporary Plebiscite Administration in Kashmir. This was charged with the conduct of fair and impartial plebiscite ‘on the question of the accession of the State to India or Pakistan’. The UNCIP was expanded and dispatched to oversee the arrangements.<sup>38</sup>

According to Parama S Palit, the UN Security Council resolution made India upset. The resolution had held both India and Pakistan equally responsible. This was unacceptable to India, as the resolution did not identify Pakistan as the aggressor. Palit writes that the U.S. was desirous of making Pakistan an *important input in its Middle East strategy*. In the light of the UN resolution, America was convinced that accession of Kashmir to India was incomplete and Kashmir was a disputed territory.<sup>39</sup>

## **Cold War & Indo-U.S. Relations**

With the onset of the Cold War involving deterioration of relations between the USA and the USSR, divergent world view of India and United States got manifest. While India was prone to view the U.S. through the lens of imperialism, the U.S. was keen to hold a world view tinged with anti-Communism. The Cold War prompted United States to find out allies in South Asia to effectively combat the spread of Communism. The policy adopted by the U.S. to contain dissemination of

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<sup>38</sup> Westcott, S. (2020). *Self-Determination and State Sovereignty: The Case of UN Involvement in Jammu and Kashmir Chapter*. Retrieved from <https://www.e-ir.info/2020/05/29/the-case-of-un-involvement-in-jammu-and-kashmir/>. Accessed on August 20, 2020.

<sup>39</sup> Sinha, P. P. (2001) The Kashmir Policy of the United States: A Study of the Perceptions, Conflicts and Dilemmas. *Strategic Analysis*.25 (6), [https://ciaotest.cc.columbia.edu/olj/sa/sa\\_sep01pap01.html](https://ciaotest.cc.columbia.edu/olj/sa/sa_sep01pap01.html). Accessed on January 30, 2021.

communism in South Asia was to empower India and Pakistan to defend themselves against external attack, to obtain bases and facilities from which the United States might strike the Soviet Union with its own forces, and to help both states meet the threat from internal (often communist-led) insurrection and subversion<sup>40</sup>

Thus, being caught in the vortex of latent power-play of both the superpowers – the U.S. and the Soviet Union, India preferred to keep itself away from any alignment with either of the two blocs. This consideration led to the adoption of ‘Non-Alignment’ as the foundation and philosophy of India’s foreign policy. India’s unique stand of not being involved in the two superpower’s silent duel did not go down well with the U.S. leading to a rift in the Indo-U.S. relationship. Two leading scholars of the India-U.S. relations mentioned that during 1950s, the U.S. viewed India’s non-alignment policy totally in divergence with its own. With the rise of Cold War, America became more annoyed with Indian Non-alignment policy. The U.S. tilted itself towards Pakistan to curb the advancement of Soviet Union in Asia as it was not ideologically attuned to the Communist China and cooperation of India was also not available being a non-aligned country.<sup>41</sup>

## **Food Aid and Economic Assistance**

Despite the divergences in foreign policy and international stance with India, especially over the nonalignment policy of the newly independent country, the

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<sup>40</sup> Cohen, S. P. (2000, December). India and America: An Emerging Relationship. In *Conference on the Nation-State System and transnational forces in South Asia*, 8 (10). Kyoto, Japan. <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/kyoto.pdf>. Accessed on October 25, 2021.

<sup>41</sup> Malone, D. M., & Mukherjee, R. (2009). India-U.S. relations: The shock of the new. *International Journal*, 64 (4), 1057-1074. DOI:10.1177/002070200906400413. Accessed on November 30, 2021.

United States invested in India's development from the very beginning. President Harry Truman's signed the India Emergency Food Assistance Act in 1951.

As per the USAID, its programme has “evolved progressively over the decades from emergency provision of food, to infrastructure development, capacity building of key Indian institutions, support for the opening of the Indian economy and more”,<sup>42</sup>.

Given the fragile economic condition of the country, the much needed food aid from the United States helped the country to a certain extent. The humanitarian context was much appreciated in India but at the same time this had no immediate impact on the foreign policy orientation of the country which was clearly against bloc politics in international affairs. As per the records of the USAID, food aid was 92 percent of the annual assistance but by the late 1970s, other projects receiving the U.S. support included rural electrification, fertilizer promotion, malaria control, agricultural credit, integrated health and population programs, irrigation schemes and social forestry. Yet again, priorities changed as by mid-1980s, focus shifted to science and technology. Newer programs addressed agricultural research, alternative-energy technology development, biomedical research, water resources management and family planning. Technology transfer and institution capacity building were integral to these activities.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> United States Agency International Development (n.d.). History. <https://www.usaid.gov/india/history>. Accessed on July 20, 2020.

<sup>43</sup> United States Agency International Development (n.d.). History. <https://www.usaid.gov/india/history>. Accessed on July 20, 2020.

## Indian Democracy

It has been argued that the U.S. administration wished India well and was supportive of its development principally because India was a democracy. It was important for the U.S. to show that India is a democracy and that it has rejected communism. The message for the newly independent countries was that it is better to follow the democratic India instead of falling into the trap of the Soviet Union and Chinese inspired revolutionary Communist Government. As such, though there was initial apprehension and a bit of suspicion toward India for its nonaligned foreign policy, Americans realized that Nehru's India was a better bet than the possibilities of a communist insurrection in the country. Therefore, especially under President Eisenhower, the U.S. started to view India's nonalignment more as a strategy of Indian foreign policy and not necessarily antithetical to American interests. This appreciation of India followed the inauguration of a constitutional democracy in India which could be seen and may develop as a bulwark against the expansion communist ideologies, relentlessly being pursued by the Soviet and Chinese leadership of the time. Seema Sirohi writes that President Eisenhower considered India as '*the biggest argument against communism*' and thought that India's pursuit of non-alignment was actually a strategy and not so much as an ideology.<sup>44</sup>

The deterioration of relations between the two countries closely followed Richard Nixon's ascendancy in the U.S. Unlike Eisenhower, Nixon was a better critic of India's nonaligned foreign policy and its advocacy of the cause of the developing

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<sup>44</sup> Sirohi, S. (2023). *Friends with Benefits: The US-India Story*. New Delhi: Harper Collins India.

countries. India and the U.S. were on the separate pages on a number of pressing international issues in the 1960s and the forum of the United Nations had become a battleground of conflicting opinion and policies between the nonaligned bloc and the U.S.-led western bloc. According to Seema Sirohi, President Richard Nixon was a vociferous critic of India's non-alignment policy and considered it as unacceptable. Nixon also believed that India was responsible for the 1971 war that almost threatened his opening to China. Nixon and his Secretary of State Henry Kissinger encouraged the assumption that India would attack Pakistan in the western sector. Sirohi claims that Kissinger went to the extent of encouraging the Chinese to get militarily involved and had said to the Chinese representative in the UN that a Pakistan–China–U.S. axis was needed to scare India back to the pavilion.<sup>45</sup>

It is now well known that both Nixon and Kissinger highly exaggerated the India's involvement in the liberation war of Bangladesh and the consequent war with Pakistan. India never intended to attack Pakistan on its western front but the U.S. administration raised the bogey of an aggressive India. Seema Sirohi notes that a good working relationship with India was dipped to the most unfavourable by Nixon and Kissinger to achieve their new objective of developing bonhomie with China. The U.S. put India into economic and defence hazard by cancelling World Bank Loans and blocking spare parts of military weapons. The U.S. also delayed food aid to India.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Sirohi, S. (2023). *Friends with Benefits: The US-India Story*. New Delhi: Harper Collins India.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

## **A Permanent Seat for India in the Security Council**

The framers of the Charter of the United Nations accorded status of permanent members to 5 countries—the U.S., USSR, UK, France and China. These countries were named as permanent members in article 27 of the Charter and they had ‘veto’ power in the functioning of the Security Council. All these five permanent members were war time allies and had fought the Second World War alongside each other. They were also the same countries who were in consultation from 1941 as to the nature of international cooperation and building of new international security architecture. The new organisation, the United Nations was based on the premise of cooperation amongst major powers, mainly the permanent members of the UN Security Council. However, the onset of the Cold War resulting in unleashing of competition and conflict based on ideological and strategic power play paralyzed the effectiveness of the new organisation. The United Nations became an arena of superpower competition and rivalry. A question arose regarding the credentials of the representative of China when the Communists led by Mao Tse Tung overcame the nationalists led by Chiang Kaisek in the civil war which had raged for more than two decades in China. The establishment of the People’s Republic of China in 1950 was seen as a major triumph of the communist forces worldwide. The U.S. was very suspicious of the intentions and utterances of the communist China’s leadership who had now the full control over the mainland of China. The nationalists were forced to retreat to Formosa island- Taiwan- from where they continued to dispute the claim of the communists as to the legitimate Government of China. India was one of the first countries to recognise the PRC. UK followed the example of India. However the U.S. was not reconciled to this change in the leadership and the Government of China. They not only withheld recognition to the PRC but were actively promoting



the case of the Government in Taiwan as to be the leader and the Government of China. As such, moves to unseat the representation of the Republic of China (Taiwan) and substitute that with the representatives of PRC failed, mainly due to the policy and stance of the U.S. It was in this context that certain suggestions were mooted according the Chinese seat in the UN Security Council to India. It may be tried try to contextualize the issue as how and why India was offered a seat and what was the position of India under Nehru on this question.

This issue has more recently gained traction as to the failure of the then Indian leadership to capitalize on the offer of the UNSC seat. However, this does not seem to be the case as the details below may bring out. Question is if India was offered a permanent seat in UNSC in the year 1950 by the U.S. which were stated to be refused by the then Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru. Research conducted to explore the reasons of Nehru's reluctance to the aforesaid U.S. offer have relied on the correspondences between Jawaharlal Nehru and his sister Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit who was assigned major diplomatic positions between the later part of 1940s and earlier part of 1950s.

A letter written by Mrs. Pandit to Nehru during her assignment as India's Ambassador to the U.S. pointed out that the U.S. state department was considering exclusion of China as a permanent member of the Security Council and substituting India in its place. She wrote that top U.S. officials like John Foster Dulles and Phillip Jessup were in favour of this change. She also wrote that Marquis Childs, an influential columnist of Washington had been approached by Dulles to build up

public opinion in this direction. Mrs. Pandit advised Marquis Childs to go slow and that a move in this direction might “not be received with any warmth in India”<sup>47</sup>

In his reply, Nehru wrote that India would not entertain such an idea as this would be a clear affront to China and it would mean some kind of a break between us and China. Nehru wrote that India would continue to press for People’s Republic of China’s admission in the UN and the Security Council. India was one of the first countries to officially recognise People’s Republic of China and the U.S. insistence on continuation of the Chinese representation in the UN with the Government set up in Formosa (Taiwan) was not to the liking of India. Nehru maintained that if the PRC was not recognised in the UN and did not get to seat in the Security Council, there would be trouble which might even resulted in the USSR and some other countries finally quitting the UN. According to Nehru this might be good news for the U.S. State Department, but, it would spell a doom for the UN and a drift towards war. It was Nehru’s conviction and he clearly articulated that because of many factors India was certainly entitled to a permanent seat in the security council, but India was not going in at the cost of China<sup>48</sup>

The reason behind United States’ effort to induct India as a permanent member of UNSC was to prevent the spread of communism in Asia by empowering the large democratic country India. Besides, India’s support to the U.S. sponsored resolution

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<sup>47</sup> Harder, A. (2015) Not at the cost of China: New Evidence regarding U.S. Proposals to Nehru for joining the United Nations Security Council. *Cold War International History Project, Working Paper #76*, 3. Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. [https://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/publication/cwihp\\_working\\_paper\\_76\\_not\\_at\\_the\\_cost\\_of\\_china.pdf](https://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/publication/cwihp_working_paper_76_not_at_the_cost_of_china.pdf). Accessed on April 10, 2022.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

to condemn the aggression of North Korea evoked a sense of trust between India and the U.S. However, India's recognition of Peoples Republic of China well ahead of many countries hinted at India's strong independent foreign policy. There was unison of principle between India and USSR on the issue of induction of China as a permanent member of UNSC. Both were in favour of China's entry into UNSC as a permanent member. The U.S. Government was also pleased thinking that India's preferred Nonalignment principle did not stand in the way of fighting the communist aggression in conjunction with the U.S.

But, divergence in the views between India and surfaced when India did not vote in favour of a U.S.-sponsored resolution which vested the U.S. with the complete authority over UN forces in Korea. In the middle of January 1950, the USSR had left United Nations in protest as the People's Republic of China was being prevented from taking the China Seat in UN. However, USSR resumed its seat in the UN Security Council on 1<sup>st</sup> August, 1950.

Although there were divergences in the approaches of the U.S. and India in solving any world problem, the U.S. did not lose hope to forge a relation with India. The U.S. was undoubtedly disappointed that India's initial support for it at the UN diminished over time, and that Washington and Delhi's prescriptions for resolving the Korean crisis had diverged so much. However, Dulles' August 1950 démarche indicated that at least the U.S. State Department still hoped for closer Indo-U.S.

relations and genuinely desired to demonstrate this with a gesture, and perhaps drew India more closely to it.<sup>49</sup>

It may be said that United States harboured the plan to constitute United Nations in such a manner as would serve its interest best. Hence, the offer of UNSC permanent seat to India by the U.S. might be interpreted as the preferred diplomacy of the U.S. to mould the UN to its need with the help of chosen and amenable members.

### **Rationale of Nehru's rejection of the U.S. Offer**

The rejection of the U.S. offer by Nehru was due to his concern that his acceptance would undermine the integrity of the UN to the extent that it would cease to exist resulting in a drift towards war.<sup>50</sup>

Nehru was never in favour of being at loggerheads with China. He was peace loving. He was of the view that mutual trust and respect among the nations could only guarantee the world peace and ensure balance of power instead of banking on enhancement of arms. Nehru was of the opinion that China's integration with the world would be beneficial for the world. Such China-centric foreign policy of Nehru prompted him to advocate for the permanent seat at UNSC declining the offer of the same to India by the U.S. His logic was that any denial of priority to China under the pretext of its subscribing to any particular political ideology would be detrimental to

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<sup>49</sup> Harder, A. (2015) Not at the cost of China: New Evidence regarding U.S. Proposals to Nehru for joining the United Nations Security Council. *Cold War International History Project, Working Paper #76*, 3. Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. [https://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/publication/cwihp\\_working\\_paper\\_76\\_not\\_at\\_the\\_cost\\_of\\_china.pdf](https://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/publication/cwihp_working_paper_76_not_at_the_cost_of_china.pdf). Accessed on April 10, 2022.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

the international peace and progress. He was also of the view that a normalised relation with China would go a long way in attenuating the Cold War tension. It needs to be borne in mind also that Nehru always upheld the rich moral and cultural heritage of India in the comity of nations. This view of Nehru was deeply subscribed to even by his detractors who however were at odds with Nehru's principled stand of according priority to China over India on the issue of permanent seat at UNSC. The U.S. paranoia over communist China's potential to destabilise the UNSC in conjunction with communist USSR drove it towards the move of inducting India in the UNSC replacing China. However, there is no denying the fact that Nehru's favourable stand towards China was not duly reciprocated by China. The Sino-Indian war of 1962 was a stark reminder of it. Even the current approach of China in its international relations spoke of its utter aggressive attitude.

### **The U.S. response to 1962 India-China war**

Mao Zedong, the founding father of the People's Republic of China waged a war against India in 1962 with the sole objective of dwarfing the emerging status of Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru as a leader of the third world.

It is instructive to understand the position and policy of the U.S. administration led by Kennedy in the context of the 1962 war imposed on India by China. There are various accounts of the chain of events. The unexpected war found India on a disadvantageous footing, mainly due to complete lack of preparedness and also due to the topography and the difficult terrain. It was a painful moment for the country and particularly for Nehru who had openly championed friendship with China. Bruce Riedel, a former CIA official who worked at Brookings Institution after his retirement has presented a detailed account of the developments and has documented

how Nehru sought the help and support of the U.S. as well as of Great Britain to meet the Chinese threat. According to Riedel, the main objective of Mao Zedong was to humiliate Nehru who was emerging fast as the leader of the Third World. The Chinese leader perhaps was also motivated to take advantage of the then Soviet preoccupation with the Cuban missile crisis and the superpower stalemate and subsequent negotiations over Cuba.

According to Riedel, Nehru had sought American assistance and wrote to the then U.S. President John F. Kennedy for jet fighters and thereby asking the U.S. to join the war against China by partnering in an air war to defeat the PLA. Nehru wrote that the bombers would be used for resistance against China. It would not be used against Pakistan. The stakes “were not merely the survival of India”, Nehru told Kennedy “but the survival of free and independent Governments in the whole of this subcontinent or in Asia”. Mr. Riedel said in the second letter that Nehru was, in fact, asking Kennedy for some 350 combat aircraft and crews: 12 squadrons of fighter aircraft and crews: 12 squadron of fighter aircraft with 24 jets in each and two bomber squadrons. At least 10,000 personnel would be needed to staff and operate jets, provide radar support and conduct logistical support for the operation”, Mr. Riedel said adding this was a substantial force, large enough to make it a numbered air force in the American order of battle”.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Riedel Bruce, JFK’s Forgotten Crisis: Tibet, the CIA and the Sino-Indian War. ’ September 26,2017

## 1965 India- Pakistan War

Relations between India and Pakistan had deteriorated because of conflicting claims over the Rann of Kutch by the early 1965. Rann of Kutch constituted the southern end of the international boundary between the two countries. In August 1965, military hostilities erupted along the ceasefire line in Kashmir.

The UN Secretary-General reported that “a return to mutual observance of ceasefire by India and Pakistan is a must for a resolution of differences between the two countries. By resolution 209, the Security Council called for a ceasefire and expecting cooperation with UNMOGIP. On 6 September, the Council adopted resolution 210. The resolution requested the Secretary-General “to take all measures possible to strengthen the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan”,<sup>52</sup> and to keep the Council informed on the implementation of the resolutions .

The UN Secretary-General pointed out that both sides have desired ceasefire but they have imposed conditions for withdrawal of hostilities. He suggested few steps:

1. Ordering the two Governments to desist from military action under Article 40 of the UN Charter
2. The UN might consider assistance in ensuring the observance of the ceasefire and the withdrawal of all military personnel.

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<sup>52</sup> United Nations. (n.d.). *India-Pakistan Background*. United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan. <https://peacekeeping.un.org/mission/past/unipombackgr.html>. Accessed on March 11, 2021.

3. Requesting the two Heads of Government to meet in a friendly country to discuss their problems.<sup>53</sup>

The Security Council adopted resolution 211 (1965) on 20 September 1965 which called for a ceasefire, and also a subsequent withdrawal of all armed personnel to the positions held before 5 August. In Kashmir, the supervision was exercised by the established machinery of UNMOGIP. A United Nations India-Pakistan Observation Mission (UNIPOM) was established on a temporary basis for supervising the ceasefire.<sup>54</sup>

Since the ceasefire violations continued to occur, the Security Council adopted resolution 215 (1965) of 5 November and called both the countries to instruct their armed personnel to cooperate with the United Nations and cease all military activities. The Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union invited the top leaders of the two countries in January 1966. The two sides announced the withdrawal of all armed personnel. The process was to be completed by 25 February 1966. As per the publication of the United Nations, rules for disengagement and withdrawal plan were agreed upon in the presence of the UN official representative General Marambio. Both UNMOGIP and UNIPOM were tasked with the implementation of the agreement. In case of any disagreement, General Marambio's decision would be final and binding.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> United Nations. (n.d.). *India-Pakistan Background*. United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan. <https://peacekeeping.un.org/mission/past/unipombackgr.html>. Accessed on March 11, 2021.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.



The UNIPOM was terminated on 22 March 1966 and the 59 additional observers to the Military Observer Group were gradually withdrawn. As per the records of the U.S. Department of State, Pakistan was "rudely shocked" by the reaction of the U.S. as the U.S. broadly considered the matter as Pakistan's fault. The U.S. issued a statement declaring its neutrality. It also cut off military supplies to Pakistan. The Pakistanis felt betrayed. The U.S. was "disillusioned" as both sides in the war were using equipment supplied by the U.S. The United States withdrew its military assistance advisory group in July 1967 and Pakistan thought it wise not to place careless and complete reliance on the U.S. It decided not to renew the lease on the Peshawar military facility. In consequence, the U.S.-Pakistan relations were negatively impacted by the 1965 India-Pakistan war. The U.S. was being more deeply involved and engaged in the Vietnam War and as fallout, its interest in the security situation in South Asia considerably declined.<sup>56</sup>

### **The U.S. response to 1971 India- Pakistan War**

The 1971 Indo-Pak war broke out in the aftermath of a clash between the West Pakistan (now Pakistan) and the Bengali- majority East Pakistan consequent upon the landslide victory of the Awami League led By Mujibar Rehman in Pakistan's eastern wing against the Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party (PPP), in the Pakistan National Assembly election, 1970. President Yahya Khan of Pakistan postponed sine die the transfer of power to the legitimately elected representative

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<sup>56</sup> Archives Bound (n.d.). India-Pakistan Conflict: Records Of The U.S. State Department, February 1963-1966. [https://www.gale.com/binaries/content/assets/gale-us-en/primary-sources/archives-unbound/primary-sources\\_archives-unbound\\_india-pakistan-conflict\\_records-of-the-u.s.-state-department-february-1963-1966.pdf](https://www.gale.com/binaries/content/assets/gale-us-en/primary-sources/archives-unbound/primary-sources_archives-unbound_india-pakistan-conflict_records-of-the-u.s.-state-department-february-1963-1966.pdf). Accessed on May 5, 2022.

Mujibur Rehman to form a Government at the centre. The ulterior motive of Yahya Khan was to forcefully stay in power. The legitimately elected Awami League leaders along with its supporters took to the streets demanding transfer of powers to the Awami League (AL) to form the Government. The talks involving President Yahya Khan, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Mujibar Rahaman failed leading to the indiscriminate

killing of Bengalis and arrests of AL leaders. The talks between President Yahya, PPP leader Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and AL leader Mujibur Rehman to resolve the crisis failed on 25 March 1971. The Pakistan Army led by Governor and The Chief Martial Law Administrator of East Pakistan, Lt Gen Tikka Khan, carried out Operation Searchlight to curb the Bengali nationalist movement in East Pakistan. A large number of Bengalis—Muslims, Hindus, businessmen, intellectuals and students—were killed during this operation. Mujibur Rahman was arrested by the Martial Law Authorities (MLAs) on the charge of ‘treason’ along with his principal followers. Other supporters were suppressed.<sup>57</sup>

The carnage coupled with the arrest of people led to mass exodus from East Pakistan to India. About 10 million people fled East Bengal and entered the Indian states of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and West Bengal. A large number of trained Pakistani agents, along with the refugees, had also entered India, causing major economic, social, political, administrative and security problems in India. Besides, Pakistan’s friendly relations with the U.S. and China aggravated the security concerns of India.

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<sup>57</sup> Bishoyi, S. (2021). Role of the United States in the 1971 War. *Journal of Defence Studies*, 15(4), 263-296. [https://idsa.in/system/files/jds/15\\_Saroj%20Bishoyi.pdf](https://idsa.in/system/files/jds/15_Saroj%20Bishoyi.pdf). Accessed on October 21, 2021.

Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, External Affairs Minister Swaran Singh and other key members of the Cabinet went on a tour of West European countries, the U.S. and others to inform them about the magnitude of Pakistani army's brutal crackdown in East Bengal and its implications on India. Nevertheless, Gandhi and her cabinet's sincere diplomatic efforts failed to convince the Western powers, especially the U.S., to use their power to persuade Pakistani military rulers to find a solution to the crisis by means of political compromise with the Bengali leaders, so that around 10 million refugees could leave India.<sup>58</sup> The Bengali people from East Bengal belonging to different professions and social strata e.g. para-military, police forces, thousands of AL and other volunteers, and Bengali deserters from Pakistani Army consolidated themselves into armed freedom fighters- " Mukti Bahini"

United States at that time was very keen for a rapprochement with China through Pakistan as there was a bonhomie between Pakistan and China during that period. It was the deliberation of Nixon Government that the U.S.- China-Pakistan axis would enable United States to retain its hegemony in the Asia. This Geo-Political strategy prompted the U.S. not to dissuade Islamabad from perpetrating the brutal massacre in East Pakistan and depriving the democratically elected representatives of Awami League to take over the reins of East Bengal's governance. The falsity of United States' claim as the pillar of democracy got exposed. Henry Kissinger, the U.S. National Security Adviser, advised President Nixon not to get embroiled in the explosive situation of East Pakistan as that would embitter the U.S.-Pakistan

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<sup>58</sup> Bishoyi, S. (2021). Role of the United States in the 1971 War. *Journal of Defence Studies*, 15(4), 263-296. [https://idsa.in/system/files/jds/15\\_Saroj%20Bishoyi.pdf](https://idsa.in/system/files/jds/15_Saroj%20Bishoyi.pdf). Accessed on October 21, 2021.

relationship and in turn tell upon the realization of improving the Sino-U.S. relation using Pakistan as the broker.

Series of telegrams on the situation at Dhaka were sent to President Nixon by the U.S. Consul General in Dhaka, Archer K. Blood. On 28 March, the Consul General in Dhaka, Archer K. Blood reported that a reign of terror had been created by the Pakistani army in Dhaka. On 29 March, it was reported by the U.S. consulate in Dhaka that the Pakistani Army was burning houses and then shooting people when they came out. Hindus were particular focus of the campaign. On 31 March, Blood reported that Pakistani army had killed about four to six thousand people since 25 March, and said that Pakistani army's objective to hit hard and terrorize the Bengali people had been fairly successful.<sup>59</sup>

Kenneth Keating, the U.S. Ambassador to India, frantically requested the Nixon administration to publicly censure the heinous mass killing, arson, etc perpetrated by Pakistan and also to prevail upon Pakistani President for immediate cessation of the killing spree. He also appealed to the U.S. Government for abrogation of 'one-time exception' military supply agreement with Pakistan. However, those reports of American Officials on the anarchic state of affairs in East Pakistan and their vigorous appeal for immediate remedy of the situation fell flat on President Nixon and his associates. President Nixon preferred to embrace 'quiet diplomacy' to keep Pakistan in good humour to clinch the Sino-U.S. rapprochement with Pakistani mediation.

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<sup>59</sup> Bishoyi, S. (2021). Role of the United States in the 1971 War. *Journal of Defence Studies*, 15(4), 263-296. [https://idsa.in/system/files/jds/15\\_Saroj%20Bishoyi.pdf](https://idsa.in/system/files/jds/15_Saroj%20Bishoyi.pdf). Accessed on October 21, 2021.

Meanwhile, based on a positive response from the Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai, Kissinger visited Beijing in July 1971 via Pakistan. Kissinger and Zhou unanimously were in favour of Pakistan's stance on the East Pakistan Crisis. This secret tour of Kissinger to Beijing was made public by Nixon on the 15<sup>th</sup> July, 1971. On the same date, he also announced his upcoming visit to China. Even, Nixon expressed his personal gratitude to Yahya Khan through a hand written letter for restoring the communication channel between China and the U.S.

In May 1971, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi wrote a letter to President Nixon urging him to prevail upon Pakistan for a political settlement on the East Pakistan Crisis. She also referred to the predicament faced by India due to massive influx of East Pakistan refugees to India. In August 1971, another letter was written to President Nixon by Prime Minister Gandhi apprising him that the situation had not improved at all.

The concentration of East Pakistan Refugees in India rose to around 10 million by November 1971 putting India in social, political and economic jeopardy. In her last-ditch effort to turn the corner, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi visited United States, Britain and some other western countries to convince the respective Head of the State that the killing and other repressive activities of Pakistan were continuing unabated and also to persuade them to immediately stop the carnage and to insist on Pakistan's negotiating with Mujibur Rahman to transfer power to him as the elected legitimate leader. She also highlighted that India should be relieved of the alarming situation arising out of the abnormally high influx of refugees in India from East Pakistan. But, all her efforts proved abortive as President Nixon, Prime Minister of Britain and the leaders at the helm of other countries could not be

convinced to swing into action to stem the inhuman and autocratic activities of Yahya Khan's Government in Pakistan. Besides, during discussion with Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on 4<sup>th</sup> November, 1971 at the Oval office President Nixon warned that the Chinese, the Soviet Union and the U.S. might take appropriate action if India initiated a war.

However, Kenneth B .Keating, the U.S. Ambassador to India complained in a secret cablegram to Washington that the Nixon Administration's justification for its pro-Pakistan policy detracted from American credibility and was inconsistent with his knowledge of events. Ambassador Keating urged United States to withdraw its support towards Pakistan and extend its support to India. He also indicated the inevitability of birth of an independent Bangladesh due to the inhuman torture and indiscriminate killing of the people by the Pakistani junta. He argued that India, as the world's most populous democracy, India deserved American help and backing at its critical time. But, Keating's recommendation fell flat on the Nixon Administration which sought to maintain a good relation with Pakistan, refused to accept Mr. Keating's recommendation.<sup>60</sup>

In response to Keating's aforesaid remarks, Kissinger tried to justify Nixon's Pakistan Policy through a motivated explanation which was countered by Keating with reasons. Keating advised the U.S. to adhere to its professed principle of democracy and thereby to help India, another large democratic country , to tide over the crisis precipitated by Yahya Khan, the dictator ruler of Pakistan. Kissinger

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<sup>60</sup> Gwertzman, B. (1972). U.S. Envoy in India Disputed Policies Backing Pakistan. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/1972/01/06/archives/us-envoy-in-india-disputed-policies-backing-pakistan-keating-said.html>. Accessed on July 6, 2022.

explained to Keating that President Nixon wanted to hold up the ‘one-time exception’ military aid to Pakistan, but wanted to supply the military spare parts which were not applicable to the crisis. Keating said that this military supply would draw flak from other nations. He suggested that certain conditions should be attached to any further economic aid to Pakistan and emphasised that necessary steps must be taken towards a political settlement of the crisis so that refugees could return to their homes.<sup>61</sup> Keating’s advice earned for him the sarcastic epithet ‘‘Advocate for India’ from President Nixon. Nixon did not subscribe to Keating’s views.

Finding no other alternative, Indira Gandhi entered into an agreement with Moscow in August, 1971 for getting military support in the event of any military intervention from the U.S. or China against India if Indo-Pak war broke out.

Pakistan launched an air attack in the 1<sup>st</sup> week of December, 1971 on the eastern sector of India which was duly retaliated by Indian Army and Air Force. Ultimately, on 16<sup>th</sup> December, 1971, the Pakistani army under the leadership of General Niazi surrendered to the Indian Army under the leadership of General SHFJ Manekshaw.

As an act of solidarity with the Pakistan, President Nixon sent a Task force of the Seventh Fleet including the nuclear powered aircraft carrier Enterprise into the Bay of Bengal on 10 December 1971, to cow down India. But, the U.S. effort failed as

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<sup>61</sup> Bishoyi, S. (2021). Role of the United States in the 1971 War. *Journal of Defence Studies*, 15(4), 263-296. [https://idsa.in/system/files/jds/15\\_Saroj%20Bishoyi.pdf](https://idsa.in/system/files/jds/15_Saroj%20Bishoyi.pdf). Accessed on October 21, 2021.

Pakistan was already badly defeated by that time. The Task Force entered the Bay on 15 December 1971, too late to make any difference to the outcome of the war.<sup>62</sup>

It is therefore well established that the United States not only took an anti-India posture during the India-Pakistan war over the liberation struggle in East Pakistan, the U.S. was even contemplating action against India. The repeated pleadings of the then American Ambassador to the U.S. administration about the gravity of the situation brought about by the Pakistani forces in East Pakistan was not entertained by Nixon administration. For it, the imminent rapprochement with the Peoples Republic of China took center stage in their foreign policy and Pakistan was playing a positive and constructive role to facilitate American bonhomie with the Chinese. Nixon failed to correctly evaluate the military situation and his attempt to intervene was too late as the Pakistani forces were forced to surrender before their Indian counterpart within a matter of two weeks. One offshoot of the U.S. policy in the 1971 war was the cementing of defence ties with India. Indira Gandhi possibly did not want to go to a war with both the superpowers opposed or indifferent. This probably led to India and the USSR concluding a Treaty of Friendship which signaled that India would not be without friends in case a full-fledged war ensues.

### **Pokhran Test of 1974 and the U.S. Response:**

India and the U.S. developed a strong divergence over the question of nuclear proliferation since the time India refused to agree to and sign the Nuclear Non-

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<sup>62</sup> Chowdhury, I. A. (2013). U.S. Role in the 1971 Indo-Pak War: Implications for Bangladesh-U.S. Relations. *ISAS Working*, Paper No. 165 – 15. National University of Singapore. <https://www.isas.nus.edu.sg/papers/165-us-role-in-the-1971-indo-pak-war-implications-for-bangladesh-us-relations/>. Accessed on January 3, 2023.



Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in the late 1960s. However, this was not a hindrance for India receiving supply of uranium for the nuclear power generation programme. The Lal Bahadur Shastri Government in 1964 launched the Tarapur Atomic Power Plant. The plant relied on boiling water reactors (BWRs) for power generation. BWRs are nuclear reactors using water as a coolant and moderator. Steam is produced in the reactor, which is enriched with uranium oxide. These BWRs were supplied by the American General Electric Company and more than 100 Americans were part of the project. Commercial operations at the Tarapur commenced in October 1969, five years after the contract with the U.S. was signed. The contract stated that the U.S. would supply enriched uranium for the plant for thirty years. However, a big question mark over the continued American commitment under the agreement was raised when in May 1974, India conducted its first successful nuclear test in Pokhran under Operation Smiling Buddha. Pokhran test was the first confirmed nuclear test by a country other than the five nuclear weapons states. This was considered a major deviation from the overarching nuclear security architecture, which was sought to be built by the NPT.

India had bound itself to operate the Tarapur station only on special nuclear fuel (U-235), supplied by the United States. In exchange for the American supply, India had agreed to inspections and accounting of all the fissile material. In 1971, the Tarapur plant was placed under the inspection and safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). There was no special difficulty regarding the fuel supply for the Tarapur plant until 1974. India was however on a completely different page so far as the question of nuclear policy was concerned. India had not signed the NPT and had argued against the vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons permitted by the NPT for the nuclear weapons states. India felt that the NPT was discriminatory as it

sought to prevent horizontal proliferation but did not address the issue of continuous up-gradation of nuclear weapons and capabilities of the five nuclear weapons states. Notwithstanding the Indian reservation on the overall nuclear weapons issues, the country faced no problem in operationalising its nuclear power for peaceful purposes. However, almost everything changed as soon as India conducted the Pokhran test in 1974. The U.S. increased its commitment to the IAEA and the latter was empowered further to have more control over the diversion of nuclear supplies for purposes other than peaceful.

According to Sanjukta Banerji:

“...And India, the “offender”, came in for special arm-twisting by the United States because not only had India demonstrated its independence in nuclear decision-making and had acquired considerable technological know-how through foreign assistance and indigenous experimentation, it had also consistently refused to sign the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) which would have opened all its plants and research work to international inspection, and therefore, interference. According to the American viewpoint, the technology required for a peaceful nuclear explosion (PNE) was the same as that for a “non-peaceful” one, and therefore, India was subverting the cause of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons by insisting on the right of the NNWS to experiment with PNEs”<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Banerji, S. (1981). Dynamics of Confrontation: Tarapur and Indo-US Relations. *India Quarterly: A Journal of International Affairs*, 37 (2), 241-251.  
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/097492848103700205#core-collateral-self-citation>.  
Accessed on July 7, 2022.

## **Beyond Pokharan-1 Test**

India felt the imperative need for achieving nuclear capability and was prompted to go for the Peaceful nuclear explosion at Pokhran in 1974, consequent upon the occurrence of a series of events -China's defeat of India in a 1962 territorial war, China's 1964 nuclear test, the 1965 war with Pakistan, and China's support of Pakistan in that conflict. This test took many in the United States and beyond by surprise. The Nuclear Suppliers' Group( NSG) convinced many observers that the nuclear technology exported to India for peaceful purposes were used in the said nuclear explosion. In 1975, a set of guidelines was framed by the NSG to control the supply of the nuclear materials and it was published in 1978. The U.S. Congress wanted to apply sanctions to India. However, the official stand of the administration was that no American materials were used in the 1974 test out of the materials supplied to India for the first nuclear power reactor at Tarapur.

Within five years of Pokhran I, the United States passed several laws that restricted exports of high-technology goods to countries engaging in proliferation-related activities. A list of such activities are as follows:

- The Glenn and Symington Amendments to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961: The Glenn Amendment (adopted in 1977) prohibited aid to countries seeking capabilities to reprocess plutonium from spent reactor fuel and requires aid cessation to any country that attempts to obtain or transfer a nuclear device. These restrictions cannot be waived without an act of Congress. The Symington Lessons from India's Nuclear Tests Amendment (adopted in 1976) prohibits aid to any non-nuclear weapon state not under the

International Atomic Energy safeguards that either tries to import uranium or acquire uranium enrichment capabilities.

- The Nuclear Nonproliferation Act of 1978: This act established international controls on the transfer and use of materials, technology, and nuclear materials for peaceful uses to prevent proliferation. It called for the establishment of common international sanctions and a framework for international cooperation on peaceful uses of nuclear energy and authorized the U.S. to license the export of nuclear fuel to those countries adhering to nonproliferation policies.
- The Arms Export Control Act of 1979: This authorized the U.S. to make military exports, sales, loans, transfers, and grants to other countries and determines their eligibility for such programs and requires that these actions accord with other policy concerns (e.g.nonproliferation). The president may unilaterally waive any or all of the restrictions he determines and reports to Congress that they are detrimental to national security.
- The Export Administration Act of 1979: This act authorized all commercial exports, loans, sales, transfers, and grants to other countries, coordinated these actions with other policy concerns (e.g.nonproliferation) and set forth the eligibility requirements for recipients.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Fair, C. C. (2005). Learning to think the unthinkable: Lessons from India's nuclear tests. *India Review*, 4 (1), 23-58. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/14736480590919608?tab=permissions&scroll=top>. Accessed on June 11, 2022.

It is obvious that those restrictions were imposed on India to deter it from embarking on nuclear test in future. However, it cannot be overlooked that despite plethora of hindrances, India and U.S. were resilient enough to restore their bilateral relationship with intermittent dips.

In 1980, meeting between Indira Gandhi and Ronald Regan was initiated to renew the relationship followed by another meeting held in 1982 between Prime Minister Gandhi and President Reagan in Washington, DC, where the “Science and Technology Initiative,” was signed which led to the signing of Memorandum of Understanding on Sensitive Technologies, Commodities and Information in 1984 by Rajiv Gandhi.

The United States was comparatively not so keen to implement its non-proliferation agenda with respect to India to sustain its interest in the South Asia. However, India was bent on elevating itself as a Nuclear Power gradually and secretly and to expose it to the world in appropriate time. A series of significant changes were observed in South Asia during post 1980s. By the end of the 1980s, the 1984 memorandum of understanding proved to be largely defunct, at least to most U.S. observers. This was due in part to the increasing American and international efforts to retard missile proliferation. In 1987 the Missile Technology Control Regime was formed, comprised initially of the United States and members of the G-7 countries (Canada, West Germany, Italy, Japan, France, and the United Kingdom). In 1990, the U.S. incorporated Missile Technology Control Regime guidelines into the Arms Export Control Act and Export Administration Act of 1979. The collapse of the Soviet

Union posed a number of challenges to India regarding its longtime weapons supplier and proven source of diplomatic and political support.<sup>65</sup>

In the 1990s, an upward trend in the relationship between India and the U.S. was observed. The United States declared India to be an emerging market and targeted it for the U.S. foreign direct investment and expanded commercial contacts. The Indian defense bureaucracies began to formalize inter-service cooperation in 1991 through the Kickleighter Proposals. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission also wanted to engage India in a nuclear safety dialogue due to, inter alia, concerns about the safety of India's nuclear facilities and because India had developed its nuclear infrastructure isolated from the rest of the world for two decades. Dialogue began in 1994, and lumbered along until April 1998. William J. Perry visited India in 1995. This visit of the U.S. defence secretary had come after seven years. During this trip, he and Indian Minister of Defense Mallikarjun signed the *Agreed Minute on Defense Relations between the United States and India*. The Agreed Minute called for a new strategic relationship and specified a tripartite structure within which such relations would develop. Another important initiative undertaken to improve ties with New Delhi was the Department of State-launched Strategic Dialogue of October 1997, which entailed a series of cabinet-level visits that began in October 1997. Each visit was used to focus on possible areas of cooperation, particularly in various secretaries' areas of expertise.

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<sup>65</sup> Fair, C. C. (2005). Learning to think the unthinkable: Lessons from India's nuclear tests. *India Review*, 4 (1), 23-58. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/14736480590919608?tab=permissions&scroll=top>. Accessed on June 11, 2022.

The U.S. Secretary of State visited India in November 1997 and there was an expectation of a visit by the U.S. President in 1998. The dialogue between the two countries was ongoing but got fully punctured before the May 1998 test.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Fair, C. C. (2005). Learning to think the unthinkable: Lessons from India's nuclear tests. *India Review*, 4 (1), 23-58. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/14736480590919608?tab=permissions&scroll=top>. Accessed on June 11, 2022.

## **CHAPTER-2**

### **The 1998 Moment: Pokhran Nuclear Test and the sanctions**

The present chapter attempts to dissect the relevant developments and analyses these for understanding the state of relations between India and the United States prior to and subsequent to the nuclear tests at Pokhran in May 1998. The tests were an assertion of India's new found status as a nuclear weapon state, completely overshadowing the concerns and reservations over nuclear proliferation. The backdrop and the context of the "1998 Moment" which was a milestone development in the foreign policy of the country is discussed in this chapter, in its relations with the United States and the international community and a culmination of developments actuated both by security considerations vis a vis China and Pakistan and as well as a result of domestic public opinion and political dynamism. The chapter also analyses the international fallout of the nuclear tests in the form of sanctions and how constructive diplomatic engagements paved the way for a gradual thaw in the India-U.S. relations, and finally withdrawal of the sanctions, albeit in the light of the devastating 9/11 attack on the U.S.

Pokhran-II nuclear tests conducted by India on the 11th May, 1998 (three nuclear tests) and on the 13th May (two nuclear tests) were preceded by its first nuclear test on the 18th May, 1974, dubbed as Pokhran-1 nuclear test. The Pokhran-II test caught the nations of the world unaware. During India's 24 years' apparent nuclear



hibernation period since 1974, speculations among the various countries were rife about remote possibility of India's going nuclear. Such impression gained ground in the backdrop of India's preference for non-alignment policy dovetailed with its campaign for global disarmament and world peace. But, behind the scene, reality was different. India took an ambiguous stand of keeping its nuclear option open sans any leaning towards weaponisation vis-à-vis showcasing its nuclear capability, as it was not happy with the discriminatory world divided between the nuclear-powered P-5 (The permanent 5 member nations of the UN Security Council- United States, United Kingdom, Russia, China and France) and the others. As quoted by Anil Kakodkar, the nuclear scientist and the Director of Bhabha Atomic Centre at the time of Pokhran-II nuclear test,

“I remember Dr.Homi Bhabha had several times said that India could make a bomb in 18 months. For a variety of reasons, that did not happen.”<sup>1</sup>

R.Venkataraman, former Defence Minister & later President of India, had put forward the fact that in spite of India's readiness with full preparations for an underground nuclear test in 1983,it was coerced not to go ahead. Similarly, in 1995, another attempt to carry out new nuclear tests was ultimately halted by the U.S.

So, prior to the explosion of the nuclear device in 1998, preparations were carefully concealed and engineers worked at night to avoid detection by American satellites.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Sinha, A. (2018, May 11). Nuclear Scientist Anil Kakodkar explains: How Pokhran happened. *The Indian Express*. <https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/how-pokhran-nuclear-tests-1998-happened-5172010/>. Accessed on February 3, 2022.

<sup>2</sup> Atomic Heritage Foundation. (2018, August 23). *Indian Nuclear Program*. <https://ahf.nuclearmuseum.org/ahf/history/indian-nuclear-program/>. Accessed on December 15, 2021.

The following analysis of the sequence of past events and the consequent measures adopted by India towards nuclear weaponisation can establish the *raison d'être* behind 1998 nuclear explosion.

### **Debate: Security and Domestic Political Dynamism**

It has been a longstanding position of India that the United States and other countries possessing nuclear weapons and for that matter the countries which have accepted the nuclear order under the NPT regime have failed to understand and appreciate India's concern, its vulnerability as well the dynamics of the domestic politics of an ambitious democratic polity on the question of the country acquiring nuclear weapon capabilities. The realist school would like us to believe that decision making on such issues are driven primarily by security considerations. Since the country has an adversarial relations with China as exemplified by the war in 1962 and that China has been in possession of Indian territory ceded to it by Pakistan and that China continues to rake up disputes over Indian territory, it is but expected that India would consider it necessary to balance China's might in the nuclear domain. After all, the nation's survival is dependent on acquisition and deployment of nuclear weapons in order to create a minimum deterrence vis a vis a nuclear weaponized China. To add to the vulnerability of the country and the security challenges facing it, India has yet another and no less potent, adversary in the form of neighbor Pakistan. The two countries have gone to war in 1947-48, in 1965 and then again in 1971. Moreover, Pakistan has been a member of the Cold War era military alliances led by the U.S. and Pakistan and China have both enjoyed a very warm relation, particularly in the context of their common aversion toward India. Pakistan had ceded a large track of the Indian territory to China which was at its illegal possession. Moreover, Pakistan

had also decided not to join the NPT and that it was quite known that the country was secretly developing nuclear weapons through clandestine means. Under the circumstances, it is naïve to expect that India would disregard the manifold challenges to its security and would acquiesce to the nuclear order mandated by the NPT. This would have meant giving up on the option to have nuclear weapons and forfeiting any prospect of development of a nuclear deterrent capability.

An overwhelming number of analysts subscribe to the view that India's decision to keep alive its nuclear option and finally to carry out the nuclear explosion in 1998, declaring the country as a nuclear weapon state was indeed a response to the security challenges facing the country. However, the attempt to locate the rationale for India's decision to go nuclear is not necessarily driven by security considerations. The May 1998 decision was no less driven by domestic factors impacting foreign policy decisions. These domestic factors emanated not only from the competitive political dynamics at play in the country but is derived from the world view of a democratic country which was deeply dissatisfied with the existing arrangement of the international system based on the differentiation between the "nuclear haves" and "nuclear have nots". It is instructive to refer to the views of Petrokovich who has written a comprehensive account of India's journey as a nuclear weapon power.<sup>3</sup>

According to him, "Domestic factors, including moral and political norms, have been more significant in determining India's nuclear policy..."

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<sup>3</sup> Perkovich, G. (1999). *India's Nuclear Bomb: The Impact on Global Proliferation*, pp.6-8. Berkeley: University of California Press.

India has been torn between a moral antagonism toward the production of weapons of mass destruction, on one hand, and on the other hand, an ambition to be regarded as a major power in a world where the recognized great powers rely on nuclear weapons for security and prestige. India's domestic imperative to foster socioeconomic development has clashed with an interest in building up military strength. India's policymaking processes and institutions also have affected its nuclear history: Indian political leaders and nuclear scientists have consciously excluded the military from nuclear decision making, again for internal reasons. Each of these material and ideological factors has been in some way affected by India's colonial past and postcolonial identity.<sup>4</sup>

He further elaborates:

“Acquiring nuclear weapons proves that Indian scientists are as talented as those of the world's dominant powers: doing so in the face of the U.S.-led nonproliferation regime, which Indians consider a system of “nuclear apartheid” reasserts India's repudiation of colonialism”. Yet, if India followed fully the nuclear paths of the United States, the United Kingdom, or China, it would violate its own quest to be morally superior to and more humane than these states. These and other related factors largely explain the twists and turns of India's nuclear history from 1947 through 1998.”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Perkovich, G. (1999). *India's Nuclear Bomb: The Impact on Global Proliferation*, p.8. Berkeley: University of California Press.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.pp.8-9

There is no end to speculations as to the reason for India deciding to go for the exercise of its nuclear weapon option. One may say that the decision was a natural progression of the series of events and developments since the 1960s. After all, India had faced hostility and a border war with China and that the security considerations were paramount. At the same time, there is no denying that India was deeply dissatisfied with its position and status in the comity of nations and it was necessary for the country to express its disillusion with the international arrangements. At the foreign policy level this found expression in the non-alignment policy and at a later time period, India raised valid and significant questions on the issue related to nuclear haves and have nots which was expressed through its policy of non-adherence to the NPT. Indian domestic opinion has always placed a premium on the country's independent course and non-acceptance of presently constituted international hierarchy. Therefore, Vajpayee Government's decision to conduct the nuclear tests at Pokhran in May 1998 was actuated by the demands of the public opinion as well as encouraged by both short term and long term considerations related to security of the country. The timing and the domestic fallout including the questions related to electoral dividend may always be raised but there is but little doubt that the policy decision on nuclear weapon status of the country was in fact a continuation and logical culmination of the determination and planning of both the security as well as the scientific community of the country.

### **The Beginning**

Foreseeing the imperative need of harnessing the nuclear energy for supplementing the energy need of the country in different development sectors and thereby improving the economic condition of the nation, the Atomic Energy Research

Committee was set up in 1946. This was replaced by Indian Atomic Energy Commission with the enactment of Atomic Energy Act in 1948. In order to provide a fillip to the research and development in the field of nuclear technology, Department of Atomic Energy was set up by the Government of India in 1954. Atomic Energy Establishment, Trombay, was also set up in the same year.

In the subsequent years, India enriched its nuclear technology and infrastructure with the assistance from different countries e.g., the U.S., the UK, Canada, and France. India's sole aim was utilisation of its acquired nuclear skills for being self-reliant in meeting its burgeoning energy needs and carrying out further advanced researches in the nuclear science to apply the outputs in pharmaceutical, mining and many other industries. With China's public declaration regarding its decision of making nuclear weapons in 1958, the Government of India felt highly concerned as it perceived threat to its own security. On 22 November, 1960, Nehru remarked in the Indian Parliament,

“If nothing effective is done in regard to disarmament in the course of the next three or four years, it may perhaps become too late to deal with it; it may become almost impossible to control the situation.”<sup>6</sup>

India's deficiency in military strength vis-à-vis that of China was laid bare in India's defeat in 1962 India-China border war. Volleys of demands emanated from the enlightened Indians as well as different nationalist political organisations, seeking India's immediate initiative in developing nuclear weapons as a deterrent against any

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<sup>6</sup> Nehru, J. (1961). *India's Foreign Policy: Selected Speeches, September 1946-April 1961*, p.235. Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India.

future aggression from China. But, the Government of India, under Nehru's premiership, preferred to take recourse to a diplomatic approach and arouse international conscience towards early disarmament of the nuclear- powered countries. India was keener to intercept Chinese onslaught by upgrading its conventional military prowess than to fortify itself with nuclear weapons.

China's first nuclear explosion on 16<sup>th</sup> October, 1964 came as a frightening shock to the Indian populace and the leaders at the helm of Indian governance. Lal Bahadur Shastri, the then Prime Minister of India immediately reacted by observing that the Chinese blast had taken the whole world under shock and posed a real danger towards maintaining peace. He did not however review India's nuclear policy. Later though Shastri pointed at the fact that India would stick to its peaceful nuclear policy, without following China's act of developing and testing nuclear weapons.<sup>7</sup>

## **The Chinese Nuclear Bomb**

China kept on acquiring nuclear bombs. Consequently, India grew all the more vulnerable since Shastri was determined not to opt for making nuclear weapons. This gave rise to a lot of resentment among the masses who advocated India's need of the hour to equip itself with nuclear bombs, arsenals etc. The opponent political parties, the Congress Party along with the Government itself, demanded nuclear deterrence.

Mushtaq Ahmed, the then New Delhi Pradesh Congress President was the first in the Congress Party to make a public declaration that India's only way of defending

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<sup>7</sup> Chakma, B. (2005). Toward Pokhran II: Explaining India's Nuclearisation Process. *Modern Asian Studies*. 39 (1), 189-236. [https://digital.library.adelaide.edu.au/dspace/bitstream/2440/16831/1/Chakma\\_16831.pdf](https://digital.library.adelaide.edu.au/dspace/bitstream/2440/16831/1/Chakma_16831.pdf). Accessed on April 16, 2022.

herself was through the production of her own atom bomb. The All India Congress Committee (AICC) meeting was held on 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> of November 1964, in which the Prime Minister of India was under the pressure of his own political party wherein almost a hundred delegates put forth a petition emphasizing on India's necessity to acquire 'an independent nuclear deterrent to protect herself against any possible threat from China'.<sup>8</sup>

But, till 23<sup>rd</sup> December, 1964, Prime Minister Shastri adhered to the principle that no nuclear bomb would be produced by India. Ultimately, on the 24<sup>th</sup> December, 1964, he succumbed to the political pressure from the members of the Parliament. As a result, there was a slight change in his Government's policy. He switched over 'from a *no bomb ever* stance to a *no bomb at present* position'.<sup>9</sup>

In 1965, the 'Subterranean Nuclear Explosion Project' was approved by the Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri to enable the scientists to gain more advanced knowledge on nuclear technology. He was keen to develop deterrence against the nuclear-powered China through mobilizing international consensus for nuclear disarmament. Shastri received lukewarm response to his endeavour to secure safeguard from the super power nuclear nations for the non-nuclear ones in the event of any nuclear blackmail by other nuclear-powered nations.

China's threat for its military intervention against India, in support of Pakistan, during Indo-Pak war, 1965, was largely responsible for building public opinion in

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<sup>8</sup> Chakma, B. (2005). Toward Pokhran II: Explaining India's Nuclearisation Process. *Modern Asian Studies*. 39 (1), 189-236. [https://digital.library.adelaide.edu.au/dspace/bitstream/2440/16831/1/Chakma\\_16831.pdf](https://digital.library.adelaide.edu.au/dspace/bitstream/2440/16831/1/Chakma_16831.pdf). Accessed on April 16, 2022.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.



favor of keeping open the possibilities and options for going nuclear. It catalysed the thought process of the persons at the helm of Indian governance to acquire nuclear weapons as a deterrent against any future bullying or invasion from China.

## **Indira Gandhi and the NPT**

Subsequent to the sudden demise of Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri at Taskhent, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was initially not in favor of even continuing the 'Subterranean Nuclear Explosion Project' which got approval of the former Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri. But, her opinion veered towards developing technology for nuclear explosion, consequent upon the test of a thermonuclear weapon conducted by China in May, 1966 followed by the test of a nuclear-warhead missile in October of the same year. India also expressed its unwillingness to sign the Non- proliferation Treaty in 1968 despite pressures from the super powers, as the five nuclear powers made no commitments as to gradual reduction of their nuclear weapon stocks. Instead, they were exerting pressures on the non-nuclear states to refrain from developing nuclear technology even for peaceful purposes. In 1970, the launch of a satellite into the space- orbit using a long range rocket by China evoked a further sense of national insecurity in the minds of Indians, apprehending China's potential of launching ballistic nuclear missiles attack deep inside Indian territory. Opinion of the Indian masses at large and those of Indian civil and military organizations converged to persuade the Government of India to go for nuclear weapons in the interest of India's security vis-à-vis the nuclear-powered neighbor China and its protégé Pakistan being in possession of nuclear weapons in secret collaboration with China.

Simultaneous proposals were also mooted by Vikram A. Sarabhai, Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission, the Government of India, for carrying out researches in the field of Atomic Energy and Outer Space for the development and defence of India. He stated in his foreword to the proposal dated 22 July,

“The progress and science and technology is transforming society in peace and in war. The release of the energy of the atom and the conquest of outer space are two most significant landmarks in this progress.”<sup>10</sup>. In reiterating the imperative need of harnessing technology, he observed, “I suggest that it is necessary for us to develop competence in all advanced technologies useful for our development and for defence.”<sup>11</sup>

The United States of America’s display of anti-Indian stance by sending a Military Aircraft Carrier in the Bay of Bengal in support of Pakistan, during Indo-Pakistan War, 1971, exposed the U.S. diplomacy. Given these developments, the Government of India felt pressured to enhance its military power through nuclear deterrence to stave off future invasion from either the American ally Pakistan or from the aggressive nuclear- powered China, another military benefactor of Pakistan.

Consequently, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi’s initial abhorrence for using atomic energy for developing nuclear weapons gradually petered out and resulted in the Pokhran –I nuclear explosion on 18<sup>th</sup> May, 1974 with the implicit objective of deriving from the experimental outcome, the necessary knowledge towards making

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<sup>10</sup> Atomic Energy Commission, Government of India. (1970). *Atomic Energy and Space Research – A Profile for the decade 1970-80*. [https://inis.iaea.org/collection/NCLCollectionStore/\\_Public/02/006/2006423.pdf](https://inis.iaea.org/collection/NCLCollectionStore/_Public/02/006/2006423.pdf). Accessed on October 20, 2020 .

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

nuclear bombs. However, wide publicity was given that the explosion was conducted for utilising the experimental data to harness the atomic energy for peaceful purpose only. Recourse to such camouflaged approach was taken to avoid economic and other sanctions from the nuclear- powered super powers.

It is obvious that “the test thus made India a latent nuclear weapons power that could constitute a nuclear weapons programme in a reasonable time frame from a decision to do so”.<sup>12</sup>

### **India- U.S. Correspondence post-Pokhran-1**

India’s nuclear explosion brought in its trail reactions from various countries. In respect of Canada, it has been pointed out:

“Following the test, Canadian personnel working on another reactor in India were brought home while Canada reassessed their foreign policy for sharing nuclear technology. Aside from the fact that Canada had always held a firm belief that nuclear technology should be used for peaceful purposes, the fact that the plutonium used in the test was produced using Canada's heavy water reactor technology could have made them feel somewhat culpable.”<sup>13</sup>

However, no sharp reaction emanated from the United States. The U.S. reacted in a far more toned down manner. In the backdrop of the Watergate Scandal, coupled

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<sup>12</sup> Vipin, N. (2016). India’s Nuclear Weapons Policy. In S. Ganguly (Ed).*Engaging the World, Indian Foreign Policy since 1947*. Oxford University Press.

<sup>13</sup> Donohue, M. (2014). Pokhran-1: India’s First Nuclear Bomb. *Coursework Stanford University*. <http://large.stanford.edu/courses/2014/ph241/donohue1/>. Accessed on October 30, 2021.

with the uncertainty of India's future plans and intentions, Henry Kissinger, the U.S. Secretary of State, felt it wiser not to react strongly, to prevent any adverse impact on future relations with India.<sup>14</sup> Consequently, India's nuclear research continued unabated with the sole mission of enriching its nuclear potential with a tint of variation in India's professed nuclear policy during regimes of the successive Prime Ministers.

Correspondences between American President Jimmy Carter and India's Prime Minister Morarji Desai during 1977-1980 gives a glimpse of Desai's earnest bid to convince Carter about India's imperative need of harnessing nuclear energy to feed its multiple development sectors and also India's determined principle of ruling out the possibility of using nuclear technology for military purpose –

“...My Government is quite clear that we shall not use nuclear technology for warlike purposes whatever others may do and I have publicly reaffirmed this commitment. For us it is not a policy but an article of faith. But, faced as we are with gigantic problems of development and limitation of fossil fuel, we cannot but rely on nuclear technology and scientific progress to meet our future energy and developmental requirements. It is an instrument of industrialisation with immense potentiality. ....We have, therefore, to persist in the course we set 20 years ago and I feel certain that those who have any lingering doubts about our intentions will realise, as the

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<sup>14</sup> Donohue, M. (2014). Pokhran-1: India's First Nuclear Bomb. *Coursework Stanford University*. <http://large.stanford.edu/courses/2014/ph241/donohue1/>. Accessed on October 30, 2021.

years roll by, that we have matched our actions with our intentions.”<sup>15</sup>

Prime Minister Desai’s reasoned approach to President Carter for the supply of enriched fuel for the Tarapur nuclear reactor, gives vent to India’s utter dependence on the U.S. for the nuclear fuel and its declared commitment to peaceful use of nuclear energy to ensure uninterrupted supply of the same.

As far as the Tarapur reactor was concerned, it was established on the assurance of the availability of enriched fuel from the U.S., as and when required. A bilateral agreement was reached at, which embodied sufficient, required safeguards against the possibility of any misuse. This agreement between the two countries was to the states of Maharashtra and Gujarat, which during that period was dependent on Tarapur station to secure a significant amount of their energy requirements. It was further hoped that as an outcome of the arrangement, the disposal of the nuclear waste would not be a cause of threat or anxiety for a sizeable rural and urban population in the states.<sup>16</sup>

In response, while appreciating India’s declared abhorrence for nuclear weapons, President Carter assured the shipment of enriched uranium for the Tarapur Atomic Power Station-

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<sup>15</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers. (1977). *letter from Indian Prime Minister Desai to American President Carter, May 16, 1977. XIX (73)*. Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d73>. Accessed on November 15, 2021.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

“ ..I was deeply impressed by your letter, and by what you have said publicly on a number of occasions regarding your strong and principled opposition to nuclear weapons. ... On Tarapur, I was delighted with your forthright and positive response to Ambassador Goheen, whom I had personally asked to discuss this with you. Your prompt assurances to me that India would maintain international safeguards on Tarapur, would not use material supplied by the United States in a further nuclear explosion, and would enter into negotiations on nuclear matters were extremely encouraging. On the basis of your response, I authorized a recommendation that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission issue the long-pending license for enriched uranium fuel. I am pleased the shipment is now on its way.”<sup>17</sup>

In the next letter, President Carter was apprised by Prime Minister Desai about the inordinate delay in the supply of the enriched uranium by the U.S. for the Tarapur atomic plant and its consequent adverse impact not only on the plant but also on huge number of beneficiaries of the generation of power. This deviation from the committed time-line of supply on the part of the U.S. drew flak from the detractors of the India-U.S. bonhomie. A stark discrimination against India also became utterly apparent at the hasty clearance of the U.S. Government in regard to the sale of two

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<sup>17</sup>Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers. (1977). *Letter from American President Carter to Indian Prime Minister Desai, July 15, 1977. XIX (80)*. Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d80>. Accessed on November 17, 2021.

nuclear reactors of the U.S. design by France to the Peoples Republic of China without safeguards.<sup>18</sup>

As regards Pakistan's clandestine procurement of nuclear technology to develop nuclear weapons, mention was also made in the said letter that the said act of Pakistan was not in consonance with peaceful purposes. Attention of President Carter was also drawn to Pakistan's desperate bid to acquire nuclear capability through the clandestine procurement of nuclear materials.<sup>19</sup>

By way of giving assurance to India, infeasibility of Pakistan's going nuclear within a short time was emphasized by President Carter. Thus, the veracity of Pakistan's secret development of nuclear capability was not ruled out by the U.S. President. Rather, it was reiterated by the President that Pakistan was clearly engaged in a significant effort to build a uranium enrichment plant which would give it a capability of developing nuclear explosives. At the same time, it was also declared by President Carter that as per their best assessment, it would be several years before Pakistan would be able to produce enough material for a nuclear explosive device, rather than the six months cited in the analysis of the Government of India.

However, assurance came from President Carter,

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<sup>18</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers, South Asia. (1979). *Letter from Indian Prime Minister Desai to American President Carter, February 10, 1979*. XIX (126). Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d126>. Accessed on November 20, 2021.

<sup>19</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers, South Asia. (1979). *Letter from Indian Prime Minister Desai to American President Carter, February 10, 1979*. XIX (126). Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d126>. Accessed on November 20, 2021.

“We have been very active in seeking to forestall the Pakistani program. We have talked to all the countries exporting sensitive nuclear equipment, urging them to enforce existing export controls and to apply stricter ones where necessary. We have reviewed our own procedures as well. While the response from supplier nations has been good, we must face the fact that at best these efforts will probably only delay Pakistan’s program.”<sup>20</sup>

The tacit support of the U.S. to Pakistan’s effort towards nuclear weaponisation and President Carter’s gesture of laying the onus of solving this issue on India was candidly revealed in the statement of President Jimmy Carter when it was claimed by him that the U.S. Government also discussed at some length the problems posed by Pakistan’s nuclear program. However, it was also admitted by President Carter that everything was being done to avert the danger to the India-U.S. shared goal of non-proliferation. Sharing India’s concern about the impact in the Middle East in case of Pakistan’s going nuclear, cautioned President Carter that it would be mistaken however, to think that the motivation for Pakistan’s nuclear program lay outside South Asia. Against this backdrop, it was clarified by the U.S. President that the solution of different Indo-Pak problems could be solved by direct Indo-Pak meeting.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers, South Asia. (1979). *Letter from American President Carter to Indian Prime Minister Desai, April 5, 1979.* XIX (133). Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d133>. Accessed on December 2, 2021.

<sup>21</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers, South Asia. (1979). *Letter from American President Carter to Indian Prime Minister Desai, May 8, 1979.* XIX (142). Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d142>. Accessed on December 2, 2021.



A letter was written by President Carter to Prime Minister Indira Gandhi that his earnest desire to build a strong connection between India and the U.S. had induced him to take a political risk of recommending to the American Congress, by taking resort to an executive order, the release of pending supply of the enriched Uranium to India, with the knowledge that American Congress had the authority of declining his recommendation. It was also expressed by him that he had decided to move ahead with the two pending license applications. He was keen to issue an executive order authorizing the first export covered by the license application then pending before the NRC (XSNM-1379). He further instructed the executive branch to recommend to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to give favourable consideration to the second pending application (XSNM-1569).

The U.S. President also raised the issue that there might be significant opposition to those actions in Congress. The law provided that the Presidential instruction could be overridden by the Congress. However, President Carter deemed it worthwhile to embark upon such a political risk in the interest of a strong Indo-U.S. ties against the backdrop of a renewed sense of self confidence and stability generated under the leadership of Indira Gandhi in India. In order to give a push to his effort to permit the export, direction was issued by President Carter to the members of his senior staff to persuade concerned members of Congress to ensure onward transmission of the export item.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers, South Asia. (1980). *Letter from American President Carter to Indian Prime Minister Gandhi, May 2, 1980. XIX (182)*. Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d182>. Accessed on December 3, 2021.

In return of his initiative to ensure an uninterrupted supply of enriched Uranium to India, a reciprocal gesture of cooperation was solicited by President Carter from Prime Minister Gandhi towards uninterrupted discussion of the non-proliferation issue in an ambience of mutual confidence. The reason advanced by the President Carter in favor of this approach was that non-proliferation was the corner stone of Carter administration and it was the U.S. policy too. High hopes were held by President Carter that warm response would be forthcoming from India for effective implementation of the non-proliferation policy to serve the interest of both the countries. It was under the contemplation of the U.S. President that the facilitation of the Uranium export would pave the way for roping in India in the process of implementation of the non-proliferation policy<sup>23</sup>

The aforesaid correspondences highlighted the U.S.'s dual strategy of strengthening military prowess of Pakistan to have a platform for combating Russian invasion of Afghanistan and to bring India within the fold of non-proliferation treaty to thwart India's progress towards nuclearization . Pakistan's enhancement of nuclear power with the covert guidance and assistance of China as well as the burgeoning stockpiling of nuclear arsenals by China itself urged Prime Minister Indira Gandhi to plan for a second peaceful nuclear explosion in 1982 to equip India with the expertise of producing nuclear weapon from the scientific data to be obtained from such nuclear explosion. But the plan was shelved ultimately. In the same year, another plan of destroying Pakistan's uranium enrichment plant at Kahuta was also

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<sup>23</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers, South Asia. (1980). *Letter from American President Carter to Indian Prime Minister Gandhi, May 2, 1980. XIX (182)*. Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d182>. Accessed on December 3, 2021.

withdrawn. India was thus highly concerned to upgrade its nuclear potential to fortify its national security in the inimical ambience created simultaneously by the nuclear-powered China and the relentless secret effort of Pakistan to acquire nuclear weapons.

## **Development of Missile System**

The scientists, while developing India's nuclear potential, felt the imperative need of evolving *pari passu* a missile delivery system for the effective use of nuclear power as a deterrent. Consequently, different missiles saw the light of the day under the Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme (IGMDP). Among these missiles 'Agni' and 'Prithvi' had the capability of serving the dual purpose of non-nuclear use and use with nuclear warheads, although it was not explicitly mentioned at the time of their launching. The IGMDP included an anti-tank missile—*Nag*, two surface-to air missiles—*Akash* and *Trishul*, one medium range surface-to-surface missile—*Prithvi*, and an intermediate range ballistic missile—*Agni*. There was no indication from the Government of India about nuclear implications of the IGMDP at the time it was launched.

The development of series of Ballistic Missiles initiated during the tenure of Indira Gandhi continued unabated during Prime minister Rajiv Gandhi's time too. India's ramping up of military mobilisation across the Indo-Pak Border during 1986-1987 elicited Pakistani Scientist A.Q.Khan's claim of possessing nuclear weapons. Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi then took a decisive stand to make India's nuclear weaponisation a reality. Thus, India's march toward an overt nuclear capability was continued in 1988-89 during the premiership of Rajiv Gandhi as well. Atomic

Energy Commission (AEC) and Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) were entrusted with the mandate to weaponise India's nuclear capability so that India would have components necessary to assemble nuclear weapons more readily available<sup>24</sup>

There prevailed a period of vacillation as to the effective use of nuclear weapons by India. Although Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's go-ahead for nuclear weapons was obtained, confusion prevailed over the issues as to what would be the utility of nuclear weapons for India; how many nuclear weapons will be required for India; what India wanted to do with its nuclear weapons, how many it would need, how it would deliver them, against whom, and under what conditions etc. It must be mentioned that the period under the premiership of Rajiv Gandhi saw a spurt in the research activities in the nuclear field.<sup>25</sup>

### **Developments post-Rajiv Gandhi Period**

The interim Indian Prime Ministers between Rajiv Gandhi and Narasimha Rao were indecisive as regards efficacy of policy of 'nuclear ambiguity' or 'overt nuclear weaponisation' in safeguarding security of India facing triangular dilemma: indefinite extension of nuclear Non- Proliferation Treaty (NPT) & Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) ; China's burgeoning nuclear arsenals ;Pakistan's covert acquisition of nuclear weapons.

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<sup>24</sup> Vipin, N. (2016). India's Nuclear Weapons Policy. In S. Ganguly (Ed). *Engaging the World, Indian Foreign Policy since 1947*, p. 455. Oxford University Press.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid. p.456.

The Indian scientists, being very keen for an overt nuclear explosion to validate their research works for nuclear explosion, urged the Prime Ministers for according approval for such nuclear explosion. The Congress Government during P.V. Narasimha Rao's premiership faced such persuasion of the scientific community as well as the political pressure from the Bharatiya Janata Party for conducting nuclear explosion to pave the way for nuclear weapons. Besides, apprehending that in the eventuality of conclusion of CTBT, the scope of conducting further nuclear explosion would peter out, Narasimha Rao's Government was on the brink of conducting the nuclear explosion in December, 1995. But, being detected by the American surveillance team, the plan had to be abandoned. Plan for a nuclear test was taken up by the Narashima Rao Government in December 1995, like France and China, who first conducted series of nuclear tests and then joined the treaty. But, before this plan reached its logical conclusion, Indian preparations were detected by American intelligence sources and enormous pressure was put on New Delhi by the United States to abandon the test. Eventually Americans prevailed over Prime Minister Rao.<sup>26</sup>

India was averse to sign NPT and CTBT as those treaties were devised by the nuclear-powered countries to restrain the attainment of nuclear potential by non-nuclear countries like India who possessed all the expertise required for going nuclear.

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<sup>26</sup> Chakma, B. (2005). Toward Pokhran II: Explaining India's Nuclearisation Process. *Modern Asian Studies*. 39 (1), 189-236. [https://digital.library.adelaide.edu.au/dspace/bitstream/2440/16831/1/Chakma\\_16831.pdf](https://digital.library.adelaide.edu.au/dspace/bitstream/2440/16831/1/Chakma_16831.pdf). Accessed on April 16, 2022.

The BJP Government during its 13 days' stint in power in 1996 tried to consider the issue of nuclear explosion. However, two interim Governments led by H D Deve Gowda and I K Gujral during 1996-1998 was formed following BJP's failure to secure a vote of confidence in the lower House of Parliament, Lok Sabha. These two Governments, however also failed and elections to Lok Sabha were held in 1998.

### **Decision to go Nuclear**

BJP's victory in the March 1998 general election ushered in India's era of nuclear weaponisation. The report of the Strategic Review Committee set up by Atal Behari Vajpayee Government for assessing the status of India's readiness for the nuclear explosion was favourable. Politically too, the positive move in this direction was quite favourable as the Vajpayee Government needed to consolidate itself. The Government did not enjoy a clear majority in the Lok Sabha, depended it was on the support of the allies. As such, it was considered politically convenient to undertake the bold decision to go nuclear, a decision which was avoided for one or the other reasons by the previous Governments for almost two decades.

The much-sought-after fruition of more than two decades of nuclear research came on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> May, 1998 with the explosion of three and two nuclear devices respectively. The test was followed by Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's declaration of the test as successful. A moratorium on the nuclear test was also declared by P.M. Vajpayee. Government spared no pains to convey its yearning for world peace in the backdrop of its attaining nuclear power, albeit it was misinterpreted by the diplomats.

Statements were issued after Prime Minister Vajpayee's announcement that India was always in favor of total global elimination of nuclear weapons. It was also clarified that India had not closed the door to some form of Indian participation in the test ban treaty if established nuclear powers committed themselves to this goal. But diplomats said this appeared to be mainly aimed at dissuading the United States from imposing sanctions.<sup>27</sup>

An analysis of the sequence of events as narrated above reveals that the prime reason behind Pokhran-II explosion was to acquire a nuclear deterrent against any further invasion either from nuclear powered China or from China-assisted nuclear-powered Pakistan. However, India's natural ambition of elevating its status as a nuclear-powered country in the comity of nations, the earnest insistence of the Indian scientists to gather experimental data for nuclear weaponisation and the lukewarm response of the nuclear super powers on the issue of extending protection to the non-nuclear countries in the event of their being attacked by any nuclear-powered country played a latent secondary role in the culmination of India's decades long nuclear research work into Pokhran-II nuclear explosion.

An observation of a former the U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce, Trade Development on this issue was –

“..Few in the United States government or policymaking establishment realized just how deep and emotional the nuclear issue was to India and, particularly, to its defense

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<sup>27</sup> Burns, J. F. (1998, May 12). India sets 3 nuclear blasts, defying a worldwide ban; tests bring a sharp outcry. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/1998/05/12/world/india-sets-3-nuclear-blasts-defying-a-worldwide-ban-tests-bring-a-sharp-outcry.html>. Accessed on August 22, 2021.

and policy communities. India wanted to be recognized as equal to the United Kingdom, its imperial oppressor; equal to the United States, which many felt was a successor to Britain in its imperial ambitions; and equal to China, which had invaded India in 1962. The nuclear issue was as much about equality, dignity, respect, and trust as it was about security.”<sup>28</sup>

## **The U.S. Response and Sanctions**

On the 13<sup>th</sup> May, 1998, the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Senator Jesse Helms commented, “the Indian Government has not shot itself in the foot. Most likely it shot itself in the head.”<sup>29</sup>

After the nuclear explosion on 11<sup>th</sup> May and 13<sup>th</sup> May, 1998, the U.S. President Bill Clinton remarked outside the Sanssouci Palace in Potsdam, Germany, after meeting with Chancellor Helmut Kohl,

“I believe they ( the nuclear tests ) were unjustified. They clearly create a dangerous new instability in their region and, as a result, in accordance with U.S. law, I have decided to impose economic sanctions against India.”<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Vicker Jr., R.E. (2018, May 31) Looking Back: The 1998 Nuclear Wake Up Call for U.S.-India Ties - India's 1998 nuclear tests were a moment of reckoning for the United States. *The Diplomat*. <https://thediplomat.com/2018/05/looking-back-the-1998-nuclear-wake-up-call-for-us-india-ties/>. Accessed on August 22, 2021.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> World News Story Page (1998, May 13). U.S. imposes sanction on India; Clinton urges Pakistan: Show nuclear restraint. *CNN*. <http://edition.cnn.com/WORLD/asiapcf/9805/13/india.us/>. Accessed on August 22, 2021.



In compliance with the Glenn Amendment to the Arms Export Control Act of 1994, President Bill Clinton imposed the following sanctions:

- “Terminated or suspended foreign assistance under the Foreign Assistance Act, with exceptions provided by law (e.g., humanitarian assistance, food, or other agricultural commodities).
- Terminated foreign military sales under the Arms Export Control Act, and revoked licenses for commercial sale of any item on the U.S. munitions list.
- Halted any new commitments of USG [U.S. Government] credits and credit guarantees by USG entities (including EXIM and OPIC).
- Gained G-8 support to postpone consideration of non-basic human needs (BHN) loans for India and Pakistan by the International Financial Institutions (IFIs) to bolster the effect of the Glenn Amendment requirement that the United States oppose non-BHN IFI loans.
- Will issue Executive Order to prohibit U.S. banks from extending loans or credits to the Governments of India and Pakistan.
- Will deny export of all dual-use items controlled for nuclear or missile reasons. Will presume denial for all other dual-use exports to entities involved in nuclear or missile programs.”<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Morrow, D., & Carriere, M. (1999). The economic impacts of the 1998 sanctions on India and Pakistan. *The Nonproliferation Review*, 6(4), 1-16. <https://www.nonproliferation.org/wp-content/uploads/npr/morrow64.pdf> . Accessed on August 23, 2021.

India was also inflicted with sanctions from 14 other countries including *Japan, Germany Denmark, Sweden, Canada and Australia* who joined hands with the U.S. Development loans for India worth \$1.2 billion was cancelled by Japan. Another \$30 million in grant aid was also cancelled by Japan. Bilateral aid talks with India were called off by Germany and a new development aid worth \$16 million was withheld. *Denmark* froze \$28 million in aid, *Sweden* cancelled \$119 million, and *Canada* suspended approximately \$9.8 million of non-humanitarian aid, all originally intended for India. *Australia*, a relatively small lender to South Asia, cancelled all non-humanitarian aid to India, of \$2.6 million.<sup>32</sup>

Pakistan too came under the spell of sanctions as it detonated a total 6 (six) nuclear devices in tandem with India on 28<sup>th</sup> May and 30<sup>th</sup> May, 1998.

Strobe Talbott, the U.S. Undersecretary of State, stated that rationale for imposition of sanction was threefold,

“First, it’s the law. Second, sanctions create a disincentive for other states to exercise the nuclear option if they are contemplating it. And third, sanctions are part of our effort to keep faith with the much larger number of nations that have renounced nuclear weapons despite their capacity to develop them.”<sup>33</sup>

Consequent upon the imposition of sanction, it dawned upon the U.S. administration that India’s nuclear explosion being a *fait accompli*, a way forward ought to be

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<sup>32</sup> Morrow, D., & Carriere, M. (1999). The economic impacts of the 1998 sanctions on India and Pakistan. *The Nonproliferation Review*, 6(4), 1-16. <https://www.nonproliferation.org/wp-content/uploads/npr/morrow64.pdf> . Accessed on August 23, 2021.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid.

explored through relaxation of sanctions and negotiation with the Indian Government to stem any further proliferation of its nuclear weaponisation programme . India's geo-political edge over other Asian countries was of prime importance to the U.S. in its strategy of curbing China's ambition of challenging the super powers and enhancing its influence in the Asia Pacific region. The lucrative market of India was another attraction for the U.S. Government. Those issues coupled with India's diplomatic overtures for cooperation in nuclear non-proliferation issue prompted the U.S. to take steps towards relaxing in phases the sanctions imposed on India. Additionally, the American wheat growers vigorously lobbied for relaxation of sanctions to safeguard their auction of wheat particularly for Pakistan which used to be the highest buyer of American wheat.

Consequently, at the intervention of American Congress, the Agriculture Export Relief Act was passed and signed into law on July 14, 1998. This Act amended the Arms Export Control Act leading to exemption of various department of agriculture-backed funding from sanctions pertaining to section 102 of Arms Export Control Act.

India-Pakistan Relief Act of 1998 was passed by Congress subsequently. It was signed into law by the President on October 21, 1998. President was authorised to waive, for a period of one year, the application of sanctions relating to the U.S. foreign assistance, the U.S. Government nonmilitary transactions, the U.S. position on loans or assistance by international financial institutions, and the U.S. commercial bank transactions. The new authority vested in the U.S. President was immediately

used by President Bill Clinton and it was announced on November 7, 1998, that certain transactions and support would be restored.<sup>34</sup>

Later, Sanctions on the following entities was waived by President Clinton on October 27,1999, being empowered by the permanent waiver authority conferred by Congress in the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, FY 2000, signed into law on October 25, 1999 and issuing a certificate to the Congress, as required in the law , to the effect that the application of the restriction would not be in the national security interests of the United States

Export-Import Bank loans and credits, Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) funding, Trade and Development Agency (TDA) export support, International Military Education and Training programmes, the U.S. commercial banks transactions and loans, Department of Agriculture (USDA) export credits, and specific conservation-oriented assistance.<sup>35</sup>

The waiver of sanction was preceded by intensive soul-searching among American Senators and the officials. An overt admission by President Bill Clinton hinted at American Government's post realisation about the ineffectiveness of the imposed sanction divorced from international consensus- "the sanctions can be useful,

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<sup>34</sup> Everycrsreport.com. (2003, February 3). *India and Pakistan: U.S. Economic Sanctions*, RS20995. <https://www.everycrsreport.com/reports/RS20995.html>. Accessed on August 23, 2021.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

particularly when applied by the international community as a whole, but the United States had become too reliant on them as a tool of foreign policy.”<sup>36</sup>

The reverberation of President Clinton’s observation was apparent in the remarks of some of the senior officials of the U.S. administration.

The U.S. Secretary of State Albright publicly admitted that the sanctions imposed by the administration had apparently failed miserably. While Assistant Secretary of State Karl Inderfurth said that the sanctions would not take the U.S. “very far,” Commerce Secretary William Daley almost blasted Washington’s tendency of imposing unilateral sanctions as counter-productive.<sup>37</sup>

The policy of lifting sanctions against India was adhered to during the tenure of President George W. Bush too. Being empowered by the authority conferred by the American Congress, he went about taking effective measures for implementing the sanction-lifting policy. In a note to Secretary of State Colin Powell, he stated, “The application to India and Pakistan of the sanctions and prohibitions . . . would not be in the national security interests of the United States.”<sup>38</sup>

A series of visits by the political dignitaries and high-level officers of India and the U.S. took place after the commencement of President Bush’s tenure in 1981. The visit of India’s foreign and defense minister to Washington took place in April, 1981

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<sup>36</sup> Mahapatra, C. (1998). Pokhran II and after: Dark clouds over indo-us relations. *Strategic Analysis*, 22 (5), 711-720. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09700169808458847?journalCode=rsan20>. Accessed on December 23, 2021.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Krishnadas, K.C. (2001). U.S. lifts sanctions against India, Pakistan. *EE Times*. <https://www.eetimes.com/u-s-lifts-sanctions-against-india-pakistan/>. Accessed on December 23, 2021.

followed by that of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of State, General Shelton, in May, 1981 to discuss military-to-military relations. In May, 2001, and again in August, 2001 visit of Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage to India took place. During this visit, United States' interests in fully normalizing relations with India was publicly declared. Necessity of promotion of global trade talks prompted the U.S. Trade Representative Robert Zoellick to visit India in August 2001.<sup>39</sup>

### **9/11 Attack and Implications**

The United States received a big jolt at the unprecedented and abrupt terrorist onslaught on the United States on September 11, 2001. The immediate dire need of the U.S. was to plunge headlong to combat the menace of terrorism. President Bush's immediate goal was total extermination of the terrorism network. This exigency prompted Bush Administration to mend fences with Pakistan as a unique geographical and political position was held by Pakistan vis-a-vis Afghanistan which was the breeding place and hideout of the terrorists of different categories and groups. However, India's strategic and geo-political importance had also to be reckoned with for effectively containing the spread of terrorism. So, it was realised by the U.S. Government that a cooperative relationship would have to be maintained with India too. Consequently, the President, in exercise of the authority granted to him in the Defense Appropriations Act, FY2000, lifted on September 22, 2001, all nuclear test-related economic sanctions against India and Pakistan after finding that

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<sup>39</sup> Krishnadas, K.C. (2001). U.S. lifts sanctions against India, Pakistan. *EE Times*. <https://www.eetimes.com/u-s-lifts-sanctions-against-india-pakistan/>. Accessed on December 23, 2021.

denying export licenses and assistance was not in the national security interests of the United States.<sup>40</sup> Sanctions were lifted in respect of both India and Pakistan within two weeks of the 9/11 attack.<sup>41</sup> It was obvious that America would not like to be bound by restraints in the conduct of its international relations and foreign policy when the country itself has been attacked. The U.S. needed to gain the support and cooperation of all the countries in its declared war against terrorism and since the attack was launched by masterminds holed up in Afghanistan, it was crucial for the U.S. to secure full-fledged support of Pakistan and India. Therefore, the sanction strategy had to give way to the requirement of an effective response against the perpetrators of the 9/11 attack.

## **Gradual Thaw**

The gradual thaw in the post-sanction Indo-U.S. stand-off was a consequence of concerted effort on the part of both the U.S. and India Government. The crucial role was played by the Foreign Minister of India, Jaswant Singh and the U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott. Their several rounds of diplomatic dialogues in quest of a mutually acceptable way forward yielded the desired outcome.

The Jaswant-Talbott Talks, consisting of eleven rounds were held in different places around the world including in Washington D.C., New Delhi, London, and Singapore.

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<sup>40</sup> Krishnadas, K.C. (2001). U.S. lifts sanctions against India, Pakistan. *EE Times*. <https://www.eetimes.com/u-s-lifts-sanctions-against-india-pakistan/>. Accessed on December 23, 2021.

<sup>41</sup> Panda, S. (1999). India and the United States: perceptions and policy. *Strategic Analysis*, 23 (1), 111-120. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09700169908455032>. Accessed on December 23, 2021.

A comprehensive range of issues confronting India in the strategic arena, the India-U.S. bilateral relations, and their expectations from each other were covered in the talks. Apprehensions about India's nuclear policy, India's aspirations, and security concerns were dispelled in these talks.<sup>42</sup> The continuous lobbying by India Caucus in the U.S. in tandem with the intense activities of the India's Diplomatic Mission in the U.S. hastened the reconciliation between India and the U.S. on varying issues pertaining to the withdrawal of the U.S. sanction on India.

It may be said that the grave task of justifying India's nuclear test was assigned to Capitol Hill by India. A pivotal role was played by the Indian lobbying carried on by India Caucus and supported by India's diplomatic mission in Washington D.C. In the passage of the U.S.-India nuclear agreement bill in the U.S. Congress, the Indian lobbying played its part very effectively leading to an end to India's nuclear isolation.<sup>43</sup>

Jaswant Singh, with his acute diplomatic acumen, exposed Pakistan's sole ulterior motive and provocation to destabilise India by citing Pakistan's Kargil intrusion in 1999. He adroitly drove home the point on circumstantial compulsion leading to India's Nuclear Explosion in 1998 to attain minimum nuclear deterrence. His meticulous and reasoned analysis of the Pakistan's motivated anti-Indian stance prompted the U.S. administration not to assess India through the Pakistani Lens.

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<sup>42</sup> Sharma A. (2020, October 2). Jaswant – Talbatt Talk and India-U.S. Strategic Engagement : A legacy of Jaswant Singh, the Foreign Minister at the crucial juncture of India's international engagement. *The Times of India*. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/blogs/ashoks-statecraft/jaswant-talbatt-talk-and-india-us-strategic-engagement-a-legacy-of-jaswant-singh-the-foreign-minister-at-the-crucial-juncture-of-indias-international-engagement/>. Accessed on December 23, 2021.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.



Pakistan's Kargil intrusion was very adroitly used as a tool by Jaswant Singh to expose the aggressive and anti-Indian stance of Pakistan. Pakistan faced global repercussions and alienation. For the first time, the U.S. saw India-Pakistan relations independently and slammed Pakistan for putting the South Asian region at the risk of nuclear war. The incident also de-hyphenated the U.S.-India relation from Pakistan.<sup>44</sup>

President Clinton took initiative to revive Indo-U.S. relation to a qualitatively and mutually favourable level through his visit to India during March 19-25, 2000. This was followed by the reciprocal visit of Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee to United States at the invitation of President Bill Clinton during September 15-17, 2000. In their Joint statement, dated 15th September, 2000, Prime Minister Vajpayee and President Clinton declared a roadmap for facilitating the progressive partnership between the two large democratic countries. Comprehensive coverage of multiple domains of cooperation was done to enhance the feasibility of the improvement in the relationship.

It was agreed upon by the U.S. and Indian leaders that the wide-ranging architecture of institutional dialogue between the two countries provided a broad-based framework to pursue the vision of a new relationship. The pace and objectivity with

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<sup>44</sup> Sharma A. (2020, October 2). Jaswant – Talbatt Talk and India-U.S. Strategic Engagement : A legacy of Jaswant Singh, the Foreign Minister at the crucial juncture of India's international engagement. *The Times of India*. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/blogs/ashoks-statecraft/jaswant-talbatt-talk-and-india-us-strategic-engagement-a-legacy-of-jaswant-singh-the-foreign-minister-at-the-crucial-juncture-of-indias-international-engagement/>. Accessed on December 23, 2021.

which the two countries held the bilateral consultations in conformity with the dialogue architecture, was appreciated by both of them.<sup>45</sup>

The two leaders reviewed the performances of various coordinating groups, forums, institutional set-ups, consultative committees etc. which were entrusted with the task of improving the bilateral relationship between India and the United States. They expressed satisfaction in the activities of the groups which had already started functioning e.g., ‘Joint Working group on Counter-Terrorism’, ‘joint consultative group on clean energy and environment’.

Mutual confidence was expressed that the three ministerial-level economic dialogues and the High –Level Coordinating Group would go a long way to ameliorate the bilateral trade environment, facilitate greater commercial cooperation, promote investment and contribute to strengthening the global financial and trading systems. The establishment of the Science and Technology forum was welcomed by both the countries. Commitment of mutual cooperation was given to sustain the traditionally strong scientific cooperation between the two countries. Initiatives in the health sector, in improving health care and combating AIDS and other major diseases were also reviewed.<sup>46</sup>

The discussions also included issues on development in the health sector. Special stress was laid on the joint collaboration for improvement in health care systems and

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<sup>45</sup> The White House. (2000, September 15). *Joint Statement: U.S.-India (9/15/00)*. [https://clintonwhitehouse5.archives.gov/WH/new/html/Wed\\_Oct\\_4\\_105959\\_2000.html](https://clintonwhitehouse5.archives.gov/WH/new/html/Wed_Oct_4_105959_2000.html). Accessed on January 30, 2022.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

adoption of effective preventive and curative measures for the treatment of AIDS and other prevailing diseases at that time.

Thrust was given to harness the information technology to bring about an all-round development for the people of all strata in the society. It was also decided that the two countries would cooperate in building a wider international consensus on information technology. Digital divide, both within and between countries, was sought to be removed so that the benefits of information technology may percolate to all citizens, rich and poor and thereby contribute to the socio-economic development.<sup>47</sup>

Improvement in the field of textiles and civil aviation constituted an important part of their deliberations.

Commitment for enhancing scientific researches in the field of agriculture, environment, biotechnology, genomics, bioinformatics to ensure global food security and environmental protection was the other important areas of the joint discussion.

The Governments of the United States and India resolved to explore ways of enhancing cooperation and information exchange, joint collaborative projects and training of scientists in agriculture biotechnology research. Special importance was attached to the vaccine research utilizing the knowledge of genomics and bioinformatics.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> The White House. (2000, September 15). *Joint Statement: U.S.-India (9/15/00)*. [https://clintonwhitehouse5.archives.gov/WH/new/html/Wed\\_Oct\\_4\\_105959\\_2000.html](https://clintonwhitehouse5.archives.gov/WH/new/html/Wed_Oct_4_105959_2000.html). Accessed on January 30, 2022.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid

In order to bring improvement to the lives of the rich and the poor too, the two leaders pledged to attract private investment through ensuring efficiency, transparency and accountability in the capital markets.

The signings of commercial agreements between the two countries for development of power industry in India were appreciated by both the leaders. Thrust was given to the adoption of clean technologies to ensure clean environment.

Intensification of cooperation between the two countries in all the activities of United Nations including peace keeping operations and operations relating to International Security System got prominence in the discussion between the two leaders of India and the U.S. The contribution of Asian Security Dialogue initiated between India and the U.S. towards improving Indo-U.S. relationship was also appreciated by them.

During discussion, both the U.S. and India committed to bring the two treaties viz 'Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT)' and the 'Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT)' to a conclusive logical end. India reaffirmed that it would continue its voluntary moratorium until the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) came into effect. The United States reaffirmed its intention to work for ratification of the Treaty at the earliest possible date. The United States and India confirmed their support for a global treaty to halt the production of fissile material for weapons

purposes, and for the earliest possible start of Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty negotiations in Geneva.<sup>49</sup>

Both the countries being victim of terrorism, renewed their commitments to curb terrorism and urged the other countries to come forward and to raise the issue in the United Nations forum also to eliminate the international menace.

Intensification of bonhomie among the Indian and the U.S. people through the exchange of culture and commerce was deliberated upon. The initiative taken by the Indian-American Community in this effort was deeply acknowledged. The Vajpayee – Clinton conference created a thaw in the post-sanction strained relation between India and the U.S.

## **A Strengthened Cooperation**

During the tenure of President George W Bush too, it was felt that sustenance of a symbiotic relationship between India and the U.S. demanded positive involvement of India and United States in a number of mutually beneficial issues e.g. fighting terrorism, promoting human rights and protecting the environment, in addition to the nuclear issues. Mr. Robert B. Zoellick, the United States Trade representative, was the first Member of President Bush's Cabinet to visit India. His observation during his public address in New Delhi in August, 2001, gave vent to the U.S. administration's outlook towards India during Bush Administration

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<sup>49</sup> The White House. (2000, September 15). *Joint Statement: U.S.-India (9/15/00)*. [https://clintonwhitehouse5.archives.gov/WH/new/html/Wed\\_Oct\\_4\\_105959\\_2000.html](https://clintonwhitehouse5.archives.gov/WH/new/html/Wed_Oct_4_105959_2000.html). Accessed on January 30, 2022.

“...The United States wants to treat India realistically for what it is -a major country and an emerging power. We want to engage India in a strategic dialogue that encompasses the full range of global issues. The United States appreciates that India's influence clearly extends far beyond South Asia.”<sup>50</sup>

The senior legislators of the U.S. were also very keen to accelerate the process of negotiations between India and the U.S. Joseph R. Bidden, the Chairman of the Senate foreign relations committee, advised President Bush that a timely removal of sanction could pave the way for holding a meeting between Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee and President Bush, sometime towards the end of September, 2001, in New York.

In the year 2001, the exchange of visits between India and the U.S. at the Ministerial and official level contributed very effectively towards normalisation of relation between these two countries. India's Foreign and Defence Minister visited Washington in April; Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of State, General Shelton visited India in May, to discuss military-to-military relations. In May, 2001, and again in August, Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage visited India and publicly stated the United States' interests in fully normalizing relations with the country. In August 2001, the U.S. Trade Representative Robert Zoellick visited India to promote global trade talks.”<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Perlez. J. (2001). U.S. ready to end sanctions on India to build alliance. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2001/08/27/world/us-ready-to-end-sanctions-on-india-to-build-alliance.html>. Accessed on Decemer 23, 2020.

<sup>51</sup> Everycrsreport.com. (2003, February 3). *India and Pakistan: U.S. Economic Sanctions*, RS20995. <https://www.everycrsreport.com/reports/RS20995.html>. Accessed on August 23, 2021.

The Indo-U.S. relations took a very positive turn consequent upon the terrorist attack on the U.S. on September 11, 2001. Bush administration was desperate in its bid to nab the masterminds behind the nefarious act and exterminate terrorism. India's active collaboration towards this end along with that of Pakistan was found to be indispensable by President Bush. This led to cessation of economic sanctions imposed on India and Pakistan by the U.S. post 1998 nuclear explosion. In exercise of the authority granted to the President in the Defense Appropriations Act, FY2000, on September 22, 2001, the President lifted all nuclear test-related economic sanctions against India and Pakistan after resolving that denying export licenses and assistance was not in the national security interests of the United States.<sup>52</sup>

However, the stance of Bush administration to relieve India from the imposed economic sanctions within a period of three years was interpreted by many countries as a reversal of the U.S. policy under a point-of –no –return position created by India by making itself a de facto nuclear power. But, this relenting approach of the U.S. was not incongruent with its policy since its own security strategy was to protect the U.S. through a missile shield against the weapons of mass destruction stealthily devised by some countries. In other words, the U.S. was not averse to conduct further nuclear test to produce more improved nuclear arsenals. The reversal was in consonance with the administration's own opposition to a nuclear-test-ban treaty and its desire to build a missile shield against what it

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<sup>52</sup> Everycrsreport.com. (2003, February 3). *India and Pakistan: U.S. Economic Sanctions*, RS20995. <https://www.everycrsreport.com/reports/RS20995.html>. Accessed on August 23, 2021.

increasingly seems to regard as the inevitable spread of missile technology and weapons of mass destruction.<sup>53</sup>

That both India and United States were keen to develop a mutually beneficial strategic relationship, in the aftermath of the 11 September, 2001 onslaught of terrorism on the U.S. of which India had been an early victim, was evident from the sequence of reciprocal visits by the leaders and dignitaries of both these countries and the speeches delivered by them :

In a Joint Statement issued during Prime Minister Vajpayee's visit to Washington in November 2001, the two sides reaffirmed the enduring ties between the two countries and the importance of further transforming the relationship. Both the countries expressed their solidarity in view of the fact that both countries were victims of terrorism with reference to the heinous attack on 11 September in the U.S. and on 1 October in Kashmir. While expressing satisfaction with the progress made in India-U.S. cooperation on counter-terrorism , both the countries announced the establishment of a Joint Cyber-Terrorism Initiative and committed to initiate a dialogue between their Governments with a view to evaluating the modality of transfer of dual-use technology and military items. Discussions were also held to initiate civil space cooperation<sup>54</sup>.

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<sup>53</sup> Perlez, J. (2001). U.S. ready to end sanctions on India to build alliance. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2001/08/27/world/us-ready-to-end-sanctions-on-india-to-build-alliance.html>. Accessed on Decemer 23, 2020.

<sup>54</sup> Tomar, R. (2002, June 25). *India-U.S. Relations in a Changing Strategic Environment*. Research Paper no. 20, 2001-2002. Parliament of Australia. [https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id:%22library/summary/summary.w3p;query=Source%3A%22RESEARCH%20PAPERS%20\(FOREIGN%20AFFAIRS,%20DEFENCE%20AND%20TRADE%20GROUP\)%22](https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id:%22library/summary/summary.w3p;query=Source%3A%22RESEARCH%20PAPERS%20(FOREIGN%20AFFAIRS,%20DEFENCE%20AND%20TRADE%20GROUP)%22). Accessed on March 12, 2022.



Series of reciprocal visits of the U.S. and Indian dignitaries in January, 2002 followed by the next visit to India of the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Political Military Affairs, were organised to contribute to the consolidation of Indo-U.S. engagement. The month of January 2002 was remarkably significant for the visit of dignitaries e.g. Secretary of State Powell, Environmental Protection Agency Director Governor Christine Todd Whitman, FBI Director Robert Mueller, Defence Intelligence Agency head Admiral Thomas Wilson, and the State Department's Counter-Terrorism chief Francis Taylor visited New Delhi. As a reciprocal gesture, Defence Minister George Fernandes and Home Minister Lal Krishna Advani travelled to Washington. In addition, in late April the Assistant Secretary of State for Political Military Affairs Lincoln Bloomfield Jr. visited India for the first Indo-U.S. Political Military Dialogue to set the stage for a closer and even more productive bilateral security relationship<sup>55</sup>

In order to deliberate on the issues relating to Critical Infrastructure Protection, Indo-U.S. Cyber Security Forum was also set up.

Keeping in view India's potential to maintain regional balance vis-à-vis China's aggressive endeavour towards aggrandising its position as the Asian hegemon and throwing a challenge to the leadership of the world super powers, intensive efforts were made by both India and the U.S. to bolster their military cooperation. At a meeting of the U.S. India Defence Policy Group (DPG) in December 2001, the two

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<sup>55</sup> Tomar, R. (2002, June 25). *India-U.S. Relations in a Changing Strategic Environment*. Research Paper no. 20, 2001-2002. Parliament of Australia. [https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id:%22library/summary/summary.w3p;query=Source%3A%22RESEARCH%20PAPERS%20\(FOREIGN%20AFFAIRS,%20DEFENCE%20AND%20TRADE%20GROUP\)%22](https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id:%22library/summary/summary.w3p;query=Source%3A%22RESEARCH%20PAPERS%20(FOREIGN%20AFFAIRS,%20DEFENCE%20AND%20TRADE%20GROUP)%22). Accessed on March 12, 2022.

sides committed themselves to substantially increase the pace of high-level policy dialogue, military-to-military exchanges and other joint activities. Indian Defence Minister George Fernandes met Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice in Washington in January 2002 and the discussed issues related to terrorism and sharing of military intelligence. Defence Minister Fernandes took the opportunity to reassure the U.S. that India's military standoff with Pakistan could be resolved, easing concerns that the situation could escalate into a major war. The two sides also signed a General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) which essentially guaranteed that they would protect any classified technology shared between them. It also paved the way for the future sale of the U.S. weapons to India.<sup>56</sup>

Commitments were forthcoming from the U.S. regarding their keenness to develop bonhomie with India with due deference to India's independent stand on its internal and external issues. Apprehensions from some sections of Indian politicians was allayed. It was clarified by Ambassador Blackwill that the U.S. had no intention of stationing the U.S. troops permanently in India. Regarding Indian military acquisitions from Russia, the U.S. attitude was that India was a free country and as such it was free to acquire defence systems from any country. Further, given the

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<sup>56</sup> Tomar, R. (2002, June 25). *India-U.S. Relations in a Changing Strategic Environment*. Research Paper no. 20, 2001-2002. Parliament of Australia. [https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id:%22library/summary/summary.w3p;query=Source%3A%22RESEARCH%20PAPERS%20\(FOREIGN%20AFFAIRS,%20DEFENCE%20AND%20TRADE%20GROUP\)%22](https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id:%22library/summary/summary.w3p;query=Source%3A%22RESEARCH%20PAPERS%20(FOREIGN%20AFFAIRS,%20DEFENCE%20AND%20TRADE%20GROUP)%22). Accessed on March 12, 2022.

changed international situation, good relations between India and Russia were now in the interests of the U.S.<sup>57</sup>

Both India and the U.S. identified the core similarities between them to give a firm foundation to their relationship. A joint statement was issued by India and the U.S. in 2003, to “re-define the U.S-India relationship” in terms of “democracy, common principles, and shared interest<sup>58</sup>

## **Conclusion**

It is thus seen that though the world received a jolt at India’s Pokhran-II explosion followed by the sanctions imposed by the U.S. and some other nuclear-powered countries on India, the importance of India in the comity of nations to bring world order and to contribute to the growth of trade and commerce among nations could not be ignored. This led to gradual withdrawal of sanctions by the U.S. amidst critics’ innuendos against the U.S.’s conciliatory approach towards India, despite India’s not being a signatory to CTBT and NPT. However, the momentum gained through series of visits and discussions among the leaders and high level dignitaries of India and the U.S. unfolded hitherto untraversed realms pregnant with the possibilities of contributing to a durable relationship between India and United

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<sup>57</sup> Tomar, R. (2002, June 25). *India-U.S. Relations in a Changing Strategic Environment*. Research Paper no. 20, 2001-2002. Parliament of Australia. [https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id:%22library/summary/summary.w3p;query=Source%3A%22RESEARCH%20PAPERS%20\(FOREIGN%20AFFAIRS,%20DEFENCE%20AND%20TRADE%20GROUP\)%22](https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id:%22library/summary/summary.w3p;query=Source%3A%22RESEARCH%20PAPERS%20(FOREIGN%20AFFAIRS,%20DEFENCE%20AND%20TRADE%20GROUP)%22). Accessed on March 12, 2022.

<sup>58</sup> Saha, A. (2021, January 29). In the shadow of sanctions? U.S.-India Relations and the S-400 Purchase. *E-International Relations*. <https://www.e-ir.info/2021/01/29/in-the-shadow-of-sanctions-us-india-relations-and-the-s-400-purchase/>. Accessed on March 12, 2022.

States. One of such significant areas was harnessing of nuclear energy for the civil purposes by India. This key requirement of India which constituted the bedrock of India's nuclear policy, as was highlighted subsequent to India's Pokhran-1 and Pokhran-II nuclear explosion, got recognition with the initiation of 'Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement' between India and United States. The next chapter dwells on the issues related to this agreement.

## **CHAPTER-3**

# **Making of the Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement**

The highpoint of positive growth in India-U.S. relationship is generally attributed to the successful conclusion of civil nuclear cooperation agreement between the two countries in 2005 and additional support to the cooperation that came about in the wake of successful conclusion of related agreements over the years. The U.S. had adopted a strict stand vis- a- vis the Pokhran explosions and imposed sanctions on India. However, even with the sanctions in force, both sides continued to explore avenues for supporting their mutuality. One important aspect of this mutuality was definitely trade and investment. India was not only one of the fastest growing markets; its policy reform aimed at liberalization was expected to be a big boost in the economic domain, foreign trade and as a destination for investment. The U.S. therefore was not interested in isolating India and was ready to calibrate its non-proliferation concerns in a way that India gets the necessary breather. India was also interested in ending its isolation and wished to gain access to international markets and as such both sides decided to leave enough room to maneuver and negotiate.

The civil nuclear agreement was an outcome of parleys over the years undertaken by the Vajpayee Government in India and the Bush administration in the U.S. The 9/11 attack on the U.S. territory also made it a necessity for the U.S. to pool all available

sources in its “war on terror” and India’s support in this endeavour was considered quite important by a growing number of policy planners in the U.S. However, the non-proliferation lobbies in the U.S. is adamant that any leeway or concession to India should not be construed as an endorsement of India’s defiance of international non-proliferation regime. It is against this backdrop that intense negotiations had started by the Vajpayee Government but well continued with Manmohan Singh’s stewardship of the Government since 2004.

### **Steps culminating in the Agreement**

With the visit of the Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to the United States in 2005, came a new dawn of India-United States strategic relationship. The ‘Next Steps in Strategic Partnerships (NSSP)’ between India and the United States, announced in January 2004, seeking augmentation of cooperation in civilian nuclear activities, civilian space programs, high-technology trade, and missile defence saw its culmination with the said visit of the Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. A thaw in the Pokhran-1& Pokhran II- induced Indo-U.S. strained relationship was overtly manifested in the joint statement of U.S. President George W Bush and the Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on 18th July, 2005, regarding mutual agreement of entering into a ‘Civil Nuclear Deal’. President Bush recognised India as a responsible state. President Bush was of the view that as a responsible state with advanced nuclear technology, India deserved the same benefits and advantages as is accessible to such other states. President Bush was keen to cooperate with India on

the issue of India's harnessing of nuclear power to attain energy security.<sup>1</sup> The U.S. President also assured that necessary adjustment of the U.S. laws and policies with the consent from Congress and adjustment of international regimes in collaboration with the friends and allies would be done to facilitate full civil nuclear energy cooperation and trade with India. Consideration of fast supply of fuel for the safeguarded Tarapur Nuclear Reactors was also mentioned in the statement. In due appreciation of India's expressed interest for participation in International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) Project, it was also assured that consultation with the concerned authorities would be done to make it feasible. Prime Minister of India made a slew of commitments to reciprocate the cooperative measures declared by the U.S. President:

- Segregation of India's Civilian and Military Nuclear facilities in a phased manner.
- Placement of Civil nuclear facilities under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)
- (IAEA) safeguard.
- Adherence to India's unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing.
- Entering into a multilateral Fissile Material Cut Off Treaty (FMCT) in collaboration with the U.S..

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<sup>1</sup> Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. (2005, July 18). *Joint Statement , India-U.S.* [https://mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/6772/joint\\_statement\\_indiaus](https://mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/6772/joint_statement_indiaus). Accessed on January 13, 2022.

- Refraining from transfer of technologies relating to enrichment and reprocessing of nuclear materials, to any country which is not conversant with such technologies.
- Supporting international efforts to limit the spread of enrichment and reprocessing technologies.
- Strict observance of comprehensive export control legislation, Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) and Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) guidelines to secure nuclear materials and technology.<sup>2</sup>

The commitments made by President Bush in his address to the Indians on 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2006 during his visit to Delhi spoke volumes about a synergy in Indo-U.S. relationship –The United States was eager to help India to meet its energy needs utilizing civilian nuclear technology and thereby to gradually withdraw from the use of fossil fuels and thus to contribute to the reduction of global warming. An agreement was made between India and the United States in Washington to share Civilian Nuclear Technology. India acquiesced in putting its Civilian Nuclear Technology under the International Atomic Energy Safeguards. Efforts were made to develop a relationship of trust between India and the United States.<sup>3</sup>

After the Joint Statement of 18<sup>th</sup> July, 2005 regarding engagement in civil nuclear cooperation, Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement was reached between President

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<sup>2</sup> Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. (2005, July 18). *Joint Statement , India-U.S.* [https://mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/6772/joint\\_statement\\_indiaus](https://mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/6772/joint_statement_indiaus). Accessed on January 13, 2022.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Department of State. (2009). *U.S. - India: Civil Nuclear Cooperation.* <https://2001-2009.state.gov/p/sca/c17361.htm>. Accessed on January 12, 2022.



George W. Bush and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in March 2006 when President Bush visited Delhi. Thereafter, in May 2006, negotiations with the U.S. interlocutors started regarding separation of India's nuclear facilities into civil and military components. In the separation plan, eight plants were sought to be left outside international safeguards. However, the Fast Breeder Reactors (FBRs) stationed at Kalpakkam were considered to be kept beyond the purview of safeguards, as the Fast Breeder program and the corresponding technology were yet to attain the desired level of perfection.<sup>4</sup>

India declared 14 thermal power reactors, out of 22 such reactors in operations, to be under the civilian list and agreed to put them under IAEA safeguards. Those 14 reactors were: Tarapur Atomic Power Station (TAPS) 1, TAPS 2, Rajasthan Atomic Power Station (RAPS) 1, RAPS 2, Kudankulam (KK) 1, KK 2, RAPS 5, RAPS 6, RAPS 3, RAPS 4, Kakrapur Atomic Power Station (KAPS) 1, KAPS 2, Narora Atomic Power (NAPS) 1 and NAPS 2.<sup>5</sup> However, the authority to decide the classification of nuclear facilities into civilian and military categories lay exclusively with India. Besides, it was also clarified that India would categorise all future indigenous nuclear reactors into civilian and military groups. However, it was mandatory that all imported nuclear reactors would fall under military category and would be under IAEA safeguards.

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<sup>4</sup> Rajagopalan, R. P. (2008). *Indo-U.S. Nuclear Deal: Implications for India & the Global N-Regime. IPCS Special Report, 62.* Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, New Delhi. <https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/94951/IPCS-Special-Report-62.pdf>. Accessed on February 4, 2022.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

Consequent upon finalisation of the separation plan, Bush administration found it imperative to circumvent some of the stipulations of the U.S. Atomic Energy Act of 1954, for facilitating Indo-U.S. nuclear cooperation, since India did not satisfy those stipulations. The stipulations were:

- A country must not have detonated a nuclear explosive device after March 10, 1978.
- A country must not have engaged itself in activities involving source or special nuclear material and having direct significance for the manufacture or acquisition of nuclear explosive devices, and has failed to take steps which, in the President's judgment, represent sufficient progress toward terminating such activities.
- A country must have its nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards.<sup>6</sup>

Hence, in order to waive the above referred conditions of the U.S. Atomic Energy Act of 1954 for Nuclear cooperation with India, Henry J. Hyde United States – India peaceful Atomic Energy Cooperation Act known as Hyde Act was passed by Bush Administration after the name of outgoing Chairman of House International Relations Committee Henry J. Hyde on 18 December, 2006.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Kerr, P.K. (2012, June 26). US Nuclear Cooperation with India: Issues for Congress. Congressional Research Service Report. <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/RL/RL33016/68>. Accessed on January 20, 2022.

<sup>7</sup> Ahemad, G.M. (2013). Indo-US Civil Nuclear Deal: Heralding a New Era in Indo-US Relations. In M. B. Alam (Ed.), *Indo-US Relations - Dimensions and Emerging Trends*, Shipra Prakashan.

The passage of Hyde Act attracted strong opposition from the Indian political parties and scientists, as some of its provisions were at variance with the Indo-U.S. joint statement issued on July 18, 2005. However, through a series of negotiations, the Indian interlocutors clinched a favourable agreement on a few contentious issues. India was awarded the reprocessing rights and assured of fuel supply. Consequent upon the finalization of the agreement on 20 July 2007, the text of the agreement was released on 3<sup>rd</sup> August, 2007.<sup>8</sup>

The safeguard agreement with IAEA regarding surveillance of India's civilian reactors was entered into in August 2008. India also got clearance for nuclear trade and commerce with different countries after necessary amendments in the guidelines of Nuclear Supplier Groups (NSGs) were made in the year 2008. The 123 Agreement was then placed before the United States Congress seeking its approval for the same. The agreement was passed in the House of Representatives on September 28, 2008. It was passed in the Senate on 1<sup>st</sup> October, 2008. It was signed by the U.S. President on 8<sup>th</sup> October, 2008. The agreement is titled as *United States – India Nuclear cooperation Approval and Non-proliferation Enhancement Act*.<sup>9</sup> Indian External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee and the U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice formally signed the agreement on 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2008.

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<sup>8</sup> Ahemad, G.M. (2013). Indo-US Civil Nuclear Deal: Heralding a New Era in Indo-US Relations. In M. B. Alam (Ed.), *Indo-US Relations - Dimensions and Emerging Trends*, Shipra Prakashan.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

## **Domestic Opposition in India**

The very initiation of the proposal for the Indo-U.S. Civil Nuclear Deal, drew strong opposition from the Left wing and the Right wing Political Parties of India as well as from some of the renowned Indian scientists. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh along with his trusted political colleagues and the dedicated bureaucrats had to negotiate with the objections with due diligence and sincerity to muster the support of the Indian scientific community and the opposing political parties to salvage the proposed deal.

Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the former Prime Minister of India and the Leader of the opposition, accused the Manmohan Singh Government of bartering away its freedom of developing its nuclear capability to suit its defence needs by entering into the proposed deal. Other BJP party leaders demanded prior parliamentary ratification of the agreement. Consequent upon the publication of the 123 Agreement, the Government was asked by the BJP party to cease all activities relating to the nuclear deal till discussion of the issue in the Parliament. Amendments in the Constitution and the relevant laws were sought by the BJP leaders Yashwant Sinha and Arun Shourie to make a mandatory provision for Parliamentary ratification of all future international agreements having a bearing on the country's sovereignty, territorial integrity and national security.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Bartwal, H.S. (2007, August 4). BJP opposes Indo-U.S. nuclear deal. *The Hindustan Times*. <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india/bjp-opposes-indo-us-nuclear-deal/story-mkW43LYb5ExDnCjoA qdZcP.html>. Accessed on January 15, 2022.

These BJP leaders were also critical about the discrimination shown towards India, compared with five big nuclear powers, in respect of IAEA safeguards for the nuclear fuel reprocessing facilities. It was pointed out by Arun Shourie that none of the five big nuclear powers had allowed IAEA safeguards against their respective national fuel reprocessing facility. The UPA Government also drew flak from the BJP on the provision of the agreement that even after termination of the agreement, there would be continuation of the IAEA safeguard as long as any material or equipment or any of the byproducts remained on the Indian soil.<sup>11</sup>

The BJP leader Yashwant Sinha criticised the Manmohan Singh Government and also expressed doubt as to India's freedom to make further nuclear tests despite omission of any such restriction in the 123 agreement. He asked the UPA Govt,

“When (U.S.) national laws apply, which includes the NPT, provisions of Atomic Energy Act of 1954 and Hyde Act, 2006 which specifically forbid nuclear tests, where is the question of India having the freedom to test once we enter into this agreement?”<sup>12</sup>

Huge financial involvement in the separation of military and civil nuclear facilities was also referred to by Vajpayee,

“not only would the new agreement put restrictions on the nuclear research program, but India would also incur

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<sup>11</sup> Bartwal, H.S. (2007, August 4). BJP opposes Indo-U.S. nuclear deal. *The Hindustan Times*. <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india/bjp-opposes-indo-us-nuclear-deal/story-mkW43LYb5ExDnCjoA qdZcP.html>. Accessed on January 15, 2022.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

huge costs on separating military and civilian nuclear installations”<sup>13</sup>

Criticisms were also forthcoming from the Left parties, the coalition partner of the United Progressive Alliance Government, extending support to the major partner Congress from outside. They criticised the Government for entering into the agreement with the United States without keeping its coalition partners apprised of the issue. The Indo-U.S. agreement was deemed by them as India’s deviation from its long-established non-aligned tradition.<sup>14</sup>

The scientific community took umbrage for not being taken into confidence before clinching the deal. The Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) in India was vociferous in registering its strongest remonstrations against the scheme of separating Civil and Nuclear facilities considering its possible negative impact on the future progress of research and development of Indian nuclear programs. The U.S. push for bringing India’s fast breeder reactors under the IAEA safeguard as one of the conditions of the deal, drew vehement opposition from the scientific establishments. The observation in this regard of Dr. Anil Kakodkar, Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission of India, clarified the reason behind the opposition.

He observed that, in case fast breeder reactors were put on the civilian list, it would kill India’s thorium research and will not serve its credible minimum nuclear

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<sup>13</sup> Pant, H.V. (2011). *The U.S.-India Nuclear Pact: Policy, Process and Great Power Politics*, p.326. New Delhi: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198073963.001.0001>

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

deterrence.<sup>15</sup> This stand of the nuclear scientists prompted the Indian Government to bargain with the U.S. Government over this issue which rendered several rounds of initial discussions over the deal infructuous. Vigorous negotiations were made by the Government of India with all the Indian stake holders to win their confidence in the efficacy of the deal in the national interest of India.

While India's stand of keeping the Indian fast breeder reactors beyond the IAEA safeguards was yet to be acceded to by the Bush Administration, India had to take recourse to a diplomatic strategy with the dissident Indian nuclear scientists to win their support for the deal. The Indian Prime Minister diplomatically declared in the Indian Parliament that the fast breeder reactors would not be put in the civilian list and so would not be open to international inspections.<sup>16</sup> This declaration assuaged the simmering discontent of the concerned scientists and secured their support in favor of the deal. Ultimately, however, Indian Government could prevail upon the U.S. Government to keep the fast breeder reactors of India outside the ambit of IAEA inspection. No restriction clause, however, was incorporated in the deal as regards India's building of new nuclear reactors in future and categorisation of such reactors under civilian group or military group. In other words, in the deal, India bargained out a freehand in determining its energy need and its national security- a vindication of its sovereignty. The separation plan was designed to achieve a judicious adjustment between India's long-term energy and security interests and

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<sup>15</sup> Bagchi, I. (2006, February 7). Atomic Energy Chief muddies waters on N-deal. *The Times of India*. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/atomic-energy-chief-muddies-waters-on-n-deal/articleshow/1403393.cms>. Accessed on January 18, 2022.

<sup>16</sup> Pant, H.V. (2011). *The U.S.-India Nuclear Pact: Policy, Process and Great Power Politics*, p.327. New Delhi: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198073963.001.0001>

the global community's expectation that a considerable component of Indian nuclear capabilities should be utilized for purposes other than the military purposes.<sup>17</sup>

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh came to terms with the reality that the very existence of his coalition Government would be in jeopardy in the event of his assertive approach to finalise the deal, as the recalcitrant Left parties were averse to the fruition of the same. But, the 2008 U.S. presidential election being imminent, President Bush was very keen to bring the deal to its logical conclusion. He, therefore, preferred taking an all-out drive to fructify the initiative of two largest democracies towards a strategic rapprochement through the long-awaited deal to coaxing a coalition partner not amenable to reasons. The Indian Government decided to prematurely end its tenure by few months by paving the way for the deal and pushing its main coalition partners, the Communist parties, to withdraw support<sup>18</sup> The communist parties by their innate anti-American principle never acquiesced in the Indian Government policy of making itself available as a global player in close collaboration with the developed and nuclear-powered countries to better serve its national interest.

There was no room for doubt that the policy of BJP was also to catapult India to the status of a responsible nuclear-powered country and thereby to harness the available global resources to ensure its all-round social, economic and political development. The Pokhran-II nuclear explosion bore a testimony to this. But, BJP's support to the deal was also not forthcoming, as it was wary of not paving the way for the Congress

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<sup>17</sup> Pant, H.V. (2011). *The U.S.-India Nuclear Pact: Policy, Process and Great Power Politics*, p.327. New Delhi: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198073963.001.0001>

<sup>18</sup> Ibid. p.331.



to steal a political march over them by clinching the path-breaking deal to terminate India's nuclear isolation.

The explicit contradiction and non-cooperation of the political parties like BJP and the left parties on the issue of strengthening India's nuclear potential through the deal was indicative of their sheer parochial political interest at the cost of national interest. This political naivety laid bare India's incapability of taking a united stand even on issues having supreme national implication. Some of the points of discord emerging from the opposing Indian political parties in respect of the deal were: restrictions on further nuclear test, capitulation of the Indian Government to the U.S. will and duplicity of Bush Administration in conveying certain issues differently to the U.S. Congress and to the Indian Government. With his analytic comments, K.S. Bajpayee, former Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, the Government of India, and Indian Ambassador to Pakistan, China and the U.S., sought to drive home the necessity of reflecting on those issues from a diplomatic angle. Regarding restriction on the test, his argument was that the 123 agreement was devised to bypass automatic termination, by creating scopes for consultations on the circumstances leading to the test. He bore the opinion that it would all depend on the state of the relations between the two countries at the relevant point of time and the interpretation of the agreements according to need.<sup>19</sup> He explained the issue on India's capitulation to the U.S. Government,

“...As for surrendering to American goodwill (read: diktats), nobody has any illusions. The U.S. is not giving

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<sup>19</sup> Bajpai, K.S. (2008, September 7). *Growing up*. The Hindustan Times. <https://www.hindustan-times.com/india/growing-up/story-ExVAVkGZk44kLLz3quBZ5I.html>. Accessed on April 4, 2022.

us this deal without expecting something in return. Specifically, it sees a strong India as an asset in a world in which China is the second world power. We look for better relations with China, hoping it will be an internationally cooperative power, not an assertive one throwing its weight around. But can we ignore its worrying actions — nuclear help to Pakistan, naval bases in Myanmar and Gwadar and its open obstructiveness in Vienna?”<sup>20</sup>

His views regarding alleged duplicity of the U.S. Government was,

“We betray our naiveté about how the world ticks. International negotiations inevitably involve differences. In this case, it was between what will work with us and what will work with the U.S. Congress. It is the very essence of diplomacy to find solutions for such differences.”<sup>21</sup>

Against the background of uncertainty regarding the next U.S. Government’s support for the deal, if President Bush were not able to form the Government after the 2008 U.S. Presidential election, Manmohan Singh Government could ensure consensus of his party on the deal. The smooth implementation of the deal was also facilitated by the victory of Manmohan Singh’s Party in the 2009 Parliamentary election.

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<sup>20</sup> Bajpai, K.S. (2008, September 7). *Growing up*. The Hindustan Times. <https://www.hindustanimes.com/india/growing-up/story-ExVAVkGZk44kLLz3quBZ5I.html>. Accessed on April 4, 2022.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

## **Opposition in the U.S.**

The Bush Administration also did not have a smooth sailing in getting the deal ratified by the Congress. President Bush in close collaboration with his dedicated team had to establish cogent reasons to assuage concerns of the members of the U.S. Congress as to the dilution of the Non proliferation Treaty (NPT). Issues were raised as to how despite not being a signatory to NPT, India could reap the benefit of the deal through proposed uninterrupted supply of nuclear fuels for the Indian Nuclear reactors put under IAEA safeguards. The Congress deemed the contents of the deal tantamount to capitulation of the U.S. national interest to that of India. The reason of negative response of the U.S. Congress and the foreign policy bureaucracy to the deal was attributed to Bush Administration's avoidance of prior consultation with them in respect of the deal. The views of the Congress were that the foreign policy in the Bush Administration's second term was being largely controlled by Condoleezza Rice and a close circle of advisors and hence, the concerns of the U.S. Congress and the foreign policy bureaucracy regarding the nuclear deal were ignored. This lack of consultation with the Congress stood as a constraint for the implementation of the nuclear agreement.<sup>22</sup>

A plethora of criticisms from the U.S. critics of the deal, emerged involving covert and overt implications of the same. The common of such criticisms was that the deal reversed the U.S. nonproliferation efforts and diluted attempts to prevent states

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<sup>22</sup> Pant, H.V. (2011). *The U.S.-India Nuclear Pact: Policy, Process and Great Power Politics*, p.328. New Delhi: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198073963.001.0001>

like Iran and North Korea from acquiring nuclear weapons and thereby precipitated a nuclear arms race in Asia.<sup>23</sup>

Charles D. Ferguson, Science and Technology Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, remarked,

“It is an unprecedented deal for India. If you look at the three countries outside the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)- Israel, India and Pakistan-this stands to be a unique deal”<sup>24</sup>

The suspicion expressed by Henry Sokolski, Executive Director of the Nonproliferation Policy Education Center, a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving awareness of proliferation issues, as to the credibility of India towards adherence to the nuclear non-proliferation principle, was crafted to throw a spanner into the Bush initiative for the deal,

"We are going to be sending, or allowing others to send, fresh fuel to India--including yellowcake and lightly enriched uranium--that will free up Indian domestic sources of fuel to be solely dedicated to making many more bombs than they would otherwise have been able to make,"<sup>25</sup>

In the report of Congressional Research Service (CRS), the opposing camp clamoured for full-scope safeguard of the Indian Nuclear facilities. An important

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<sup>23</sup> Bajoria, J., & Pan, E. (2010). The U.S.-India nuclear deal. *Council on Foreign Relations*. <https://www.cfr.org/background/usa-india-nuclear-deal>. Accessed on February 10, 2022.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

question is how India, devoid of full-scope safeguards, can impart enough confidence that the U.S.' peaceful nuclear technology will not be aimed to serve the purposes of nuclear weapons purposes.<sup>26</sup>

In their bid to point out the loopholes in the deal, a series of other issues were referred to by the dissident U.S. Groups: exclusion from the safeguard of the fissile materials produced by India prior to the deal; non-imposition of any limit on the production of fissile materials by India; non-mentioning of any ceiling in respect of production of nuclear weapons by India;

William C. Potter, Director of the Center for Non-proliferation Studies at the Monterey Institute of International Studies commented in *Nonproliferation Review* in August 2005,

“The agreement appears to have been formulated without a comprehensive high-level review of its potential impact on nonproliferation, the significant engagement of many of the government’s most senior nonproliferation experts, or a clear plan for achieving its implementation.”<sup>27</sup>

India’s scheme of segregation of the Military nuclear program from the civil nuclear program was in tune with the mutually accepted principle between the Manmohan Singh and the Bush Government. But, it drew flak from some members of the U.S. Congress. Edward Markey, the Democratic Representative, opined that the Indo-U.S. deal had jeopardized the security of the world as a whole. The U.S.

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<sup>26</sup> Bajoria, J., & Pan, E. (2010). The U.S.-India nuclear deal. *Council on Foreign Relations*. <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/us-india-nuclear-deal>. Accessed on February 10, 2022.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

Congress was worried about the negative impact the deal was supposed to create on the nuclear Non-proliferation issue. It was apprehended that the pact would impact the non-proliferation regime, especially at a time when the United States was bent on preventing Iran and North Korea from embarking on their nuclear proliferation attempts. The other view point was that the deal with India would send a wrong message at a time when Washington and its European Allies were asking the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to refer Iran's case to the United Nations (UN) Security Council for further action.<sup>28</sup>

However, Bush Administration prevailed upon the U.S. Congress and endeavored hard to drive home the point that clinching of the deal would in no way hinder the implementation of the nuclear Non-Proliferation regime. In order to buttress Bush's argument that the deal was not fraught with the risk of undermining the nuclear non-proliferation initiative, India decided to shut down the Cirus Reactor permanently by 2010 and to shift the Apsara Reactor from the Bhava Atomic Research Centre<sup>29</sup>.

David Albright, President of the Institute for Science and International Security, observed,

“without additional measures to ensure a real barrier exists between India's military and civilian nuclear programs, the agreement could pose serious risks to the security of the United States by potentially allowing

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<sup>28</sup> Pant, H.V. (2011). *The U.S.-India Nuclear Pact: Policy, Process and Great Power Politics*, p.330. New Delhi: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198073963.001.0001>

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.p.330.

Indian companies to proliferate banned nuclear technology around the world. In addition, it could lead other suppliers including Russia and China to bend the international rules so that they can sell their own nuclear technology to other countries, some of them hostile to the United States.”<sup>30</sup>

Some experts even went to the length of commenting that NPT had already proved abortive. Experts like Gahlaut remarked that many countries - including North Korea, Libya, Iran, and Iraq- had cheated while being signatories of the NPT. <sup>31</sup><sup>32</sup>

The critics tried to establish that India had a past record of pursuing the policy of simultaneous use of nuclear power both for peaceful purposes and military ones. They argued that the first nuclear weapon was tested by India in 1974 by diverting plutonium made with nuclear imports from the United States and Canada that were supplied for peaceful purposes. It was also alleged that In the 1980’s, India had smuggled heavy water from the USSR, China and Norway, which allowed India to use its reactors to make plutonium for bombs.<sup>33</sup>

India’s manufacturing of nuclear- capable Agni Missile also did not escape the adverse criticism of the U.S. detractors . It was complained that the nuclear-capable Agni missile was manufactured by India by importing from NASA the design of an

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<sup>30</sup> Bajoria, J., & Pan, E. (2010). The U.S.-India nuclear deal. *Council on Foreign Relations*. <https://www.cfr.org/background/usa-india-nuclear-deal>. Accessed on February 10, 2022.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Motz, K., & Milhollin, G. (2006, June 13). Seventeen Myths About the Indian Nuclear Deal: An Analysis of Nuclear Cooperation with India. *Wisconsin Project on Nuclear Arms Control*. <https://www.wisconsinproject.org/seventeen-myths-about-the-indian-nuclear-deal-an-analysis-of-nuclear-cooperation-with-india/>. Accessed on January 19, 2022.

American space launcher, which was meant for peaceful purposes. Criticisms also poured in to the effect that American equipment were imported by India, in violation of the U.S. law, for the Indian missile and nuclear sites.<sup>34</sup>

The U.S. critics ruled out the possibility of development of Indo-U.S. bonhomie through the implementation of the deal, as was professed by the Bush administration. Their arguments was that India was cooperating militarily with Iran and had been training Iran's navy, as India was dependent on Iranian oil, although it went against the foreign policy of the United States. The critics were of the opinion that India being the creator of the Non-Aligned Movement, would never follow America's dictates blindly.<sup>35</sup>

The antagonists of the deal also gave counter-argument to the deal protagonists' view that the deal might assist the U.S. diplomatically or militarily in any future conflict with China. According to the Antagonist's view, as India shared a border with China, it was eager to maintain good terms with China. So, India would never embitter its relation with China simply from a vague desire to please the United States<sup>36</sup>

As regards the deal, the Bush administration was of the view that one of the most important components of the deal was to enable India meet a part of its energy need

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<sup>34</sup> Motz, K., & Milhollin, G. (2006, June 13). Seventeen Myths About the Indian Nuclear Deal: An Analysis of Nuclear Cooperation with India. *Wisconsin Project on Nuclear Arms Control*. <https://www.wisconsinproject.org/seventeen-myths-about-the-indian-nuclear-deal-an-analysis-of-nuclear-cooperation-with-india/>. Accessed on January 19, 2022.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.



from the nuclear power generated electricity. The opponents argued that the share of nuclear power in meeting India's energy needs had never been significant in the past and was less likely to be more important in the future. They cited the reason that India had been generating electricity with nuclear reactors for more than 40 years. Yet, reactors supplied only 2% to 3% of its electricity today. Even if India were to achieve a 50% increase in nuclear power generation (which is unlikely) such a step would only increase India's overall electricity output by one percent at most, and would only increase India's overall energy output by a fraction of one percent.<sup>37</sup>

The initiative of Bush administration to enter into a strategic relationship with India through the civil nuclear deal was severely attacked by the barbs of criticism of opposing camp. Their contentions were that there were better ways to improve relations with India than engaging in nuclear trade. India could have been helped to generate electricity except through the nuclear technology, as the nuclear technology had the potential to enable India to make nuclear bombs also. India's space researches could have been aided by the United States without extending help to India for developing India's missile technology. It was also suggested that trade, military cooperation, scientific exchange and political consultation could all be improved without a nuclear deal.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Motz, K., & Milhollin, G. (2006, June 13). Seventeen Myths About the Indian Nuclear Deal: An Analysis of Nuclear Cooperation with India. *Wisconsin Project on Nuclear Arms Control*. <https://www.wisconsinproject.org/seventeen-myths-about-the-indian-nuclear-deal-an-analysis-of-nuclear-cooperation-with-india/>. Accessed on January 19, 2022.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

## **Political & Bureaucratic Synergy**

The impediments faced by India and the United States to steer the deal through the vehement opposing forces were awesome. But, the unflinching endeavor of the key personalities of India and United States associated with the deal in the capacity of political leaders and Government officials tided over the seemingly insuperable hindrances and led the deal to its logical conclusion.

The pioneering measures in spawning the idea of this deal were taken by none other than President Bush himself. India's rich heritage as a peace loving country and the world's largest democracy prompted him to befriend India through a path-breaking deal at the critical period India was passing through after its 1998 Pokhran-II nuclear explosion. The goal was to harness the immense demographic and trade potential of India in enriching United States and projecting India as the super power in Asia to contain the hegemony of China, being deemed to be the prospective American rival as the world leader. So, President Bush launched an all-out drive for clinching the deal keeping at bay all discordant views against India either at the national or international level. Bush's pioneering approach in averting the entrenched the U.S. hostility towards India on Kashmir and non-proliferation went a long way to better the Indo-U.S. relationship. He put his effort to restrain the non-proliferation lobby from jeopardizing the deal. He also influenced the antagonistic nations in the nuclear suppliers group (NSG) to develop a pro-India view. He

persuaded the U.S. Congress to approve the 123 agreement on short notice despite being confronted by an unprecedented financial crisis.<sup>39</sup>

The most arduous task of disarming the suspicion of the U.S. Congress as to the efficacy of the Indo-U.S. deal in entrenching the position of the U.S. as the supreme power in the comity of nations, was executed most adroitly by the then U.S. Secretary of States, Condoleeza Rice. The contribution of David Mulford, the U.S. Ambassador to Delhi, to form Indian and the U.S. opinions in favor of the deal through uninterrupted negotiations between these two nations, was commendably significant. Nicholas Burns, the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, coordinated the steps culminating in the signing of the deal with unswerving diligence and carefulness. The role of Robert D. Blackwill, the former U.S. Ambassador to India, was catalytic in facilitating Indo-U.S. ties. On two sensitive issues, - India's nuclear aspirations and terrorism –Blackwill made the first significant moves.<sup>40</sup>

Ashley J.Tellis, Advisor to Robert D. Blackwill also contributed significantly to the fruition of the deal. In his book titled, *“India's Emerging Nuclear Posture: Between Recessed Deterrent and Ready Arsenal”*, Ashley clarified India's core nuclear policy of manufacturing nuclear weapons to serve as nuclear deterrents vis-à-vis the nuclear-powered China and its promoted nuclear weaponised country Pakistan both engaged in engineering border insurgencies against India to thwart India's national development and enhancement of India's role in the global governance. He

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<sup>39</sup> Pant, H.V. (2011). *The U.S.-India Nuclear Pact: Policy, Process and Great Power Politics*, p.333. New Delhi: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198073963.001.0001>

<sup>40</sup> Ibid. pp.333-334.

exhorted that India ought to be looked upon by the U.S. as an Asian super power and hence India's concern for its national defence and security should be taken into consideration while assessing India's nuclear doctrine through the prism of Nuclear proliferation. His analytic views in his report –'India as a New Global Power: An Action Agenda for the United States', contributed to a considerable extent to the formation of the U.S. policy towards India in making the civil nuclear deal. The contribution of Tellis in the formulation and implementation of the deal braving strong opposition, was commendable.<sup>41</sup>

The initiative taken by the U.S. President with the apt assistance of his highly efficient political and bureaucratic team was squarely responded to by the Indian Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh and his corresponding associates to make the deal see the light of the day. He braved all adverse circumstances created by the opposition BJP party in the Parliament and even by the Communist parties, the political partner of his coalition the UPA Government, in their bid to foil fruition of the deal. He was steadfast to clinch the deal even at the cost of his personal career. It was his resolve against all political odds that kept the implementation process running throughout on the Indian side. He had a personal stake in the agreement, as he wanted to build his legacy on the deal.<sup>42</sup> Shri Pranab Mukherjee, the External Affairs Minister, who commanded great respect and acceptability among the Parliamentarians, irrespective of their party affiliation, accomplished the onerous task of convincing the coalition partners the imperative need of completing the deal

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<sup>41</sup> Pant, H.V. (2011). *The U.S.-India Nuclear Pact: Policy, Process and Great Power Politics*, p.334. New Delhi: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198073963.001.0001>

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.p.334.

in the national interest and thereby to win their support for the deal. M.K. Narayanan, the National Security Advisor, with his deep erudition and rich experience kept the negotiation process running. The other Indian key personalities who acted in their respective domains for facilitating the execution of the deal were : Ronen Sen, the Indian Ambassador to the United States; Shiv Shankar Menon, the Foreign Secretary; Shyam Saran, Special Envoy to the Prime Minister and Anil Kakodkar, the Chief of the Department of Atomic Energy.

The divergence in the outlook between the U.S. Congress and the Bush Administration in respect of the deal was that while the U.S. Congress was keen only to ensure that India must be a signatory to the Non- Proliferation Treaty , the Bush Administration recognized that India's past performance in the use of the nuclear power was totally free from any instance of nuclear proliferation and hence India was treated as a nation as responsible in taking precautions to prevent spread of the nuclear components as the NPT-signatory countries were. This trustworthiness of India encouraged the Bush administration to enhance the ambit of nuclear deal to other strategic agreements in varying domain of mutual interest and expediency. India too was circumspect to treat the nuclear deal not as an end in itself but as a means to terminate its long nuclear isolation and the consequent impediments in the way of its taking part in the mainstream of the world governance. This approach of the Indian Government was very much in tune with the policy always resorted to by great powers of the world. The resonance in the contemplation of India and the U.S. on the issue of utilising the nuclear deal to facilitate other mutually beneficial agreements wielded a strong influence on the sticklers of Non-

proliferation treaty. Global political realities once again, trumped the institutional imperatives of the nuclear non-proliferation regime.<sup>43</sup>

However, consequent upon the clinching of the deal, other hurdles cropped up in implementing the nuclear power program: Provisions of supplier liability in the Indian Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act ( CLNDA) of 2010 and ii) issues related to the administrative arrangement with regard to implementing the ‘ Agreement and Procedures agreed to by the two countries with regard to reprocessing of spent fuel in March 2010.<sup>44</sup>

Article 17 of the CLNDA of 2010 allowed the operator of a nuclear power plant to channel the operator’s legal liability in case of a nuclear accident to supplier(s) of nuclear equipment , goods and services – partly or wholly – through its Right of Recourse provision under some conditions.<sup>45</sup> , as per international norm, nuclear liability rests only with the operator whatever may be the cause of the accident. So, the suppliers cannot be held responsible for any nuclear disaster.

However, the above impasse in the implementation of the civil nuclear deal over the nuclear liability issue was sought to be overcome through the formation of an ‘Insurance Pool’. The forging of the four big Indian insurance companies into an insurance pool as a consortium, provided the necessary cover to both the operator

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<sup>43</sup> Pant, H.V. (2011). *The U.S.-India Nuclear Pact: Policy, Process and Great Power Politics*, p.336. New Delhi: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198073963.001.0001>

<sup>44</sup> Ramachandran, R. (2015, February 4). Hurdles ahead. *Frontline*. <https://frontline.thehindu.com/cover-story/hurdles-ahead/article6848124.ece>. Accessed on March 3, 2022.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

and the suppliers ( domestic and foreign)<sup>46</sup> . According to G. Balachandran, of the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, the insurance of nuclear companies had a better feasibility because of rare incidents in nuclear industries. As regards the issue on reprocessing of spent fuel, it was established that as per the United States Law, fuel in the U.S. -built reactors would become obligated to the U.S. irrespective of its source. The U.S. had, therefore, pressed for being allowed to track the movement of reprocessed the U.S.-obligated fuel even if the plants were under IAEA safeguards.<sup>47</sup> However, Indian Government was of the view that the supervision by the IAEA of the nuclear plants was adequate to keep an eye on the use of the spent fuel and hence additional checking mechanism was redundant.

The visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the United States in September 2014 augured well for the convergence between Modi and President Obama on the issues on nuclear liability and the administrative arrangements for implementation of the nuclear deal. According to Sujatha Singh, the Foreign Secretary during Obama's visit to India , three rounds of discussions ( in New Delhi, Vienna and finally in London) in the contact group over three months, facilitated the two sides reaching an understanding on both the outstanding issues, namely, the civil nuclear liability and the administrative arrangements for implementing the 123 agreement.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Ramachandran, R. (2015, February 4). Hurdles ahead. *Frontline*. <https://frontline.thehindu.com/cover-story/hurdles-ahead/article6848124.ece>. Accessed on March 3, 2022.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

## **India's Takeaway from the Deal**

India's Pokhran-I nuclear explosion in 1974 followed by the Pokhran-II nuclear explosion brought in its trail for India a slew of economic sanctions coupled with sanctions in the field of nuclear fuels, advanced appliances required for research in science and technology, military arsenals etc imposed by the United States and its allies, pushing India thereby into a state of isolation from the world powers. Indian nuclear scientists were barred from any access to the U.S. nuclear laboratories. The U.S. also denied any visa to Indian nuclear scientists. India's frantic effort to purchase a Super- computer from the U.S. for meteorological purposes proved abortive on the ground of its potential for dual use.

The Civil Nuclear Deal came almost like a messiah for India to retrieve it from the state of estrangement and to place it in the state of engagement, defying all seemingly insuperable opposition. The remarkable firmness and diplomatic wisdom of Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and the U.S. President George Bush along with their untiring negotiations with the opposing groups aptly assisted by their high profile Government officials removed the sanctions in quick succession. The deal restored supply of earlier restricted materials e.g. nuclear materials, equipment, dual use technologies etc. According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, more than 87 per cent of dual use trade to India no longer required license and less than 0.5 per cent of the U.S. exports to India now required a dual use export license<sup>49</sup>.

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<sup>49</sup> Ahemad, G.M. (2013). Indo-US Civil Nuclear Deal: Heralding a New Era in Indo-US Relations. In M. B. Alam (Ed.), *Indo-US Relations - Dimensions and Emerging Trends*, p.53. Shipra Prakashan.



The deal paved the way for mutual cooperation in the space industry too. India could work in collaboration with the U.S. in manufacturing improved version of the spacecraft and make commercial agreement for launching of the U.S. satellites as payload of Indian rockets. Also, strengthening of India's military arsenals with state-of-the-art U.S. military arms was no longer an impossibility.

A study of energy scenario of India showed that India's primary energy demand had increased with the country's GDP and population. The growth of Electricity consumption was at a 7.39% compound annual rate, and that of electricity demand was expected to grow to 1,894.7 Terawatt-hours (TWh) in 2022. Demand included all aspects of the economy, from industrial and commercial to agricultural and residential uses. It was predicted that this trend would continue over the coming decades.<sup>50</sup> In order to meet this burgeoning energy need, India needed to adopt a policy of judicious mix of different energy sources e.g. conventional hydrocarbon (coal, oil, natural gas) energy sources, and non-conventional energy sources e.g. solar energy, wind energy, hydel power and Nuclear energy. Although a slew of objections was raised against the use of nuclear energy in the power industry, the proponents countered the opposing arguments citing reasons, as follows:

- The teething problems faced earlier in manufacturing nuclear power equipment in the mid-1980s were over by the early 1990s and today India is entirely self-reliant in this field.

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<sup>50</sup> Sahoo P. (2021, March 5). India's Energy Mix and the Pathways to sustainable Development. *The National Bureau of Asian Research*. <https://www.nbr.org/publication/indias-energy-mix-and-the-pathways-to-sustainable-development/>. Accessed on March 6, 2022.

- In recent years, India's nuclear-power plants have been running at good capacity utilisation levels with costs close to normative levels.
- If the fast breeder reactor route was employed successfully, India's 60,000 metric tonnes of uranium reserves, equivalent to 1.2 billion tonnes (bt) of coal reserves, could be raised to 100 bt of coal equivalent. In addition, India's 360,000 metric tonnes of thorium reserves, with the development of the technology of thorium utilisation and the thorium-uranium-233 cycles, would equal 600-1000 bt of coal equivalent.
- In terms of Long Range Marginal Cost (LRMC) advantages, nuclear power would be a viable economic option for power supply at locations far away from coal reserves, especially if hydel power facilities were not available in those areas. Therefore, though the capital cost of a nuclear power plant was 20 per cent more than that of a coal-based plant, the running cost of a coal-based plant is more if the plant was situated 1,000 km from the pit head. Therefore, over a period of time, since the fuel cost of a uranium-based plant is lower, the unit energy cost tends to remain stable with time<sup>51</sup>

The contribution of nuclear energy towards reduction of carbon emission is worth mentioning. According to the Nuclear Energy Agency (NEA), if non-electrical applications of nuclear energy, such as heat, potable water and hydrogen production

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<sup>51</sup> Dadwal, S. R. (1999). India's energy security policy: A case for nuclear power. *Strategic Analysis*, 23 (8), 1289-1303. [https://ciaotest.cc.columbia.edu/olj/sa/sa\\_99das03.html](https://ciaotest.cc.columbia.edu/olj/sa/sa_99das03.html). Accessed on March 16, 2022.

could be developed, nuclear power's contribution to carbon emission reduction would increase in a significant way<sup>52</sup>.

The utility of Nuclear energy has to be assessed in terms of its long term impact on the energy needs, along with economic and environmental development keeping in view the undernoted rationale:

- The need to diversify energy resources for energy security and energy independence.
- To limit greenhouse gases.
- To take care of long-term energy needs which cannot be met by fossil fuels, which are required for consumption in other sectors. Also dependence on the import of any commodity in as important an area as infrastructure development is unacceptable.
- Given the high cost of transporting coal as plant feedstock in areas far removed from the pit-heads, the advantages of nuclear feedstock in the west and the south are clear.
- The Indian nuclear power industry is totally indigenous<sup>53</sup>

Thus it is seen that the Civil nuclear deal has contributed immensely to the opening of a new vista for meeting India's energy needs to bolster up its economy and the

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<sup>52</sup> Dadwal, S. R. (1999). India's energy security policy: A case for nuclear power. *Strategic Analysis*, 23 (8), 1289-1303. [https://ciaotest.cc.columbia.edu/olj/sa/sa\\_99das03.html](https://ciaotest.cc.columbia.edu/olj/sa/sa_99das03.html). Accessed on March 16, 2022.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

consequent all round progress and development of India. In 2013, the assignment of responsibility on the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd. by the P.M Manmohon Singh Government and on the U.S. nuclear company Westing house by the President Obama Government for construction of a nuclear power plant in Gujrat, paved the way for implementation of the deal. In September, 2013, before the visit of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to Washington, approval was given by his cabinet to the outlines of a commercial contract on commencement of work on reactors. Preliminary Contract between Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd. and the U.S. nuclear company Westinghouse was reached to develop a nuclear power plant in Gujrat. It was declared by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during President Obama's visit to India in January, 2015 that all the outstanding issues relating to the nuclear deal have been resolved and the deal could be implemented smoothly.<sup>54</sup>

Atomic Energy Commission was set up by India as far back as in 1948. Thereafter, the Rare Materials Division was merged into it. In 1951, uranium deposits were detected in Jadugoda in the state of Jharkhand. India's first research reactor was put into operation in Mumbai by 1956. India, then, had to decide its preference between light water reactor and heavy water reactor and ultimately went for the latter type,

“New Delhi was confronted with two choices: Build the more common U.S. light water reactor design or the untested Canada Deuterium Uranium (CANDU) reactor. Ultimately, the CANDU was chosen because it used

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<sup>54</sup> Hagerty, D.T. (2016). 'The Indo-US Entente: Committed Relationship or 'Friends with Benefits'?'. In S. Ganguly, (Ed.), *Engaging the World: Indian Foreign Policy since 1947*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199458325.003.0006>.

natural uranium for fuel, and India didn't have enrichment facilities. The Indian government correctly believed that the problems of manufacturing heavy water were more tractable than acquiring uranium enrichment capabilities.”<sup>55</sup>

Indian nuclear scientists realised the potential of nuclear power as a dual-use technology. The facility of refuelling the CANDU online and the removal of spent fuel including Plutonium keeping the reactor in the operation mode, goaded them to carry out research for use of nuclear power for nuclear weapon production in future. The available domestic uranium being not of the desired grade to provide economically viable optimum level of nuclear power, Dr. Homi J Bhabha, the father of Indian nuclear research devised a three-stage action plan for developing effective and viable nuclear power in India . No domestic ore bodies with Uranium at the minimum economically exploitable concentration (0.1%) could be found. Compared to the 20% Uranium Ore of Canadian mines, Jaduguda ore was found to contain 0.06 to 0.07 percent Uranium. However, almost 25 percent of the world's high-quality thorium deposits was found in India. Homi J. Bhabha, the father of the Indian nuclear program, formulated a three-stage action plan to develop nuclear power in the country. In the first stage, CANDU reactors were to be built along with reprocessing plants to recover the plutonium in the spent fuel. Next, a generation of fast breeder reactors would be developed. Ultimately, in the third stage ,India's vast

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<sup>55</sup> Gadekar, S. (2008). India's nuclear fuel shortage'. *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*. <https://thebulletin.org/2008/08/indias-nuclear-fuel-shortage/>. Accessed on March 15, 2022.

thorium reserves would be used in a thorium-uranium fuel cycle, leading to energy and economic surplus.<sup>56</sup>

Against the backdrop of above mentioned scarcity of standard grade uranium, the only viable alternative for India was to import Uranium from foreign countries, to improve the output of the existing reactors of India which were working far below their capacities for shortage of nuclear fuel. In 2000-2003, its Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors were operating at 90 percent capacity factor. But, it dropped to 81 percent in 2003-2004 and to 76% in 2004-2005.<sup>57</sup>

Thus, the signing of the civil nuclear deal enabled India to import Uranium not only from the U.S. but also from France, Russia, Canada, Argentina, Australia, Sri Lanka, United Kingdom, Japan, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Kazakhstan and Korea, by entering into nuclear cooperation agreements with those countries. In other words, being a signatory to this deal, India could achieve the termination of its exclusion from the developmental assistances of the developed countries and thus generated an opportunity to develop itself economically, strategically and militarily too. These achievements firmly entrenched India's position vis-vis those of its perpetual detractors and rival border nations China and Pakistan.

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<sup>56</sup> Gadekar, S. (2008). India's nuclear fuel shortage'. *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*. <https://thebulletin.org/2008/08/indias-nuclear-fuel-shortage/>. Accessed on March 15, 2022.

<sup>57</sup> Ahemad, G.M. (2013). Indo-US Civil Nuclear Deal: Heralding a New Era in Indo-US Relations. In M. B. Alam (Ed.), *Indo-US Relations - Dimensions and Emerging Trends*, p. 54. Shipra Prakashan.

## The U.S.'s Gain in the Deal

The Indo-US civil nuclear deal being a win-win one, multiple economic and strategic benefits accrued to the United States also. The immediate surge in the U.S. economic gain arose with the India's proposal for setting-up of as many as 24 nuclear reactors to boost India's nuclear energy potential. The U.S. nuclear industry was well poised to cater to India's requirement of nuclear reactors. This deal thus brought a wind of encouragement for the U.S. nuclear firms to procure Indian order for the reactors at a competitive global price. A statement of Condoleezza Rice, the then Secretary of State, purveyed the said core policy of the deal,

“At its core our initiative with India is not simply government to government. It was crafted with private sector firmly in mind. Because it will fully open the door to civil nuclear trade and cooperation, this is good for American business.”<sup>58</sup>

However, the critics are of the view that even after the lapse of more than a decade since the deal, the prospect of importing foreign nuclear reactors by India is dim. Their view was buttressed by the fact that even after a decade since the signing of the nuclear deal, India did not purchase a single U.S. atomic power reactor.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Ahemad, G.M. (2013). Indo-US Civil Nuclear Deal: Heralding a New Era in Indo-US Relations. In M. B. Alam (Ed.), *Indo-US Relations - Dimensions and Emerging Trends*, p. 55. Shipra Prakashan.

<sup>59</sup> Mohan, C. R. (2015, July 20). 10 years of Indo-U.S. Civil Nuclear Deal: Transformation of the bilateral relationship in the real big deal. *The Indian Express*. <https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/10-yrs-of-indo-us-civil-nuclear-deal-transformation-of-the-bilateral-relationship-is-the-real-big-deal/>. Accessed on March 16, 2022.

The American and Indian sceptics' suspicion about the implementability of the deal could be attributed to their surface reading about the spirit of the deal instead of getting to its depth. The spirit of the deal was that the United States would not exhort India to roll back its nuclear weapons program and change its domestic law. But, it would bring about some modifications in the international rules to facilitate civil nuclear cooperation with India. India committed that it would segregate its civilian and military nuclear programs and allow its civilian nuclear program to be supervised by the IAEA. Besides, it would support the global non-proliferation regime.<sup>60</sup>

'Non-proliferation' was the bone of contention between the U.S. Congress and the Bush administration in clinching the civil nuclear deal. The deal was viewed by the Congress as a policy of appeasement towards India, a non-signatory to the Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), resorted to by President Bush at the cost of the U.S.'s global image as the prime mover of the policy of non-proliferation. The U.S. Congress also divulged its apprehension that the deal would serve as an effective precedent to other non-signatory countries and encourage their clamor for similar favor on the issue of nuclear power. President Bush left no stones unturned to convince the Congress that the nuclear deal was 'more than the eye meets in it'. It was an innovative approach to modify India's nuclear status from that of a target under the U.S. non-proliferation laws to that of a full partner. This deal thus would bring India indirectly

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<sup>60</sup> Mohan, C. R. (2015, July 20). 10 years of Indo-U.S. Civil Nuclear Deal: Transformation of the bilateral relationship in the real big deal. *The Indian Express*. <https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/10-yrs-of-indo-us-civil-nuclear-deal-transformation-of-the-bilateral-relationship-is-the-real-big-deal/>. Accessed on March 16, 2022.



and implicitly under non-proliferation regime and benefit India in terms of energy security and environmental upgradation.<sup>61</sup>

Unlike the conventional deals where sometimes, hard bargaining between the parties on gross issues outweighs other deeper concerns, the nuclear deal was unique by itself. According to Burns, the U.S. Under Secretary of States,

“Our ongoing diplomatic efforts to conclude a civilian nuclear cooperation agreement are not simply exercises in bargaining and tough-minded negotiation ; they represent a broad confidence –building effort grounded in a political commitment from the highest levels of our two governments.”<sup>62</sup>

The ‘civil nuclear deal’ comprises not only the nuclear issues, as the rubric apparently manifests. It has within its fold a slew of issues pertaining to space, advanced military arsenals, dual-use high technology, missile defence etc. President Bush with his widened diplomatic vision and wisdom of a statesman, visualised that the welfare of United States at its domestic level and its geo-political clout in Asia lay in the growth of Indian power.

President Bush had a high esteem for India’s democracy. He had unflinching confidence in India’s potential as a major responsible power in Asia. Besides, he felt that bonhomie and strategic collaboration with India would facilitate entrenchment

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<sup>61</sup> Tellis, A. J. (2006). The Transforming U.S.- Indian Relationship and Its Significance for American Interests. *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington D.C.* [https://www.npolicy.org/article\\_file/The\\_Transforming\\_US-Indian\\_Relationship\\_and\\_Its\\_Significance\\_for\\_American\\_Interests.pdf](https://www.npolicy.org/article_file/The_Transforming_US-Indian_Relationship_and_Its_Significance_for_American_Interests.pdf). Accessed on March 14, 2022.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

of India's position as a balancing power in Asia vis-à-vis China. Those considerations encouraged President Bush to persuade the U.S. Congress for its approval for the deal with necessary amendments of the U.S. laws and to request international communities to change their position. It was felt by President Bush that his persuasion of Congress for amendment of the relevant U.S. Laws and persuasion of the international communities for clinching the deal was worthwhile in view of the common interest between the United States and India to save democracy and humanity and in the perspective of India's behaviour as a responsible state .<sup>63</sup>

The full implementation of the Civil Nuclear Deal is yet to be realised. In 2015, President Barack Obama visited India in connection with discussion on certain issues relating to the implementation of the deal. The carping critics continued expressing doubts regarding feasibility of realisation of the committed goals of the deal. However, the following developments achieved consequent upon the signing of the deal, amply bears out the potential of the deal in effecting a sustainable transformation in Indo-U.S. relationship:

- the deal has increased atomic power generation in India through importing uranium and purchasing new reactors negotiating with multiple vendors.
- India and the United States have committed to upgrade the trade to the tune of half a trillion dollars. Intensive contact with people at large and the

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<sup>63</sup> Tellis, A. J. (2006). The Transforming U.S.- Indian Relationship and Its Significance for American Interests. *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington D.C.* [https://www.npolicy.org/article\\_file/The\\_Transforming\\_US-Indian\\_Relationship\\_and\\_Its\\_Significance\\_for\\_American\\_Interests.pdf](https://www.npolicy.org/article_file/The_Transforming_US-Indian_Relationship_and_Its_Significance_for_American_Interests.pdf). Accessed on March 14, 2022.

support of around three million strong Indian diaspora in America have led to the burgeoning commercial engagement.

- There has been enhanced cooperation on counter-terrorism and intelligence-sharing over the last decade. Supply of arms from the United States has increased. Support of the United States has been committed in the development of India's next generation aircraft carrier.
- The United States has declined to enter into any Civil Nuclear Deal with Pakistan. This is an indication of de-hyphenation between India and Pakistan. India has been looked upon as a responsible and great Asian power, well poised to maintain a balance of power in the Asian Region vis-a-vis China. Refusing to extend the civil nuclear initiative to Islamabad, Washington removed the hyphen in its relations with Delhi and Islamabad. Since 2005, America has also discarded the idea of mediating between India and Pakistan, especially on the Kashmir question. Equally significant has been America's decision to view India as a potential great power in the same league as China, assist in the expansion of India's comprehensive national power, and encourage Delhi to play a larger role in stabilising the Asian balance of power. Since 2005, the United States has shunned the idea of mediating between India and Pakistan on the Kashmir issue.

- The divergence of opinion between Delhi and Washington on global issues notwithstanding, convergence of opinion on the issues relating to trade and climate change was achieved.<sup>64</sup>

It is obvious that the aforesaid developments towards improvement in Indo-U.S. relationship would not have been achieved had the civil nuclear deal not been entered into by the two great democracies.

Behind the roller-coaster relationship between India and the U.S. involving divergent social, political, economic and strategic issues, there lies a common democratic heritage which sustained and upheld the relationship defying all adverse and critical circumstances. With the cessation of the cold war period, the skewed mutual relationship of the cold war period derived strength from the common democratic background and took a turn towards amelioration of relationship. The Indian diaspora's contribution towards the political, economic, cultural and societal development of the U.S. coupled with the convergence of the undernoted common national interests of these two countries, had a catalytic effect on the initiatives towards improvement of the mutual relationship between India and the United States:

- Keeping Asia free from the single power domination fraught with the possibility of any threat to the American presence, American alliances and American ties with the regional states.

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<sup>64</sup> Mohan, C. R. (2015, July 20). 10 years of Indo-U.S. Civil Nuclear Deal: Transformation of the bilateral relationship in the real big deal. *The Indian Express*. <https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/10-yrs-of-indo-us-civil-nuclear-deal-transformation-of-the-bilateral-relationship-is-the-real-big-deal/>. Accessed on March 16, 2022.

- Eradication of threats of terrorism and religious extremism posed by the state sponsors of terrorism and the religious fanatics respectively.
- Prevention of dissemination of weapons of mass destruction and related technologies to other countries.
- Promotion of the spread of democracy to prevent illiberal polities from exporting their internal struggles over power abroad.
- Adoption of a liberal international economic order to promote economic development for spreading peace through prosperity throughout the world.
- Keeping the global commons especially the sea lanes of communications well protected and free from drug trading, human smuggling etc., to ensure uninterrupted flow of global trades, goods and services.
- To ensure energy security by harnessing existing energy sources through efficient and transparent market mechanisms and collaboration and also to innovate new sources of energy.
- Promotion of sustainable development through adopting the discoveries and innovations in science and technology.<sup>65</sup> Although the above issues are mentioned to be of common interest of the U.S. & India, the operational objectives may differ. Even if operational objectives match, disagreement may ensue over the strategies to be followed to achieve the objective. The

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<sup>65</sup> Tellis, A. J. (2006). The Transforming U.S.- Indian Relationship and Its Significance for American Interests. *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington D.C.* [https://www.npolicy.org/article\\_file/The\\_Transforming\\_US-Indian\\_Relationship\\_and\\_Its\\_Significance\\_for\\_American\\_Interests.pdf](https://www.npolicy.org/article_file/The_Transforming_US-Indian_Relationship_and_Its_Significance_for_American_Interests.pdf). Accessed on March 14, 2022.

bilateral cooperation between India and U.S. bears different connotations for India and the U.S. The U.S. is interested in empowering India economically and militarily to make India a balancing power vis-à-vis China in Asia. At the same time, the US is also keen to maintain its supremacy in Asia through association with India in the realm of trade and commerce and science and technology and in the Indo-Pacific region. India, on the other hand, is a seeker of the U.S. assistance to enhance its national power and elevate its position in the comity of nations by being a permanent member of the UN Security Council. India is also eager to be a partner in the welfare and development activities of the world at large sharing its resources , demographic and material, underpinned by its rich democratic heritage. India is also aware that its vision of gaining strategic benefit can be partially realized from its bilateral cooperation with the United States, since strategic benefit is an issue encompassing benefits in multiple sector. Besides, the stark reality of vicissitudes in the international relationship can hardly be ignored. What then logically follows is that all the eggs should not be kept in one box rather India should keep itself aligned with not only the U.S. but with other nations to meet its national requirements unswervingly.

Apart from the common goal of balancing China's ambition of attaining hegemony in Asia, the other issue demanding bilateral cooperation is combatting the threat to the national security of both India and U.S. posed by the radicalised Islam. The modus operandi and the target of attack preferred by this group may vary for each of the countries. The capability of challenging this menace undoubtedly differs in India and the U.S.. But, the common goal being curbing the menace, a bilateral cooperation in intelligence sharing, joint commando training, improvement in the

communication system, and supply of sophisticated arms to India are the remarkable offshoots of the deal.

Going by the past experiences, the chances of threatening each others' security by two countries are very remote. But, there may be strong divergence in views over many issues between these two countries. However, this difference will not in any way vitiate the civil nuclear deal as the ideal of the deal is to deal with all controversial issues keeping in view the mutual welfare.

President Bush's initiative towards harnessing the enormous potential of India was a positive-sum one. The objective was to improve relations with India, a new rising power in Asia which was to be the new center of gravity of global politics. Besides, empowerment of India would indirectly intensify the power and position of the United States in Asia.<sup>66</sup>

The prerequisite for a sustainable relationship between India and United States lies not only in forging a deal with some mutually beneficial conditions involving economic, political and strategic issues but in realization by the U.S. of India's potential as a unique nation upholding the principle of democracy with the keen intension of maintaining a cordial relationship with other nations with due deference to its own sovereignty and that of others. This policy of India to develop a multipolar alignment is sometimes misinterpreted by some nations as a ploy to eschew the responsibility of supporting a major decision against any state. This

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<sup>66</sup> Tellis, A. J. (2006). The Transforming U.S.- Indian Relationship and Its Significance for American Interests. *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington D.C.* [https://www.npolicy.org/article\\_file/The\\_Transforming\\_US-Indian\\_Relationship\\_and\\_Its\\_Significance\\_for\\_American\\_Interests.pdf](https://www.npolicy.org/article_file/The_Transforming_US-Indian_Relationship_and_Its_Significance_for_American_Interests.pdf). Accessed on March 14, 2022.

viewpoint is repudiated with the reasoning that India is always in favor of solution to a problem through bilateral or international negotiations and diplomacy instead of through wars which is very much in consonance with the principle, policy or mandate of the United Nations Organization. Taking cue from this inherent ethos of India, the Indo-U.S. relationship can attain a firm foundation if the U.S. assesses its national interest more in terms of empowering India economically, politically and strategically in such a manner that India is able to establish itself as a high-statured nation symbolizing the spirit and principle of democracy and world peace and at the same time a self-reliant nation. Therein lies the realization of the U.S.'s undisputed presence in Asia keeping it free from any aggressive assertion by China as the Asian hegemon.

Past history of India and the U.S. relationship is replete with evidences of India's support to U.S. on many issues despite its adherence to non-alignment as the foreign policy doctrine<sup>67</sup>

Indian initiatives in support of the U.S. even without a formal deal are exemplified below:

- India extended support for the U.S. anti-terrorism campaign in Afghanistan . The U.S. was also allowed to use numerous Indian military bases for the purpose.

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<sup>67</sup> Tellis, A. J. (2006). The Transforming U.S.- Indian Relationship and Its Significance for American Interests. *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington D.C.* [https://www.npolicy.org/article\\_file/The\\_Transforming\\_US-Indian\\_Relationship\\_and\\_Its\\_Significance\\_for\\_American\\_Interests.pdf](https://www.npolicy.org/article_file/The_Transforming_US-Indian_Relationship_and_Its_Significance_for_American_Interests.pdf). Accessed on March 14, 2022.



- No opposition whatsoever was expressed by India to President Bush's decision to withdraw from the Anti Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, despite the widespread international and domestic condemnation of the U.S. action.
- India endorsed the U.S. position on environmental protection and global climate change in the face of strident global opposition.
- The U.S. received India's support in its initiative to remove Jose Mauricio Bustani, the Director General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons despite strong Third World opposition in the United Nations.
- India eschewed leading or joining the international chorus of opposition to the U.S.-led coalition campaign against Iraq, despite repeated entreaties from other major powers and Third world states to that effect.
- India considered seriously and came close to providing an Indian Army division for post-war stabilisation operations in Iraq, despite widespread national opposition to the U.S.-led war.
- A 10-year defence cooperation framework agreement was signed by India with the U.S. that identifies common strategic goals and the means for achieving them, despite strong opposition to, and regional suspicion about, such forms of collaboration with Washington.
- India voted with the U.S. at the September 2005 International Atomic Energy Agency Board of Governors meeting to declare Iran in ' Non-compliance'

with the Non-Proliferation Treaty , despite strong domestic opposition and international surprise.<sup>68</sup>

The above instance of India's cooperation towards the U.S. even when there does not exist any prior deal between them, indicates India's pragmatism and diplomatic wisdom to safeguard its national interest.

### **A Quality Enhanced Relationship**

The present state of relationship between India and the U.S. is designated by many political scientists as an 'Entente' rather than an 'Alliance' with reference to the distinction between these two nomenclatures , as clarified below:

'Entente' refers to a type of close alignment between states that falls short of a full-blown alliance. Alliance constitutes the deepest possible commitment states can make to one another. They are formal, often treaty based expressions of security cooperation, involving the promise and expectation of mutual military assistance in case of aggression by a proactively identified common enemy. Compared to alliances, ententes are relatively informal. They are often not expressed in treaties or other formal agreements. Entente partners thus retain greater flexibility than alliance

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<sup>68</sup> Tellis, A. J. (2006). The Transforming U.S.- Indian Relationship and Its Significance for American Interests. *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington D.C.* [https://www.npolicy.org/article\\_file/The\\_Transforming\\_US-Indian\\_Relationship\\_and\\_Its\\_Significance\\_for\\_American\\_Interests.pdf](https://www.npolicy.org/article_file/The_Transforming_US-Indian_Relationship_and_Its_Significance_for_American_Interests.pdf). Accessed on March 14, 2022.

partners when it comes to supporting one another in specific cases of threat or aggression.<sup>69</sup>

An apparent lukewarm American interest to India, compared to that during the Bush regime, was observed at the initial phase of Barack Obama's Presidency consequent upon President Obama's election in 2008. For example, India was not included in the first list of the countries to be visited by Obama. However, by 2010, the relationship was again found to be on a positive track. The compelling circumstances in the Afghanistan prompted President Obama to revisit United States' relationship with India on the lines toed by President Bush.

President Obama declared in his speech in the Indian Parliament in November, 2010 that as an accepted official policy, the U.S. would pursue the issue of India's permanent membership in the United Nations. Assurances were also given regarding promoting India's inclusion in the Nuclear Suppliers Group and some other non-proliferation institutions.

The burgeoning clout of China with different states by virtue of its lending diplomacy emerged as a cause of concern for the Obama administration. China's assertion of its right over the controversial territories in the South China Sea involving Philippines, Vietnam was another source of worries for the U.S. The adopted the U.S. policy to combat China's aggressive posture was to intensify the U.S. intervention in ensuring unfettered access to the global common areas . The

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<sup>69</sup> Hagerty, D.T. (2016). "The Indo-US Entente: Committed Relationship or 'Friends with Benefits'?. In S. Ganguly, (Ed.), *Engaging the World: Indian Foreign Policy since 1947*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199458325.003.0006>

policy statement to this effect was declared by the U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in July 2010 in Hanoi,

“The United States has a national interest in freedom of navigation, open access to Asia’s maritime commons, and respect for international law in the South China Sea.”<sup>70</sup>

In order to put into force the above policy , Obama administration felt the dire need of empowering India as a great balance against China’s predatory approach. Accordingly, in November, 2011, President Obama declared a go-ahead to his renewed pro-India policy during his visit to the Asia-Pacific region.

The U.S.’s priority for what is now referred to as the Indo-Pacific region dates to 1941. This trend was sustained by the successive Presidents of United States. Around 1,00,000 uniformed U.S. military personnel used to remain deployed in the Asia-Pacific region since Bill Clinton became the U.S. President. But, the strength of the military personnel was reduced as a good number of them had to be engaged to combat the terrorism post 11<sup>th</sup> September, 2001, in Afghanistan under operation enduring freedom. Some of them were sent to Iraq under operation Iraqi Freedom. But, since 2011, the U.S. has been according priority to the Asia –Pacific again, to contain expansion of aggressive China by investing in a long-term strategic

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<sup>70</sup> Hagerty, D.T. (2016). 'The Indo-US Entente: Committed Relationship or ‘Friends with Benefits’?. In S. Ganguly, (Ed.), *Engaging the World: Indian Foreign Policy since 1947*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199458325.003.0006>

partnership with India to support its ability to serve as a regional economic anchor and provider of security in the broader Indian Ocean Region.<sup>71</sup>

The abrupt withdrawal of the U.S. and NATO military forces from Afghanistan and the consequent capture of Afghanistan by the Taliban, has become a cause of grave concern to India. India's past experience in 1989 when the Soviet Union pulled out the Red Army from Afghanistan was not good as a political vacuum resulted in instability and consequent introduction of the Taliban regime in the country. At that time the Jihadist intensified their terror attack in the Kashmir region. India needs strategic assurance from the U.S. to put at bay its perpetual rival China but not at the cost of its sovereignty. India is also prone to maintain diplomatic bonhomie with the Soviet Union, its long time unflinching friend. This strategic ambivalence of India often acts as a stumbling block in the journey of both the countries towards mutual reliance, trust and commitment.

In reality, neither the U.S. nor India is inclined to get themselves embroiled in an anti-China alliance, as that would put their massive trade with China at stake. Thus, India and the U.S. are always interested to maintain the semblance of a mutual trust and bonhomie to serve their ad hoc purposes. The U.S.'s tackling of the issue of the Indian Consular officer Ms. Khobragde was not compatible with the desired level of temperate response from an entente partner. The U.S. approach on that issue smacked of the U.S.'s utter disregard for the mutual diplomatic niceties, being well aware of India's inability to take a tit-for-tat stand. In the month that has passed

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<sup>71</sup> Hagerty, D.T. (2016). 'The Indo-US Entente: Committed Relationship or 'Friends with Benefits'?'. In S. Ganguly, (Ed.), *Engaging the World: Indian Foreign Policy since 1947*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199458325.003.0006>

since Ms. Khobragade's arrest, she has been transformed into a symbol of India's sovereignty, pushed around and humiliated by an arrogant superpower.<sup>72</sup>

India's reliance on the U.S. has also been shaken on a number of times in the past also. During the 1965 Indo-Pak war, an embargo on the supply of arms to India (and Pakistan) was imposed, although at the time of China's invasion of India in 1962, the U.S. supplied military assistance to India. Also, the abrupt cessation of the contract of supply of nuclear fuel for Tarapur Atomic Power Station by the U.S. in 1978, put India's generation of electricity in a dilemma. In 1988, military supply licenses were also cancelled by President Clinton's administration. Those incidents have raised doubts, up to what extent India could depend on the U.S. for meeting its needs relating to latest technologies and other essential materials.

Despite India's tilt towards the U.S., India was also very keen to maintain its relations with the developing world. India has been careful in nurturing ties with the developing world through the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and other international forums. India enjoys a diplomatic edge by being a member of BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa).<sup>73</sup>

The United States laid stress on improving Indo-U.S. trade relations as a quid pro quo for the consolidation of Indo-U.S. strategic relationship, as there remained a

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<sup>72</sup> Hagerty, D.T. (2016). 'The Indo-US Entente: Committed Relationship or 'Friends with Benefits'?'. In S. Ganguly, (Ed.), *Engaging the World: Indian Foreign Policy since 1947*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199458325.003.0006>

<sup>73</sup> Cherian, J. (2015, February 4). Dangerous tilt. *Frontline*. <https://frontline.thehindu.com/cover-story/dangerous-tilt/article6848235.ece>. Accessed on April 25, 2022.

high deficit in the U.S.'s goods and services trade with India. This was candidly reflected in President Obama's State of the Union address before his visit to India to attend the India-U.S. business summit in New Delhi on January 26, 2015-

“When ninety-eight per cent of our exporters are small businesses, new trade with Europe and Asia-Pacific will help them create more jobs. We need to work together on tools like a bipartisan trade promotion authority to protect our workers , protect our environment and open new markets to new goods stamped ‘Made in the USA.’ China and Europe aren’t standing on the sidelines. Neither should we. The United States rather than China should write trade rules for Asia.”<sup>74</sup>

But, Prime Minister Modi's goal is to give a boost to the growth of industries in India by wooing the foreign industrialists to manufacture their products in India under his ‘Make in India’ initiative. This divergence in the India and the U.S. policy for augmenting the economic growth of their respective nations, can best be reconciled by active negotiations. An official press release in New Delhi stated that President of the U.S. and the Prime Minister of India affirmed their shared commitment to facilitate increased bilateral investment flows and fostering an open and predictable climate for investment.<sup>75</sup>

It is a stark reality that India's economic downturn will not only downgrade the standard of living of its nationals but also weaken its ground to aspire for being a

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<sup>74</sup> Chandrasekhar, C. P. (2015, February 4). Bending it for investors?, *Frontline*. <https://frontline.thehindu.com/cover-story/bending-it-for-investors/article6848197.ece>. Accessed on March 15, 2022.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

great-power in Asia. Its bargaining power in any developmental, economic or any strategical issues with other nations will get considerably undermined. According to an American analyst, it is recognized by Indian decision-makers and policy elites that economic dynamism is essential not just for bringing prosperity to India's poor, but also for a strategic asset-or liability. It is undeniably true that getting the Indian economy back on its fast growth trajectory is the sine qua non of continued strategic convergence with the United States.<sup>76</sup>

### **Current Scenario of the Deal**

It emerges from the foregoing discussions that the Indo-U.S. Civil Nuclear Deal unfolded the possibilities of mutual cooperation and collaboration in multiple domains in addition to the harnessing of nuclear energy to meet the energy needs of the industries and that of the burgeoning population at large. There are reasoned criticisms regarding viability of the nuclear energy vis-à-vis its prohibitive commissioning cost and high nuclear radiation risk factor in the event of an accident in the nuclear plants. In corroboration, reference is given about the nuclear disaster that took place in Japan on March 11, 2011 in the multiple reactors at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear plant due to earthquake and Tsunami. The occurrence of another major nuclear accident at Chernobyl near Ukraine is also cited to stymie the use of nuclear power for generating electric power to cater to the needs of the civil sector. Statistical data have been resorted to buttress the argument against the viability of

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<sup>76</sup> Hagerty, D.T. (2016). 'The Indo-US Entente: Committed Relationship or 'Friends with Benefits'?'. In S. Ganguly, (Ed.), *Engaging the World: Indian Foreign Policy since 1947*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199458325.003.0006>



the nuclear power for civil needs: An illustrative example is the V.C. Summer nuclear project in South Carolina (U.S) where costs rose so sharply that the project was abandoned- after an expenditure of over \$9 billion.

Consequent upon the Fukushima nuclear disaster, there was a sharp decline in India's generation of electrical energy from nuclear power. In 2008, Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission , Anil Kakodkar, projected that India would have 650 Gigawatts of installed capacity by 2050; his successor Srikumar Banerjee predicted in 2010 that capacity would reach 35 Gigawatts by 2020. Installed capacity today is only 6.78 Giga Watt. These targets were set assuming that many light-water reactors would be imported by India after the India-U.S. Civil Nuclear Deal. But, not a single new nuclear plant was established over 13 years after the deal was concluded.<sup>77</sup>

However, the primary benefit of the deal, i.e. revival of India's bilateral relationship with the U.S. after gradual withdrawal of all sanctions imposed on it , post 1998 nuclear explosion, has evolved into a spectrum of areas of mutual national interest. There are intricacies of issues in many areas as the bilateral relations are nurtured keeping in view their respective domestic constraints and their relationship with other nations which may be on good or bad terms with either of them. The crest and trough in their relationship curve appears but their political wisdom circumvents the pitfalls and marches ahead. Certain disasters like terrorism that befall them are confronted jointly. Common international Issues are deliberated

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<sup>77</sup> Raju S. & Ramanna, M. V. (2022, March 12). Shutdown this misguided energy policy, *The Hindu*. [https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/shutdown-this-misguided-energy-policy/article\\_65215060.ece](https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/shutdown-this-misguided-energy-policy/article_65215060.ece). Accessed on March 13, 2022.

upon in conjunction with stakeholders for solution. Apart from the issues relating to supply of nuclear fuels and related technologies, the deal has brought India and the U.S. closer, putting an end to the nuclear apartheid against India. The other areas of cooperation include Counter Terrorism, Defence and strategic relations, nuclear non-proliferation , promotion of democracy, protection of sea lanes in the Indian Ocean region, maintenance of balance of power in the South Asia and thus to contribute to the peace and prosperity of the world at large. In the next chapter, the issues relating to India-U.S. Cooperation and synergy in counter-terrorism has been dealt with.

## CHAPTER – 4

### **India–U.S. Cooperation and Synergy in**

The present chapter attempts to analyse the policies and strategy of India and the United States to counter and combat the significant threats both at the domestic level and more particularly at the international level, posed by the rising number of militant organizations and extremist groups using and deploying terror as a means to advance and secularize their sectional or sectarian interests. The globalization processes have been a great facilitator in the movement and the activities of various groups which seek to change or replace political authority or impose their own ideology and do not hesitate from using violence, whether against the police and armed forces or innocent civilians. These groups are at odds with the national sovereign authorities and deploy terror to instill fear amongst their target. The challenge of containing and combating extremist violence and terrorist methods have widened. Various countries have been at the receiving end of terrorist violence at different points of time. While India has been subjected to such violence for a considerable period of time, the United States witnessed the full horror of terrorist act in the 9/11 attacks in 2001. Though the U.S. was also subjected to threats from terrorists in the 1980s and 1990s, it was the 9/11 attack which became the centerpiece of U.S.' concern in its international relations and foreign policy. Consequently, the call of the United States to wage a war against international terrorism found endorsement and ready support from the international community. India, long battered by terrorist attacks joined the international community to mount

a concerted counter to the activities of the terrorist groups. India was also assured that its repeated calls for action against terrorist organizations and groups, mostly sponsored by Pakistan would now get international attention and hopefully international support for the country's action against such groups.

In the present chapter we have described the extremely negative fallout of terrorist violence, the approach and action of the United Nations against terrorism, growing number of international conventions against terrorism, the nature and extend of terrorism directed against India and the United States and finally described, charted and analysed the policy response and measures adopted by the two countries against terrorism. The major focus has been on the means and methods adopted by the two countries in their bilateral dealings on . We have also analysed the shortcomings in the gradualist approach adopted by the two countries and the specific aspects of cooperative synergy which has been achieved. Finally, we are interested in understanding if the cooperation framework advanced through dialogue and deliberations between the two countries on terrorism has helped the bilateral relations to advance into a partnership between the two of the largest democracies of the world fighting the menace of terrorism.

### **Terrorism & the terrorist organizations**

Terrorism is an old menace affecting the lives of the people by means of killing human lives and destroying national properties for achieving political, religious, ethnic and ideological gains. There is no universally accepted definition of terrorism. Even in the United Nations, no consensus has been arrived as to a proper definition of terrorism. While the act of terrorism is a matter of pride to its perpetrators and is

dubbed by its abettor as a mission, either national or religious etc., this act causes immense harm to the peace and progress of the nations and the world at large. Today's world being like a global village, violent activities of the terrorists at any part of the world create ripples in other parts of the world too. The porous borders among different states help infiltration of the terrorists to the contiguous states. The technological advancements have also been leveraged by the perpetrators of terrorism to spread the tentacles of their destructive activities. The terrorist onslaught on the U.S. World Trade Centre (WTC) and the Pentagon in the New York City (NYC) on 11 September 2001 (9/11), in Mumbai in 2008, and other acts of violence by the terrorists in Bali, Istanbul, Chechnya, London, Madrid, Kosovo, Montenegro, Israel, East Timor, El Salvador, Northern Island and Kashmir etc. have dealt a huge blow to the human existence circumventing the security apparatus of the respective states.

The activities of the terrorists are transnational in nature. The tactics resorted to are of broad ranges: suicide- bombing, flight-hijacking, kidnapping, hostage-holding etc. Some of the different terrorist groups involved in launching world- wide extremely violent and destructive activities are:

- **Abu Nidal Organisation (ANO)** - A loose coalition of organizations led by Sabri-al-Banna; broke away with Palestine Liberation Organization in 1974. The group is also known by other names such as Arab Revolutionary Council (ARC), Fatah Revolutionary Council (FRC) and even Black September.
- **Al Qaeda (the Base)** –Most prominent Islamic terrorist group fighting USA domination in the Islamic states

- **Organization for the Liberation of Palestine (ANYOLP)** – Breakaway group from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), committed acts of violence on Israel diplomat in Cyprus in April 1973.
- **Hamas**- This is a militant Palestinian military Islamic movement in the West Bank and Gaza Strip founded in 1987. The group aim at destroying Israel from the Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan River and create a Islamic State in Palestine.
- **Hezbollah** - This is a Shi'a Muslim militant group and a political party based in Lebanon. The Hezbollah forces were allegedly formed with the aid of Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Khomeini and were trained and organized by a contingent Iranian Revolutionary Guards (IRG).
- **Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)** – A Marxist-Leninist guerilla organization founded by George Habash in 1967, hijacked El Al airline of Israel resulting in the death of 25 people.
- **Red Brigades (RB)** – A left wing organization active in Italy, employs kidnappings, murder and sabotage as tactics. The group was highly ideologically motivated and popular in the 1970s in parts of Europe.
- **Red Army Faction (RAF)** - A terrorist group founded in 1969 and based in West Germany based on leftism in West Germany.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Matseketsa & Mapolisa, T. (2013). The Effects of Terrorism on International Peace and Security and Educational systems in Africa and Beyond- A New Millenium Perspective. *International Journal of Advanced Research*, 1 (8), 694-710

In addition, the following terrorist organisations are also operating particularly abetted by Pakistan against India.

- **Lashkar-e-Taiba (LET)** – It is a militant organisation harboured in Pakistan and operating against India with the abetment of ISI, Pakistan. It was financed by Osama-bin-Laden. This terrorist Group was reported to be behind the 2001 attack on Indian Parliament, 2008 Mumbai attacks and 2019 Pulwama attack on Indian armed forces.
- **Mujahideen** – It is a guerrilla type militant group led by Islamist Afghan fighters during the Soviet- Afghan War. Now-a-days, other jihadist groups in different countries like Myanmar, Cyprus and Philippines are also designated by the same name.

### **United Nations’ measures**

On 8 September 2006, the UN General Assembly (UNGA) adopted the UN Global Strategy to enhance national, regional and international efforts to counter terrorism. The Member States were unanimous in declaring their zero-tolerance for terrorism in all its form and manifestations and resolved to adopt individual and collective measures to prevent the recurrence of terrorism and also to contain it effectively.

The United Nations’ Global Counter -Terrorism Strategy consists of four pillars:

- Addressing conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism,
- Preventing and combating terrorism,

- Building States' capacity to prevent and combat terrorism and strengthen the UN system's role in this regard, and,
- Respect for human rights and the rule of law in the fight against terrorism.<sup>2</sup>

The above four core strategy is expected to facilitate maintenance of international peace and security, promotion of sustainable development and protection of human rights. The Member States were also encouraged to implement the above four principles at respective national level and in their region. In this manner, an integrated approach towards associating the Member-States with the United Nations was envisaged.

The General Assembly enjoined upon the Member States the primary responsibility for implementing the strategies, as aforesaid, in collaboration with United Nations, the Implementation Task Force (CTITF) and other international, regional and sub-regional organizations, in conformity with the resolutions taken by the General Assembly. The relevant resolutions are – Resolution No: A/RES/62/272 and A/RES/64/297 adopted during the 62<sup>nd</sup> Session in September 2008 and 65<sup>th</sup> Session in September 2010 respectively.

The United Nations for decades has tried to unite the international community for collectively combating terrorism. In order to address the various pertinent issues e.g. hijacking of planes, holding of hostages, terrorism financing, threat of nuclear terrorism etc., as many as sixteen international treaties have been entered into at the

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<sup>2</sup> United Nations. (n.d.). *Implementing the United Nations Global Counter - Terrorism Strategies in Central Asia Concept Paper*. [https://unrcca.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/concept\\_eng\\_0.pdf](https://unrcca.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/concept_eng_0.pdf). Accessed on July 15, 2022.



United Nations and the associated forums. In 1999, the Security Council took a decision to impose sanctions on the terrorist organisations e.g. Taliban, Al-Qaeda and also imposed penalties like freezing of assets, banning of travels etc. in respect of the persons associated with these terrorist organisations.

## **International anti-terrorism laws and conventions**

A total of 19 international legal instruments have been developed by the international community under the auspices of the United Nations and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) since 1963, to prevent terrorist acts. A synoptic note on the said 19 legal instruments and the underlying conventions/protocols are given below:

### 1. Instruments regarding safety and security of civil aviation : Conventions/Protocols

- 1963 Convention on Offences and Certain Other Acts Committed On Board Aircraft
- 1970 Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft.
- 1971 Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation
- 1988 Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts of Violence at Airports Serving International Civil Aviation
- 2010 Convention on the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Relating to International Civil Aviation

- 2010 Protocol Supplementary to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft
- 2014 Protocol to Amend the Convention on Offences and Certain Acts Committed on Board Aircraft
  2. Instrument regarding the protection of international staff: Conventions/Protocols
- 1973 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes Against Internationally Protected Persons.
  3. Instrument regarding the taking of hostages: Conventions/Protocols
- 1979 International Convention against the Taking of Hostages
- 1980 Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material
- 1980 Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material
- 2005 Amendments to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material
  4. Instrument regarding the maritime navigation: Conventions/Protocols
- 1988 Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation
- 2005 Protocol to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation

- 1988 Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Fixed Platforms located on the Continental Shelf

- 2005 Protocol to the Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Fixed Platforms located on the Continental Shelf

5. Instrument regarding explosive materials: Conventions/Protocols

- 1991 Convention on the Marking of Plastic Explosives for the Purpose of Detection

6. Instrument regarding terrorist bombings: Conventions/Protocols

- 1997 International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings

7. Instrument regarding the financing of terrorism:  
Conventions/Protocols

- 1999 International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism

8. Instrument regarding nuclear terrorism: Conventions/ Protocols

- 2005 International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> United Nations (n.d.) *International Legal Instruments*. <https://www.un.org/counterterrorism/international-legal-instruments>. Accessed on July 15, 2022.

## **Terrorism in India and India's Response**

India's vulnerability to terrorism has been exposed through a number of terrorist onslaught e.g. the December 2001 attack on Indian Parliament, the November 2008 attack on Mumbai's hotels and other locations, January 2016 attack in Pathankot, 2019 attack on military convoy in Pulwama in Kashmir valley and a good number of attacks in different states of India taking a toll of many human lives and causing heavy damage to the infrastructure. As per a report on global terrorism by the U.S. Government's National Center, terrorist attacks in India took a toll of more than one thousand people in India in 2007.<sup>4</sup>

The regions of India mostly affected by terrorism may be classified as i) Jammu and Kashmir ii) Andhra Pradesh iii) North Eastern States. However, sporadic incidents of terrorism erupted in other parts of India as well, as an offshoot of the activities perpetrated by the terrorists active in those regions. It is important to mention here that the country has suffered heavily due to the violent activities of the Naxalite/Maoists for many decades. What started as a communist insurrection in Naxalbari in West Bengal in the early 1970s, developed tentacles across the country. Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra and undivided Andhra Pradesh have witnessed Maoist violence and a heavy handed state response. The Naxalite/Maoist violence and activities of the extremist organisations in the name of Maoism has been largely a phenomenon confined to the domestic sphere and has no significant link or connection with international terrorism. However, the severity and the

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<sup>4</sup> Kaplan, E and Bajoria, J. (2008). Counterterrorism in India. *Council on Foreign Relations*. <https://www.cfr.org/background/counterterrorism-india>. Accessed on July 15, 2022.

widespread threats to people's life and security posed by these organisations have drawn attention and underlined the gravity of the challenge faced by the nation states in the global sphere.

In Jammu and Kashmir region, the terrorism issue owes its genesis to the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947 and the cession of Jammu and Kashmir Princely States to India by Maharaja Hari Singh of Kashmir for protection by India against the uprising in the states and external onslaught of North-Eastern Tribes insurgent groups supported by Pakistan. Since then, the militant groups have taken recourse to terrorism to wrest the control of the region from India. However, the intensity of these efforts since late 1980s has been a most prominent security threat facing India. The rulers of Pakistan harbour the terrorists to annexe this region to Pakistan. The Pakistani rulers have been waging a proxy war against India since 1947 causing immense fatalities in India and destruction of national properties. Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM), Harakat ul-Mujahadeen (HuM), Harakat ul-Jihad-I-Islami (HUJI) and Jamiat ul-Mujahadeen are the various terrorist groups responsible for violence, killing and destruction of properties.

In the Northeast region of India, extremist groups have been active from the very beginning. Their activities have engulfed and destabilised different states at different point of time. For example, Mizoram was a most disturbed state in the 1960s through 1980s due to the secessionist goals of outfit led by Laldenga. Again, Manipur has remained quite disturbed due to the violence-prone contestation amongst various ethnic group as well as due to the activities of extremist groups demanding secession from India. Nagaland has witnessed one of the longest insurgency carried out by National Socialist Council of Nagaland for the past more than 5 decades. The Issac-

Muivah faction is NSCN has been negotiating with the central Government for the last two decades and a ceasefire holds but the other faction- Khaplang- has been carrying out disturbances and violence to press for its demands. Another serious challenge has been the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) in Assam and though there has been relative peace but the ULFA remains a potent force. In addition to these better known and more organised groups carrying out terrorist actions, there are yet other violent and extremist groups who have carried out low intensity conflict in the various parts of India's Northeast. While there was a definite connection between the Mizo insurgency and the support for NSCN from China in the 1960s and thereafter, the international aspects of these have ceased over the years. At one point, some of the Indian extremist groups sought refuge in Bhutan, Myanmar and in Bangladesh and there was a certain international connection of some of these groups but due to a proactive and collaborative joint engagement of Indian and Bhutanese authorities and an active crackdown on Indian extremist groups by the Dacca Government in Bangladesh territory, the situation in the Northeast has stabilised to a large extent.

The Government of India has involved its intelligence, military, and police organizations to combat terrorism. While the State Police Force and the Central Reserve Police Force together have pooled their resources to foil the terrorist attacks, at times armed forces also need to get involved. The Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) of India as an External Intelligence Organization and Intelligence Branch (IB) as an internal one, provide the information on the whereabouts and activities of the terrorists and extremist elements and thereby help in taking preventive measures against recurrence of a terrorist attack. Akin to the CIA in the United States, there is an interagency counter-terrorism centre in India under the supervision of IB. In

India, the Ministry of External Affairs supervises its own counter-terrorism body while the U.S. State Department, oversees diplomatic counterterrorism functions.<sup>5</sup>

Subsequent to the Mumbai attacks in 2008 (26/11), structural and institutional changes have been effected by the Ministry of Home Affairs in India to tackle the burgeoning terrorism. A National Investigation Agency (NIA) has been formed , National Security Guard (NSG) has been deployed in major cities to easily avail their services. Constitution of a National Centre (NCTC) in India on the lines of that in the U.S., has also been considered to coordinate the actions and exchange of intelligence for effectively containing terrorism.

India has adopted a three-pronged approach i.e use of military force, political initiative and economic development to contain terrorism. However, Indian army swings into action only when police and central armed police forces (CAPF) fail to contain terrorist activities. The problem of insurgency has been sought to be combated by India through discussions with the separatist groups and with its concerned neighbors. In order to consider the political aspirations of the ethno-nationalists. India has also been in favour of creating new states within the Union. However, it has never been under the contemplation of India to create such new states on the basis of religion.<sup>6</sup>

In containing terrorism, India's strategy is not to resort to extreme force like aerial bombardment, artillery and heavy infantry weapons. Rather, India lays stress on the

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<sup>5</sup> Kaplan, E and Bajoria, J. (2008). Counterterrorism in India. *Council on Foreign Relations*. <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/counterterrorism-india>. Accessed on July 15, 2022.

<sup>6</sup> Basumatary, J. (2017, February 1). India's counter terrorism strategy: An assessment. *Salute*. <https://salute.co.in/indias-counter-terrorism-strategy-an-assessment/>. Accessed on July 15, 2022.

use of restrained forces coupled with some preventive measures like steps for preventing the infiltration of the terrorists from the Pakistani training camps and from other border areas to India by fencing the entire international border and most places along the Line of Control (LoC). India also uses surveillance radars, ground sensors, thermal imaging devices, night vision etc. Besides, Village Defence Committees have also been constituted in some remote villages to curb the camouflaged presence of the terrorists in such vulnerable villages.

In order to prevent terrorist activities in Jammu and Kashmir, major arterial roads are vigorously combed to check plantation of mines or Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) on the road before opening such roads for public transportation. Covert Apprehension Technique (CAT) has also been applied to tackle terrorism in Kashmir. Under this technique, the terrorists and their supporters are nabbed through search operations with the help of former captured terrorists who wear masks to hide their identity.<sup>7</sup>

The strategy adopted in curbing terrorism in Nagaland was to intercept the movement of the guerrillas from Pakistan and China into Nagaland and curbing the activities of the guerilla squads within Nagaland. Splitting of the Naga National Council was another strategy adopted to combat and contain the Naga insurgency. Military intervention was also made to abate the upsurge of terrorism in Nagaland.

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<sup>7</sup> Basumatary, J. (2017, February 1). India's counter terrorism strategy: An assessment. *Salute*. <https://salute.co.in/indias-counter-terrorism-strategy-an-assessment/>. Accessed on July 15, 2022.



Different operations taken up towards counter-terrorism in the Northeast were: 'Operation Bajrang' and 'Operation Rhino' to contain the ULFA terrorism during 1990-1992. In order to tackle the Bodo militancy, 'Operation All Out' was launched.

Terrorism in India owes its origin to the perceived grievances of different groups of the Indians on the for a whole range of grievances in different social, economic, religious and ideological ground. Islamic groups in Kashmir, Sikh separatists in Punjab, Secessionist groups in Assam etc. are examples of such groups. As mentioned by National Security Advisor M K Narayanan in August, 2008, commented that there were almost 800 terrorist cells operating in India with the aid of external forces.

The diversity in the Indian demography in respect of language, culture, creed etc. has lent an ambience to the varied cross sections of disgruntled populace to breed terrorism. The causes behind such terrorism may be classified as follows:

- politics of communalism and criminalisation
- fanatic religious movements and irresponsible statements by political and religious leaders
- human rights violation
- high levels of youth unemployment
- poverty
- illiteracy
- poor governance

- prolonged delays in criminal justice

However, of all the types of terrorism afflicting India, the major one is the Pakistan sponsored terrorism. The act of acceding Jammu & Kashmir to India by Maharaja Hari Singh of Jammu & Kashmir, after the partition of India, was not accepted by Pakistan. It was claimed by Pakistan that Kashmir being a Muslim majority territory, it belonged to Pakistan. Since then, Pakistan has continued to wage border war against India over the Kashmir issue and sponsor terrorism against India. India has also steadfastly adhered to its stand of protecting Kashmir as an integral part of India.<sup>8</sup> Thus, Pakistan being denied its baseless claim on the acceded territory of Kashmir, has been continuously sponsoring cross-border terrorism in its desperate bid to engineer destabilisation in Kashmir region and other areas of India.

Pakistan is well aware of its inferiority in a conventional war vis-à-vis India. It has therefore taken recourse to an asymmetric or proxy war against India with the help of its created terrorist organizations like Lashkar-e-Tayyeba (LeT), the covert arm of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). In order to consolidate their strength and intensify their scope of subversive activities in India, these organizations have often forged a nexus with varied type of insurgents and terrorist groups in the pasty like Babbar Khalsa International, Khalistan Commando Force, Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, United Liberation front of Assam, National Liberation Front of Tripura and so on.

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<sup>8</sup> Ahluwalia, V.K. (2017). Terrorism in India & successful counter-terrorism strategies. Vision of Humanity. <https://www.visionofhumanity.org/terrorism-counterterrorism-strategies-indian-chronicle/>. Accessed on July 15, 2022.

Government of India has already banned many terrorist organizations. But, their covert activities are still in display sporadically. The Maoist insurgency poses the gravest threat to India's internal security. Assam and Tripura also have experienced the scourge of terrorism. Thirty-five terrorist organizations operating within India have been banned. However, the list of banned organizations does not include the Popular Front of India (PFI) which is suspected of being created by foreign terrorist organizations. The PFI has its headquarters in Kerala. A report citing the Raw and Analysis Wing (R&AW), extremists from this Kerala terror groups have been going to Pakistan for further training. However, nothing definite can be said about the allegations. The threat to South India must also be viewed in conjunction with the infiltration of Al Qaeda and LeT in Maldives.<sup>9</sup>

The paw of terrorism has pounced on 20 States and 1 Union Territory: Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhatisgarh, Gujarat, Goa, Haryana, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Manipur, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttarakhand and West Bengal and National Capital Territory Delhi, out of 29 states and 7 Union Territories.

According to Government data, between 1970 to 2018, a total of 19866 lives were lost and 30544 people suffered injuries in 12002 incidences of terrorist violence across India. A steady rise in terrorism in different states of India was witnessed since 1979. The imperative need for ensuring security of the people prompted the

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<sup>9</sup> Katoch, P. (2013). Strategic options against State-sponsored Terrorism. *CLAWS Journal, Winter 2013* (97-114). <https://indianarmy.nic.in/WriteReadData/Documents/strategic%20Options.pdf>. Accessed on July 15, 2022.

introduction of anti-terrorism laws in India. Some of the major Acts introduced to combat terrorism in India included:

1. Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, (UAPA) 1967 – This Act was introduced to declare secessionist associations as unlawful, to control the funds and places of work of unlawful associations and to ascertain penalties for the members of such associations.
2. Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act, (TADA) 1987- This Act was passed to deal with terrorist activities in India. This act, however, lapsed in 1995.
3. The Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act, (MCOCA) 1999 – The purpose of this Act was to deal with rising organised crime in Maharashtra and particularly in Mumbai due to the activities of the gangs and groups in the underworld. iv) Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA), 2002 –It was a special Act for prevention of and dealing with terrorist activities.

These Acts were meant for curbing terrorism and insurgency launched by the different religious, political, ethnic and secessionist groups of India with the aim to secure their perceived unique identity apart from their common identity as Indians and to aggrandise their socio-economic and political power in the society. Although the activities of the terrorists were tamed for the time being, the intermittent spurt in terrorism used to surface in close coordination with the trans-national terrorist groups like the LTTE, PKK, Hamas, and others. This recrudescence of intensified terrorist activities necessitated a synergy among the terror-stricken nations all over

the world like the U.S., the UK, African States, West Asian States, South Asian States etc. for effectively resisting the spread of the menacing social malady.

In the early 1980s, India was affected by extremist militancy in Punjab carried out by Khalistani groups whose declared intent to secure a separate home land for the Sikhs –Khalistan- was strongly resisted and brutally countered by the state forces. A high point of the operation against the Khalistanis was the Operation Blue Star by the army in 1984, to apprehend secessionist leaders such as Jarnail Singh Bhindrawale from the Golden Temple complex in Amritsar. The entry of the armed forces in the Golden Temple was considered as a sacrilege by a section of the Sikh population. Instead of taming the rebellion, the successful Operation Blue Star however became a point of deep divide and the country lost its Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi in an assassination carried out by Sikh security guards at the official residence of the Prime Minister. Subsequent developments involving carnage against the Sikhs perpetrated in Delhi and some parts of the country has remained a blot on Indian democracy. A strong and decisive Punjab administration, however was able to put a lid on Khalistani secessionists in next few years. All this came at the cost of human lives- both due to the violence carried by the militants as well as brutal crackdown against them carried out by the armed forces.

India was mainly afflicted by the Khalistani terrorism and the terrorism in Kashmir. The modus operandi of the Khalistani group differed from that of the Kashmiri groups. The Khalistani groups did not confine their subversive activities within the Indian subcontinent. They spread their network in foreign territories also. Their terror activities, characterized by aircraft hijacking, destruction of aircrafts by bombing etc. resulted in their branding as international terrorist organization. The

United States was keen to assist India in curbing the terrorism perpetrated by those Khalistani groups, apprehending incidence of their attack not only in India but in the U.S. also.

But, the Kashmiri group of terrorists refrained from causing any harm to the Civil aviation and proliferating their killing activities in the foreign countries. However, departures were observed in the hijacking and blowing up of an Indian Airlines aircraft in 1971 and killing of an Indian diplomat in the U.K in 1983, by the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) members. Consequently, U.S. did not take any cognizance of such crime as terrorist activities and in certain way considered these more as a movement for political ends.

Instead, such acts of violence were treated more as an offshoot of Indo- Pakistan bilateral dispute over the Kashmir issue. India found itself landed in a soup to tackle the burgeoning terrorism in Kashmir with the announcement of the U.S. President Bill Clinton in 1991 about the Kashmiri terrorism as an ethnic conflict. Addressing the UN General Assembly in September 1993, President Clinton described the unrest in Kashmir as an ethnic conflict, speaking of bloody ethnic, religious and civil wars from Angola to the Caucasus to Kashmir.<sup>10</sup> This statement of President Clinton led to a spurt in the terrorists' activities in Kashmir. However, a tacit admission of President Clinton regarding Pakistan's support to the Kashmiri terrorist groups was elicited through discussion with Prime Minister Narasimha Rao during the latter's

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<sup>10</sup> Kumar, S. (n.d.). Indo-U.S. Counterterrorism Cooperation Foundations , Dimensions & Limitations. *South Asia Intelligence Review*, 63-91. [https://satp.org/Docs/Faultline/24\\_Indo-US%20Counter-terrorism%20Cooperation%20Foundations,%20Dimensions%20and%20Limitations.pdf](https://satp.org/Docs/Faultline/24_Indo-US%20Counter-terrorism%20Cooperation%20Foundations,%20Dimensions%20and%20Limitations.pdf). Accessed on July 15, 2022.

visit to Washington DC in 1994. Besides, the apathy of U.S. towards terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir was transformed into concern when a few western tourists fell victim to the Harkat – ul- Ansar (HUA) group. In July, 1995, the kidnapping of six western tourists prompted the United States to review its assessment on the status of terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir. The United States officials extended their cooperation to the Indian officials to keep vigil on the activities of the Pakistani terrorist organizations.<sup>11</sup>

As realization of the ground reality, as to the camouflaged role of Pakistan as an abettor of terrorism, dawned upon the U.S. The HUA and LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam) were branded as a Foreign Terrorist Organizations in October 1997. President Clinton also signed a new law in 1996 banning fund-raising in America by named terrorist organizations and India and the U.S. signed an Extradition Treaty in August 1997.

### **Addressing Terrorist Threats by the United States**

The United States has been under attack by various kinds of of terrorist groups such as ISIS, al-Qa'ida, and Hizballah. In 1995, a bomb was exploded by an anti-Government violent extremist at the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, taking a toll of 168 people – including 19 children – and injuring hundreds of others. In the September, 11, 2001, Al- Qaeda attack in New York, killing more than 3000 persons and injuring about 25,000 people stunned not only

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<sup>11</sup> Raman, B. (2006). Indo-U.S. counter-terrorism cooperation: Past, present and future. In Ganguly, S., Scobell, A., & Shoup, B. (Eds.), *U.S.-Indian Strategic Cooperation into the 21st Century* (1<sup>st</sup> ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203946749>. Accessed on July 15, 2022.

the U.S. but the world at large. This incident exposed the vulnerability of the United States' security system in the face of a terrorist attack. In 2016, five police officers were killed by an anti-authority violent extremist. In 2017, a lone gunman wounded four people at a congressional baseball practice. In order to combat the onslaught of terrorism, the U.S. Department of State took initiative to forge a global consensus to thwart the destructive bid of the terrorists. The measures adopted were a collective and simultaneous operation of a number of activities undertaken by different organs of the nation-diplomatic engagement with other nations, strengthening of law enforcement and judicial capabilities, intensification of aviation and border security, sharing of global information, countering terrorist financing, improvement of crisis response, and countering violent extremism.

The U.S. State Department expects countries to build counterterrorism capacity in their respective geographical regions. This is promoted as this leads to burden sharing amongst the concerned countries. An integrated action of United States' Departments of Defence, Homeland Security, Justice, Treasury, and the Intelligence Community was decided to be taken up to effectively contain the surge of terrorism.

The strategy adopted by United States to address sources and manifestations of terrorism in the domestic sphere may be classified under four broad heads: First, understanding and sharing of information regarding the full range of domestic terrorism threats. Second, adoption of preventive measures so that the domestic terrorists cannot recruit, incite, and mobilize Americans to perpetrate violent activities. Third, curbing the initial domestic terrorist activities before it culminates into violence. Finally, steps to be taken to eradicate the core source of terrorism i.e. racism and bigotry.



In order to make the above strategies successful, importance was laid on:

- Research and analysis of the trajectory of terrorist activities to adapt the curbing mechanism to the ever mutating tactics of the terrorists.
- Improvement of information sharing between the Federal Government and other relevant partners so that a collective and integrated measure can be taken.
- Detection of domestic terrorism link with international terrorism and adoption of appropriate counter-terrorism measures with the help of international partners.
- Countering communications platforms, including social media, online gaming platforms, file-upload sites, and end-to-end encrypted chat platforms of the suspected groups, even as those products and services frequently offer other important benefits.<sup>12</sup>

The first terrorist attack on the United States was triggered on 4<sup>th</sup> November, 1979 by the militant students of radical Islam who held hostage fifty-two American citizens inside the U.S. Embassy in Teheran. The U.S. President Jimmy Carter severed diplomatic relations with Iran as the hostages were not released despite vigorous negotiation pursued by the Americans. ‘Operation Eagle Claw’ launched

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<sup>12</sup> The White House. (2021, June 15). *National Strategy for countering Domestic Terrorism*. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/06/15/fact-sheet-national-strategy-for-countering-domestic-terrorism/>. Accessed on July 15, 2022.

by the U.S. to retrieve the hostages proved abortive. The hostages were finally released on 20 January 1981 after spending 444 days in captivity.<sup>13</sup>

On April 18, 1983, Sixty-three people including 17 Americans were killed when a suicide bomber exploded a truck loaded with explosives inside the U.S. embassy in Beirut, Lebanon. The U.S. Government did not take immediate retaliatory measures. Instead they sent a military team to Beirut secretly to garner intelligence as to the said explosion for effective future actions.

On October 23, 1983, another explosion of a truck loaded with explosives was carried out inside a U.S. Marine barrack at Beirut International Airport, killing 241 U.S. Marines and injuring 100 others. Hezbollah terrorist group was suspected to be the operative behind this work. The group, however, declined their involvement. At the order of President Reagan, the U.S. battleship USS New Jersey was stationed off the coast of Lebanon to the hills near Beirut. Gradually, the U.S. Marines were withdrawn from Beirut.

On December 12, 1983, the American Embassy in Kuwait was attacked with bomb explosion along with attack on a number of targets in Kuwait including a residential area for employees of the American Corporation Raytheon leading to the death of six people and injury to about 80 people. An Iranian –backed group Al Dawa or The Call was suspected to be responsible for the attack. However, no military action was taken by the United States. On March 16, 1984, the CIA Station Chief William Buckley was kidnapped.

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<sup>13</sup> PBS (1979, November 4). Terrorist Attacks on Americans, 1979-1988: Hostages taken at the U.S. Embassy in Tehran. *Frontline*. <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/target/etc/cron.html>. Accessed on July 15, 2022.

On September 20, 1984, explosion of a truck bomb outside the U.S. Embassy in Aukar, northeast of Beirut, killed 24 people including two U.S. military personnel. Hezbollah group was suspected to be the perpetrator of the attack. The CIA started covert training of the foreign intelligence agencies to destroy the terrorist network. But, later, Reagan administration stopped the covert training operation when one of the trained agents exploded a car bomb resulting in the death of more than 80 people while attempting to kill one of the spiritual leaders of Hezbollah group.

On December 3, 1984, Kuwait Airways Flight 221 was hijacked and two Americans working for the U.S. Agency for International Development were killed.

On April 05, 1986, in the La Belle discotheque in West Berlin, An American soldier was killed and about 200 people were injured due to a bomb explosion. Libya was held responsible by the U.S. intelligence through intercepting of Libyan Government communications. The U.S. Government under the Operation El Dorado Canyon, launched an attack on Libya involving 200 aircrafts and 60 tons of bombs killing 37 people and injuring 93 people. In retaliation, three employees of American University of Beirut were shot dead by a pro-Libyan group of terrorists.

On December 21, 1988, another act of terrorism was perpetrated against the United States by planting bombs in the Pan American Flight 103 from London to New York and triggering its explosion over the town of Lockerbie, Scotland, leading to the death of all 259 passengers on board and that of 11 persons on the ground.

### **Indo-US Joint Strategy**

India and the U.S., both being victim of terrorism, found it worthwhile to adopt joint measures. Democracy and secularism have been the political and social norms

in both India and the United States. This identity prompted both the countries to jointly combat terrorism. Besides, Islamic fanaticism being *bête noire* to both the United States and India, the two sides decided to commit to wage a war against the terrorist outfits led by Osama Bin Laden and other militant groups like Jihad Group in Egypt, Islamic Group, Jihad Movement in Bangladesh etc.<sup>14</sup>

Indo-U.S. cooperation in counter- terrorism started as far back as in 1980s. In 1981, first joint counter- terrorism measures were adopted by the U.S. and India to curb the terrorist activities of some Sikh Organisations like the Babbar Khalsa, the Dal Khalsa and the International Sikh Youth Federation, who were demanding an independent Khalistan in Punjab. Their terror network extended not only inside India but also in the United States , Canada and West Europe.<sup>15</sup> The destination of almost all the hijacked aircrafts being Lahore in Pakistan, the U.S. Government thought it prudent to extend its hand of cooperation towards India in containing terrorism being spawned in the Pakistani territories, to avert escalation of tensed relationship between India and Pakistan over the aircraft hijacking issue .

The sequential evolution in the Indo-U.S. cooperation can be classified into four different stages from 1981-2000 and another stage from 2000 onwards:

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<sup>14</sup> Rajeswari, P. R. (2000). Terrorism- An Area of Cooperation in Indo-U.S. Relations. *Strategic Analysis: A Monthly Journal of the IDSA*, 24 (6). [https://ciaotest.cc.columbia.edu/olj/sa/sa\\_sep00rap01.html](https://ciaotest.cc.columbia.edu/olj/sa/sa_sep00rap01.html). Accessed on July 15, 2022.

<sup>15</sup> Raman, B. (2006). Indo-U.S. counter-terrorism cooperation: Past, present and future. In Ganguly, S., Scobell, A., & Shoup, B. (Eds.), *U.S.-Indian Strategic Cooperation into the 21st Century* (1<sup>st</sup> ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203946749>. Accessed on July 15, 2022.

1. **First Stage (1981-85)** – In the first stage, anti-hijacking and hostage negotiation techniques were taught to the Indian intelligence officers in the United States. There was no exchange of intelligence.
2. **Second Stage (1985-91)** – In the second stage, exchanges of intelligence began with the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) monitoring the activities of the Khalistani terrorists based in West Europe and North America. No intelligence was provided on the activities of groups based in Pakistan.
3. **Third Stage (1991-95)** - Only exchanges of intelligence and provision of counter-terrorism training facilities to Indian officials were permitted, until late 1991. Exchanges of analyses and assessments and periodic brainstorming sessions between Indian and American counter-terrorism analysts were not part of the emerging cooperation. In 1991, the CIA accepted a proposal from the RAW, India's external intelligence agency, for similar meetings between the counter-terrorism analysts of the two countries once a year, alternately in Washington DC and New Delhi. This was inaugurated at New Delhi in January, 1992.
4. **Fourth Stage (1995 – 2000)** - The violence perpetrated by Pakistani Jihadi organisations such as Harkat-ul-Mujahideen ( HUM), the Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami (HUJI), the Lashkar-e-Toiba( LET) and the Jaish-e-Mohammad(JEM)

has been the main area of concern for the Indian intelligence agencies, since 1995.<sup>16</sup>

An abrupt setback emerged in the Indo-U.S. mutual cooperation with India's nuclear explosion in 1998. But, President Clinton's pragmatic world view outweighed the opposing arguments against restoration of bonhomie between the two large democracies.

The 'Quiet Diplomacy' of Strobe Albott, the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia and Jashwant Singh, the External Affairs Minister of India went a long way in effecting the rapprochement between the U.S. and India, overcoming the acrimonious relationship developed between those two countries as a consequence of Pokhran-II nuclear explosion in 1998. Also, in 1999, after an incident of hijacking of Indian Airlines' flight no 814 by HUM after its take off from Kathmandu and forcing the pilots to land in Kandhar, Afghanistan, President Clinton extended support to India. The said incident exposed to the U.S. the nexus between Pakistan and the terrorists in Kashmir.

India's persuasion with the U.S. President Bill Clinton for declaring Pakistan as a state sponsor of international terrorism, consequent upon HUM's hijacking of Indian Aircraft in 1999, proved abortive. Instead, in 2000, a *Joint Working Group* (JWG) was constituted by India and the U.S. to facilitate the counter-terrorism cooperation between the agencies and departments of India and the United States.

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<sup>16</sup> Raman, B. (2006). Indo-U.S. counter-terrorism cooperation: Past, present and future. In Ganguly, S., Scobell, A., & Shoup, B. (Eds.), *U.S.-Indian Strategic Cooperation into the 21st Century* (1<sup>st</sup> ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203946749>. Accessed on July 15, 2022.

The regional and international vulnerability to the rising terrorism prompted President Clinton to sign a ‘ Vision Statement’ together with Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee during his visit to India in March 2000. The statement expressed commitment of the two countries to work together towards sustenance of peace and stability in the world at large by countering terrorism with concerted strength. India and the United States committed to share common responsibility for ensuring regional and international security. Regular consultations between India and the United States and with others were also under contemplation for ensuring strategic stability in Asia and beyond. It was also decided that all out efforts will be taken to support the United Nations in its peacekeeping efforts. It was acknowledged that tensions in South Asia could only be resolved by the South Asian countries.<sup>17</sup>

A tangible qualitative change was observed in the modus operandi of the U.S. and India Governments in the implementation of the counter-terrorism policies in the year 2000 vis-à-vis that during 1981-2000 . While at the policy level the departments concerned were also involved, the confidential areas of operations were still dealt with by the intelligence agencies (India’s RAW and United States’ CIA) and counter-terrorism wings of India and United States. In other words, the formal tier at the level of the Joint Working Group (JWG) was entrusted to decide policies and identify areas of cooperation , while the informal tier involving intelligence

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<sup>17</sup> Kumar, S. (n.d.). Indo-U.S. Counterterrorism Cooperation Foundations , Dimensions & Limitations. *South Asia Intelligence Review*, 63-91. [https://satp.org/Docs/Faultline/24\\_Indo-US%20Counter-terrorism%20Cooperation%20Foundations,%20Dimensions%20and%20Limitations.pdf](https://satp.org/Docs/Faultline/24_Indo-US%20Counter-terrorism%20Cooperation%20Foundations,%20Dimensions%20and%20Limitations.pdf). Accessed on July 15, 2022.

agencies was used to ensure actual sharing of intelligence and operational cooperation<sup>18</sup>

The Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism had established a strong institutional cooperation covering the desired areas of actions to effectively combat terrorism. Some of the major decisions taken by JWG in its meetings since its first meeting in February, 2000 were:

- a) To make extensive exchange of information and assessments on the international and regional terrorist situation.
- b) To ensure intelligence and investigative cooperation.
- c) To qualitatively upgrade and expand anti-terrorism training programme for Indian law enforcement officials.
- d) To launch of a bilateral Cyber Security Forum.
- e) To initiate Inter - military cooperation on counter-terrorism and to supplement the initiatives of the India-U.S. Defence Policy Group in this area.
- f) To intensify co-operation in civil aviation security.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Raman, B. (2006). Indo-U.S. counter-terrorism cooperation: Past, present and future. In Ganguly, S., Scobell, A., & Shoup, B. (Eds.), *U.S.-Indian Strategic Cooperation into the 21st Century* (1<sup>st</sup> ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203946749>. Accessed on July 15, 2022.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.



The fiercest terrorists' attack in the United States on 11<sup>th</sup> September, 2001 accelerated the counter-terrorism cooperation between India and the U.S. India assured an all-out cooperation to the Bush administration in fighting back the onslaught of terrorism. In conformity with the earlier decisions of the JWG, U.S.-India Cyber Security Forum was established in order to enhance the efficiency of this forum. Domain experts from Government and private organizations of India and the U.S. were inducted in this forum. The scope of work of this forum was a wide one involving not only direct tackling of the incidents of cyber-crime with immediate response but also prevention of such crime by keeping abreast of any brewing of such crime well ahead through a revamped vigilance. Much importance was also laid on the research and development in the field of cyber-security and cyber-crime. The dependence of the U.S. on the information technology companies in India had a positive impact in the formation of this forum. The first meeting of this forum was held in April 2002 in New Delhi followed by the second meeting in November 2004 at Washington DC. In the meetings, commitment for continued counter-terrorism cooperation between these two countries were reaffirmed. "It was reaffirmed in the conference by the United States and India to secure cyberspace by establishing five JWS and identifying action plans for each. It was decided that in future, workshops would be held in New Delhi and Washington and efforts would be taken to intensify scientific exchanges. Areas of cooperation were also identified by the representatives of private industry."<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Raman, B. (2006). Indo-U.S. counter-terrorism cooperation: Past, present and future. In Ganguly, S., Scobell, A., & Shoup, B. (Eds.), *U.S.-Indian Strategic Cooperation into the 21st Century* (1<sup>st</sup> ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203946749>. Accessed on July 15, 2022.

Another landmark measure adopted was to induct military-to- military cooperation in counter-terrorism through the expansion of the scope of Indo-U.S. Defence Policy Group. The objective was to resist the spread of weapons of mass destruction, narcotics trafficking, piracy and maritime terrorism. India and the U.S. came forward to intensify their bilateral cooperation in the naval sector to ensure safe maritime trade through curbing the maritime terrorism. “In order to achieve this objective, assistance was taken from the Working Group on Maritime Security of the Council on Security Cooperation Asia Pacific ( CSCAP), as both the United States and India were members of this Council .<sup>21</sup>

Although the U.S. did not subscribe to India's views that Pakistan was involved in the cross-border terrorism, the heinous terrorist onslaught in the U.S. on 11th September, 2001, resulted in a change of the U.S.' opinion towards Pakistan :

- In an interview in October,2001, Washington's imposition of sanctions against the Jaish-e-Muhamad was referred to by the United States Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage as an evidence of United States' concern regarding terrorism in the region beyond Afghanistan.
- Branding of the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba ( LeT) and Jaish-e Muhamad as terrorist organizations by the United States was welcomed by the Indian Officials a few days ahead of a visit of Prime Minister Vajpayee to the United States.

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<sup>21</sup> Raman, B. (2006). Indo-U.S. counter-terrorism cooperation: Past, present and future. In Ganguly, S., Scobell, A., & Shoup, B. (Eds.), *U.S.-Indian Strategic Cooperation into the 21st Century* (1<sup>st</sup> ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203946749>. Accessed on July 15, 2022.

- In the aftermath of Pakistan-abetted terrorists' attack on India's Parliament in December, 2001, Indian officials accused the United States of showing bias towards Pakistan even on the issue of combating terrorism. India's accusation prompted Washington to declare the militant violence against Indian targets by Pakistan-based militant organizations as part of global terrorism.
- In 2003, eleven young Muslims in the Washington area were charged for being associated with LeT, which had been involved in multiple terrorist attacks on Indian targets.
- In late September 2003, at the end of the Bush-Vajpayee talks on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly session, Condoleezza Rice reportedly apprised journalists of President Bush's talk with Pakistani President Musharraf about the need to stop cross-border terrorism in Kashmir.<sup>22</sup>

Bush administration took an all-out effort to curb the activities of the terrorist group Al Qaeda. Steps were also taken to contain the activities of Taliban in Afghanistan. The exhortation given by Indian Prime Minister, A. B. Vajpayee, regarding effective implementation of counter-terrorism measures, in his address in Asia Society, New York, on September 22, 2003 is worth quoting:

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<sup>22</sup> Nayak, P. (2007). Prospects for U.S.–India Counterterrorism Cooperation: An American View. In Ganguly, S., Scobell, A., & Shoup, B. (Eds.), *U.S.-Indian Strategic Cooperation into the 21st Century* (1<sup>st</sup> ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203946749>. Accessed on July 15, 2022.

Our long-term strategy to combat it should have four broad elements: one, a concert of democracies in cohesion. A threat against one should be seen as a threat against all. Two, consistency of approach in demanding from all countries, the same high standards in combating terrorism. Three, continuity of resolve and clarity of purpose. It should not be drawn into the grey zone of conflicting policy objectives, which condone ambiguous positions on terrorism. Four, to win the war against terror, we have to win the war of ideas. We have to expand the constituency of democracy by promoting the ideals of freedom, democracy, rule of law and tolerance, which are our defining strengths.<sup>23</sup>

In 2004, India and the U.S. entered the Next Step in Strategic Partnership. This diplomatic initiative helped to curb the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and strengthen relevant laws, regulations and export-related procedures. These cooperative approaches were adopted in conformity with the national laws and international obligations of the two countries.<sup>24</sup>

The Mumbai terrorist attack in November, 2008 again highlighted the height of terrorism resorted to by the Pakistan-patronized terrorists. This incident further accentuated cooperation between the United States and India.

The hope raised on intensification of Indo-U.S. bonhomie with the assumption of office by President Obama in 2009, received a jolt because the U.S. started

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<sup>23</sup> Raman, B. (2006). Indo-U.S. counter-terrorism cooperation: Past, present and future. In Ganguly, S., Scobell, A., & Shoup, B. (Eds.), *U.S.-Indian Strategic Cooperation into the 21st Century* (1<sup>st</sup> ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203946749>. Accessed on July 15, 2022.

<sup>24</sup> U.S. Department of State. (2005, July 18). *Fact Sheet: India and United States Successfully Complete Next Steps in Strategic Partnership*. <https://2001-2009.state.gov/p/sca/rls/fs/2005/49721.htm>. Accessed on July 18, 2022.

according priority to China. Moreover, President Obama's unilateral policy decision to withdraw American troops from Afghanistan did not augur well for the Indian establishment as it was fraught with the possibility of intensification of terrorism in India. However, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's initiative to salvage the mutual strategic relationship stemmed its apparent downward trend. As the first State Guest of President Obama's administration, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh declared,

“We seek to broaden and deepen our Indo-U.S. Counterterrorism cooperation strategic partnership, and to work with the United States to meet these challenges of a fast-changing world in this 21<sup>st</sup> century.”<sup>25</sup>

As a reciprocal gesture, President Obama hailed India as a rising and responsible global power. He even exhorted Pakistan to be wary and prevent breeding of terrorism in the soil of Pakistan.

The United States adopted White House National Security Strategy in 2010 with the objective to curb terrorist activities perpetrated by Al-Qaida and its terrorist affiliates. A global campaign against Al-Qaida and its terrorist affiliates was initiated by the United States. Strategy was adopted by the United States to thwart the subversive activities of Al-Qaida and its affiliates and to protect the United States homeland, to secure the world's most dangerous weapons and material, to destroy Al-Qaida safe havens and to develop a cooperative partnerships with the Muslim communities around the world. Efforts were also made to drive home the point that the strategies adopted by the United States were not against the Islam religion . But it

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<sup>25</sup> Kumar, S. (n.d.). Indo-U.S. Counterterrorism Cooperation Foundations, Dimensions & Limitations. *South Asia Intelligence Review*, 63-91. [https://satp.org/Docs/Faultline/24\\_Indo-US%20Counterterrorism%20Cooperation%20Foundations,%20Dimensions%20and%20Limitations.pdf](https://satp.org/Docs/Faultline/24_Indo-US%20Counterterrorism%20Cooperation%20Foundations,%20Dimensions%20and%20Limitations.pdf). Accessed on July 20, 2022.

was a concerted war against a terrorist network run by the Al-Qaida and its affiliates.<sup>26</sup>

The complicity of Pakistan in fanning terrorism was further exposed with the killing of Osama bin Laden by the U.S. Navy SEALs on 2<sup>nd</sup> May, 2011 in Abbottabad in Pakistan. The duplicity being played by Pakistani Government with the U.S. in curbing terrorism incurred the ire of the Obama Administration. The committed ‘transfer of military arsenals and equipment worth 800 million USD to Pakistan and reimbursement of 300 million USD towards expenditure incurred by Pakistan to combat terrorism were suspended by the U.S. Government’<sup>27</sup> as a sequel to Pakistan’s secret harboring of Osama bin Laden, the founder and leader of Al-Qaida. India’s repeated assertion as to the role of Pakistan in abetting terrorism was vindicated by the Laden incident. The necessity of invigorating Indo-U.S. ties in containing spread of terrorism was all the more realized by the U.S. Government.

The Homeland Security Dialogue of 2011 between India and the U.S. was another step forward on the counter- terrorism issue. Indian Ambassador Mr. Sandhu and the U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security Mr. Mayorkas took the initiative for holding the dialogue to discuss important issues such as cyber security, emerging technology and addressing violent extremism. The first Homeland Security Dialogue was held in New Delhi in 2011 with the participation of Janet Napolitano of Department of

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<sup>26</sup> Obama, B. (2010). *National Security Strategy*. Obama White House Archives. [https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/sites/default/files/rss\\_viewer/national\\_security\\_strategy.pdf](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/national_security_strategy.pdf). Accessed on July 16, 2022.

<sup>27</sup> Kumar, S. (n.d.). Indo-U.S. Counterterrorism Cooperation Foundations , Dimensions & Limitations. *South Asia Intelligence Review*, 63-91. [https://satp.org/Docs/Faultline/24\\_Indo-US%20Counter-terrorism%20Cooperation%20Foundations,%20Dimensions%20and%20Limitations.pdf](https://satp.org/Docs/Faultline/24_Indo-US%20Counter-terrorism%20Cooperation%20Foundations,%20Dimensions%20and%20Limitations.pdf). Accessed on July 15, 2022.

Homeland Security of the United States and Indian Home Minister P. Chidambaram. Ms Napolitano and another Indian Home Minister Sushil Kumar Shinde conducted the second dialogue.<sup>28</sup>

The Vision Statement for the U.S. – India Strategic Partnership- ‘ Chalein Saath Saath : Forward Together We Go’ issued during the visit of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi contained a candid affirmation on concerted effort for the elimination of the terrorism taking recourse to all possible measures in the interest of regional and global peace, safety and security . It was declared that the strategic partnership was a joint endeavor for prosperity and peace. Through intense consultations, joint exercises, and shared technology, the joint security cooperation would make the region and the world safe and secure. It was resolved that the terrorist threat would be combated jointly and humanitarian disasters and crises would be responded expeditiously. . The statement also bore the promise that the spread of weapons of mass destruction would be prevented, the salience of nuclear weapons would be reduced and universal, verifiable and non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament would be promoted.<sup>29</sup>

A Joint Statement was also issued during the visit of the U.S. President Barack Obama to India from 25-27 January, 2015 as the Chief Guest at India’s 66<sup>th</sup> Republic Day celebrations, the first U.S. President to attend the momentous day of India. The

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<sup>28</sup> Lakshman, S. (2021, March 24). India, U.S. agree to re-establish Homeland Security Dialogue. *The Hindu*. <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/india-us-agree-to-re-establish-homeland-security-dialogue/article34150411.ece>. Accessed on July 15, 2022.

<sup>29</sup> The White House. (2014, September 24). *Vision Statement for the U.S.-India Strategic Partnership - “Chalein Saath Saath: Forward Together We Go”*. <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2014/09/29/vision-statement-us-india-strategic-partnership-chalein-saath-saath-forw>. Accessed on July 15, 2022.

mutual pledge of strengthening measures was writ large in the published joint statement.

Terrorism in all its forms and manifestations were condemned by the leaders. Elimination of terrorist safe havens and infrastructure, disruption of terrorist networks and their financing and stopping of cross-border movement of terrorists were declared as the core issues of counter-terrorism strategy of the two countries. It was agreed by the U.S. President and the Indian Prime Minister to share information on known and suspected terrorists. Agreement was also reached to discuss and deepen collaboration on UN terrorist designations. Pakistan was urged to bring the perpetrators of the November 2008 terrorist attack in Mumbai to justice. It was also decided by the President and the Prime Minister to work together to counter the threat of IEDs and to develop best practices in counter-terrorism.<sup>30</sup>

As another component of the Indo-U.S. joint strategic venture, a two – weeks - long joint military training exercise of Indian and the U.S. armies with the moniker ‘Exercise YUDH ABHYAS 2016’ was launched on 15<sup>th</sup> September, 2016 at Chaubattia, Uttarakhand. The purpose was to enhance the tactical and technical skills to enable the armies to counter insurgency and terrorism in a UN Peace Keeping brigade. It was also decided that both sides would field state- of- the- art equipment for surveillance and tracking , specialist weapons for close quarter battle with terrorists etc. Joint Training Programme on improvement of tactical skills of the UN peace keeping brigade were also decided to be arranged by both sides to equip

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<sup>30</sup> Ministry of External affairs, Govt. Of India (2000, March 22). *Joint Statement during the visit of President of USA to India*. <https://www.mea.gov.in/Portal/LegalTreatiesDoc/US00B0972.pdf>. Accessed on July 23, 2022.



the brigade members to combat the challenges likely to be faced by them during peace keeping operations.<sup>31</sup>

The gradual ascendance of the Indo-U.S. cooperation in the arena of counter-terrorism and realization of the U.S. Government about India's pivotal role in contribution to the global peace and security at large, encouraged the U.S. Government to confer on India the epithet 'Major Defence Partner' in 2016 and augment military assistance to India. India was conferred Strategic Trade Authorization tier-1 status in 2018. This status paved the way for India license-free access to a wide range of military and dual – use technologies regulated by the U.S. Department of Commerce.<sup>32</sup>

India was again inflicted with two Pakistan- based terrorist attacks at Pathankot and Uri. The Pakistan – sponsored cross-border terrorism took a toll of lives of twenty Indian Soldiers on the 18<sup>th</sup> September, 2016 in the Uri terrorist attack on the Indian army base. This heinous act of the Pakistan- abetted terrorists drew condemnation from all the big powers. The Uri terrorist attack was strongly condemned by all the big powers. The H.R 6069, the Pakistan State Sponsor of Terrorism Designation Act, was introduced in the House of Representatives by Congressman Ted Poe , Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Terrorism, and Congressman Dana Rohrabacher. Simultaneously, a White House petition was launched by the Indian-

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<sup>31</sup> Ministry of Defence, Government of India. (2016, September 27). *Termination of the Exercise Yudh Abhyas 2016*. Press Information Bureau. <https://pib.gov.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=151156>. Accessed on July 121, 2022.

<sup>32</sup> Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, U.S. Department of State. (2021, January 20). *Fact sheet: U.S. Security Cooperation with India*. <https://www.state.gov/u-s-security-cooperation-with-india/>. Accessed on July 15, 2022.

American community in the United States to designate Pakistan a state sponsor of terrorism.<sup>33</sup>

The response of President Obama to India's frantic call for declaring Pakistan, a terrorist state, was lukewarm. No strong statements on the terrorist attacks in India was issued by the Obama administration not to speak of supporting the initiative to declare Pakistan a terrorist state.<sup>34</sup>

The Indo-U.S. joint endeavor to exterminate terrorism continued with renewed vigor during the Presidentship of Donald J Trump too. In the Joint statement on 'Prosperity through Partnership' on 26<sup>th</sup> June, 2017, during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's official visit to Washington, D.C, the counter-terrorism strategies were very specifically delineated, with the affirmation of implementation of the same seeking cooperation from other countries also. It was resolved by the leaders that terrorism would have to be eliminated from the world. Commitment of both the United States and India to fight together against the terrorism was spontaneous. The new consultation mechanism on terrorist designations listing proposals was welcomed.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Kumar, S. (2016, October 6). Why India Finally Attacked Pakistan. *The National Interest*. <https://nationalinterest.org/feature/why-india-finally-attacked-pakistan-17958>. Accessed on July 15, 2022.

<sup>34</sup> Kumar, S. (n.d.). Indo-U.S. Counterterrorism Cooperation Foundations, Dimensions & Limitations. *South Asia Intelligence Review*, 63-91. [https://satp.org/Docs/Faultline/24\\_Indo-US%20Counter-terrorism%20Cooperation%20Foundations,%20Dimensions%20and%20Limitations.pdf](https://satp.org/Docs/Faultline/24_Indo-US%20Counter-terrorism%20Cooperation%20Foundations,%20Dimensions%20and%20Limitations.pdf). Accessed on July 15, 2022.

<sup>35</sup> U.S. Embassy & Consulates in India (2017, June 26). *Joint statement-United States and India: Prosperity through Partnership*. <https://in.usembassy.gov/united-states-india-prosperity-partnership/>. Accessed on July 16, 2022.

In the said joint statement, Pakistan was called upon to dissuade itself from abetting terrorism and to mete out condign punishment to the concerned terrorist groups . A clear message was given to Pakistan that its territory must not be used to launch attack on other countries and it should bring to justice the perpetrators of the 26/11 Mumbai, Pathankot and other terrorist attacks .<sup>36</sup>

The leaders of two countries laid stress on exchange of information about the terrorists' movement and their fund raising for hindering the networking among the terrorists and jeopardise their sustenance. Prevention of terrorist travel and disruption of global recruitment efforts were sought to be ensured through intelligence sharing and operational- level counter-terrorism cooperation. The exchange of information suspected terrorists was welcomed. It was resolved to intensify information exchange on plans , movements and linkages of terrorist groups, and also on raising and moving of funds by terrorist groups.<sup>37</sup>

The initiatives taken by the United Nations to integrate the counter-terrorism activities among different nations were also warmly appreciated in the joint statement. Support was extended by the leaders for a U.N. Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism to reinforce the view that terrorism can't be justified under any circumstances. They also pledged to work together to ensure prevention of proliferation of weapons of mass destructions and their delivery systems. It was their committed action plan to safeguard such weapons so securely

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<sup>36</sup> U.S. Embassy & Consulates in India (2017, June 26). *Joint statement-United States and India: Prosperity through Partnership*. <https://in.usembassy.gov/united-states-india-prosperity-partnership/>. Accessed on July 16, 2022.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

that the same would be beyond the access of the terrorists and the non-state actors.<sup>38</sup>

## **2+2 Dialogue**

President Trump and Prime Minister Modi took another worth mentioning initiative in conducting the 2+2 dialogue between the External Affairs Minister and Defence Minister of India and their counterparts in the U.S. The first such dialogue was held on the 6<sup>th</sup> September, 2018 attended by the Minister of External Affairs Sushma Swaraj and Minister of Defence Nirmala Sitharaman from India and Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo and Secretary of Defense James N. Mattis from the United States. The discussions covered the issue on bilateral counter-terrorism measures to be adopted. Implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 2396 on returning foreign terrorist fighters was declared by the Ministers. Intensification of the ongoing cooperation in multilateral fora such as the UN and FATF was also committed. Reaffirmation was made of commitment to ongoing and future cooperation to ensure a stable cyberspace environment and to prevent cyber-attack by the two sides.<sup>39</sup>

The 2<sup>nd</sup> 2+2 Dialogue took place on December 09, 2019. The U.S. Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo and Secretary of Defense Mark T. Esper took part on behalf of the U.S. Indian side was represented by Minister of Defence Rajnath Singh and

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<sup>38</sup> U.S. Embassy & Consulates in India (2017, June 26). *Joint statement-United States and India: Prosperity through Partnership*. <https://in.usembassy.gov/united-states-india-prosperity-partnership/>. Accessed on July 16, 2022.

<sup>39</sup> U.S. Embassy & Consulates in India (2018, September 7). *Joint statement on the Inaugural U.S.-India (2+2) Ministerial Dialogue*. <https://in.usembassy.gov/joint-statement-on-the-inaugural-u-s-india-22-ministerial-dialogue/>. Accessed on July 16, 2022.

Minister of External Affairs Dr. S. Jaishankar. Bilateral measures adopted towards counter-terrorism were discussed and the Indian Ministers appreciated the U.S. support at the United Nations for designation of the terrorist organizations based out of Pakistan. The U.S. support at the United Nations for terrorist designations, including of JeM leader Masood Azhar was appreciated by India. The United States welcomed changes in Indian law that would pave the way for further cooperation on terrorism designations. In view of the judicial cooperation on terrorism cases between the National Judicial Academy in Bhopal, India and the U.S. Federal Judicial Center, the Ministers agreed to ensure further cooperation between them in new areas and through joint judicial workshops for third-country partners.<sup>40</sup>

The 3<sup>rd</sup> 2+2 Dialogue took place on October 27, 2020. The U.S. Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo and Secretary of Defense Dr. Mark T. Esper took part on behalf of US along with India's Minister of Defence Rajnath Singh and Minister of External Affairs Dr. S. Jaishankar. The Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership developed between India and the U.S. during the visit of President Donald J. Trump to India in February 2020, was welcomed. While appreciating the actions taken in the previous dialogues, support was reaffirmed for the early adoption of a UN Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT) that would advance and strengthen the framework for global cooperation and reinforce the message that no cause or grievance justified terrorism.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> U.S. Embassy & Consulates in India (2018, September 7). *Joint statement on the Inaugural U.S.-India (2+2) Ministerial Dialogue*. <https://in.usembassy.gov/joint-statement-on-the-inaugural-u-s-india-22-ministerial-dialogue/>. Accessed on July 16, 2022.

<sup>41</sup> U.S. Embassy & Consulates in India (2020, October 27). *Joint Statement on the Third U.S.-India 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue*. <https://in.usembassy.gov/joint-statement-on-the-third-u-s-india-22-ministerial-dialogue/>. Accessed on July 16, 2022.

The 4th 2+2 Dialogue took place on April 11, 2022. The U.S. Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken and Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin took part on behalf of the US along with India's Minister of Defence Rajnath Singh and Minister of External Affairs Dr. S. Jaishankar. While reiterating the commitments and decisions taken in the previous dialogues, stress was laid on the importance of upholding international standards on anti-money laundering and combating the financing of terrorism by all countries, consistent with FATF recommendations. Reaffirmation of their support was made by the Ministers for the early adoption of a UN Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT) that advances and strengthens the framework for global cooperation and reinforces that no cause or grievance justifies terrorism.<sup>42</sup>

### **Expanding the Scope of Counter-terrorism Cooperation:**

Another milestone in the Indo-U.S. counter-terrorism measures was the signing of a bilateral treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters in October, 2001. This treaty aims to facilitate mutual law enforcement assistance, investigation and prosecution of terrorism related offences and other criminal offences like laundering of money, trafficking of drugs etc. Establishment of Maritime Cooperation Framework between India and the U.S. has also been realized to ensure security for the maritime trade. This would also serve as a preventive mechanism against any possible carriage of Weapons of Mass Destruction under the garb of trade along the sea route.

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<sup>42</sup> U.S. Embassy & Consulates in India. (2022, April 11). *Fourth Annual U.S.-India 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue*. <https://www.state.gov/fourth-annual-u-s-india-22-ministerial-dialogue/>. Accessed on July 16, 2022.

In addition, the worth-mentioning counter-terrorism initiative was ‘India-U.S. Counter- Terrorism Designations Dialogue’ inaugurated on December 18, 2017. The objective was to discuss increasing bilateral cooperation on terrorism-related designations. This initiative proved beyond doubt the committed effort of India and the United States to jointly combat terrorism. The Indian and the U.S. delegations shared information on how to pursue designations against terrorist groups and individuals, through domestic and international mechanisms. Best practices for effective implementation of the designations were also discussed.<sup>43</sup>

As a sequel to the India-U.S. Counter- Terrorism Designations Dialogue, the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) was declared as a terrorist organization by the United States in August, 2018. Besides, Abdul Rehman al-Dakhil and two terror financiers, Hameed ul Hassan and Abdu Jabbar, were declared as Specially Designated Global Terrorists (SDGT).<sup>44</sup>

## **Cooperation in Cyber Space**

One of the favourite haunts of the terrorists is the cyber space since hacking the same, they can access the secret data of the nations and thereby jeopardise the security and development of the nations. Besides, reaping the benefit of cyber technology, the terrorists can spread their tentacles of terrorism. Indo-U.S.

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<sup>43</sup> Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. (2017, December 19). *India-U.S. Counter-Terrorism Designations Dialogue*. Press Release, Media Centre. [https://www.mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/29183/IndiaUS\\_CounterTerrorism\\_Designations\\_Dialogue](https://www.mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/29183/IndiaUS_CounterTerrorism_Designations_Dialogue). Accessed on July 24, 2022.

<sup>44</sup> Kumar, S. (n.d.). Indo-U.S. Counterterrorism Cooperation Foundations, Dimensions & Limitations. *South Asia Intelligence Review*, 63-91. [https://satp.org/Docs/Faultline/24\\_Indo-US%20Counter-terrorism%20Cooperation%20Foundations,%20Dimensions%20and%20Limitations.pdf](https://satp.org/Docs/Faultline/24_Indo-US%20Counter-terrorism%20Cooperation%20Foundations,%20Dimensions%20and%20Limitations.pdf). Accessed on July 15, 2022.

cooperation on the cyber issues was thus deemed to be of utmost concern. The two countries have a strategic cyber relationship based on their shared values, common vision, and shared principles for cyberspace. Both sides recognize the value of enhancing and further institutionalizing their broad-based cooperation on cyber issues, and in that respect, intend to complete a framework based on the shared principles and intended forms of cooperation, e.g.

- A commitment to an open, interoperable, secure, and reliable cyberspace environment;
- A commitment to promote cooperation between and among the private sector and Government authorities on cybercrime and cyber security.
- A commitment to promote international security and stability in cyberspace through a framework in consonance with the international law, in particular the UN Charter.
- A leading role for Governments in cyber security matters relating to national security
- Sharing information on a real time or near real time basis.
- Developing joint mechanisms to ensure the security of ICT infrastructure and information contained therein against cyber threats.
- Promotion of cyber security-related research and development through mutual cooperation.
- Developing cooperation between law enforcement agencies to combat cybercrime through training workshops, dialogues consultations etc.;



- Arrangement of inter-state assistance to combat cyber crime through investigation, collection of electronic evidence etc.
- To ensure shared understanding of technology access policy through mechanisms like bilateral High Technology Cooperation Group<sup>45</sup>

As regards main framework and mechanism of cooperation for deriving the optimum outcome from the Cyber Dialogue Mechanism, the decisions adopted were as follows:

1. Periodic meetings between India and the United States under the High Level Cyber Dialogue mechanism led by the Special Assistant to the President and Cyber security Coordinator of the United States and the Deputy National Security Advisor, Government of India, and hosted by the Coordinator for Cyber Issues at the U.S. Department of State and the Joint Secretary for Global Cyber Issues at the Ministry of External Affairs, India. Other mechanisms of cooperation considered were the ICT Working Group, led by the U.S. Department of State and Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, India and Homeland Security Dialogue between the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the Ministry of Home Affairs, India.
2. Promotion of CERT (Computer Emergency Response Team) cooperation.

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<sup>45</sup> Press Information Bureau, Government of India. (2016, June 07). *Fact Sheet on the framework for the U.S.-India Cyber Relationship*. Prime Minister's Office. <https://pib.gov.in/newsite/printrelease.aspx?relid=146043>. Accessed on July 22, 2022.

3. Promotion and improvement of cybercrime cooperation, through the Treaty between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of India on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters.<sup>46</sup>

The duration of the aforesaid frame work of operation and other related issues were also specified:

1. It was decided that this framework would be in operation for a period of five years from the date of its signature.
2. Provision was made for modification of the framework through mutual discussion and understanding.
3. There was provision for discontinuation of the framework by either participant at any time in any manner, but preferably not earlier than 90 days after it came into force.
4. In the event of discontinuation of the framework, provision was made for protection of the information and implementation of the unfinished activities and projects which were earlier decided jointly, but could not be implemented prior to the discontinuation of the

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<sup>46</sup> U.S. Embassy & Consulates in India. (2016, August 30). *Framework for the U.S.-India Cyber Relationship*. <https://in.usembassy.gov/framework-u-s-india-cyber-relationship/>. Accessed on July 16, 2022.

framework under mutual understanding or under decision of a single party.<sup>47</sup>

## **Leveraging Human Resources Against Terrorism**

A Homeland Security working group was constituted under the bilateral High Technology Cooperation Group in 2014, to jointly harness the benefit of advanced technology in combating terrorism. Education and training always enhances the potential of the human being in performing any scheduled task. In consonance with this principle, ‘Combating Terrorism Fellowship Programme’ (CTFP) was initiated in 2002, to impart ‘combating terrorism’ training to mid- to senior-level international military officers, ministry of defense civilians, and security officials. The CTFP thus enables the ‘Department of Defence’ to build partnerships through the said training. The officials for the United States as well as those of the partner nations are thus trained to face the challenges of terrorism and curb the same.

The CTFP’s goals are to:

1. Develop and strengthen human and intellectual capital for countering terrorism;
2. Build the ‘Combating Training’ capabilities and capacities of ‘Partner Nations’;

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<sup>47</sup> U.S. Embassy & Consulates in India. (2016, August 30). *Framework for the U.S.-India Cyber Relationship*. <https://in.usembassy.gov/framework-u-s-india-cyber-relationship/>. Accessed on July 16, 2022.

3. Build and strengthen a global network of ‘Combating Training’ experts;
4. Resist ideological support for terrorism and violent extremism;
5. Consensus of views about the threat of terrorism and its evolution; and
6. Develop ‘Combating Training’ and ‘counter insurgency’ mutual understandings. Geographic Combatant Command (GCC) and CTFP worked together to identify candidates for programmes and to develop ‘Combating Training’ programmes to cater to the needs of the partner nations and their regional and global relationships.<sup>48</sup>

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) of the United States had developed a close liaison with the Indian security agencies for containing the activities of the terror outfits. Hon. Edward R Royce, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Terrorism stated,

“The Counter-terrorism Cooperation Initiative, Homeland Security Dialogue and other working groups plug along. This April, the FBI, working with the Indian Home Ministry, hosted 39 senior police executives from across India in Los Angeles, where they participated in an exchange on counterterrorism, crisis response and megacity policing. They visited the FBI's Regional

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<sup>48</sup> Department of Defense, United States Government (2015). *Regional Defence Combating Terrorism Fellowship Programme*. [https://open.defense.gov/portals/23/Documents/foreignasst/FY15\\_Regional\\_Defense\\_Combating\\_Terrorism\\_Fellowship\\_Program\\_Report\\_to\\_Congress.pdf](https://open.defense.gov/portals/23/Documents/foreignasst/FY15_Regional_Defense_Combating_Terrorism_Fellowship_Program_Report_to_Congress.pdf). Accessed on July 25, 2022.

Computer Forensics Laboratory in Orange, California, to be trained in all aspects of digital evidence recovery.”<sup>49</sup>

Hon. Royce also pointed out that both the U.S. and India were equally affected by the Pakistan abetted terrorists Al Qaeda and LeT and its affiliates. He urged the United States Government to dissuade Pakistan from spreading terrorism through these terrorists groups. He also drove home the point that protection of the United States would be better secured through adoption of joint measures with India. According to him, Indo-U.S. cooperation against terrorism and terrorist organizations got more intensified after the 2008 Mumbai attacks. He emphasized that the cooperation was more than just helping a democratic ally. Rather, the security and interest of the United States were equally involved, as the terrorists of the same group targeted both India and the United States. What was most worrying is that the United States was earlier blind to the Pakistan’s connivance with the terrorists. However, the counter-terrorism cooperation bore the requisite potential to bolster up the relationship between India and the United States, as it acted as a bridge to unite those two countries against the backdrop of common danger against common enemies.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Royce, E.R. (2011, September 14). Congressional Record, United States of America. *Proceedings and Debates of The 112th Congress, First Session*. 157 (136). <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CREC-2011-09-14/pdf/CREC-2011-09-14.pdf>. Accessed on July 22, 2022.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

## **Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) Programme**

Another apt measure taken towards combating the terrorism was the U.S. Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) programme. This programme was a strategic partnership between the Bureau of Counter-Terrorism (CT) and the Bureau of Diplomatic Security (DS). The core purpose of this programme was to facilitate the impartment of antiterrorism training and equipment by the United States to 53 active partner nations for building their capacity to investigate, detect, deter, and disrupt terrorist activities. Through this programme, services were delivered to 100,000+ law enforcement personnel from 154 countries.<sup>51</sup>

The imperative need of proper collection of data and information relating to the terrorists, their contacts and abettors, their financial resources etc in containing the uprising of terrorism, was deeply felt during President George W. Bush's regime. This led to the issuance of Homeland Security Presidential Directive/ HSPD-6— Directive on Integration and Use of Screening Information to Protect Against Terrorism September 16, 2003. It was the policy of the United States to (1) develop, integrate, and maintain thorough, accurate data base and current information about individuals known or appropriately suspected to be involved in terrorism. (2) use that information to support (a) Federal, State, local, territorial, tribal, foreign-Government, and private-sector screening processes, and (b) diplomatic, military,

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<sup>51</sup> Office of Foreign Assistance, U.S. Department of State. (2016, July 26). *Anti-terrorism Assistance (ATA) Programme (Summary)*. <https://www.state.gov/anti-terrorism-assistance-ata-program-summary/>. Accessed on July 25, 2022.

intelligence, law enforcement, immigration, visa, and protective processes.<sup>52</sup> India entered into an agreement with United States in July, 2018 for reciprocal exchange of information on terrorism which enabled India to access the benefit of the HSPD-6 . This agreement facilitated exchange of terrorist screening information between Terrorist Screening Centre (TSC) of the U.S. and an Indian agency.

### **Bottlenecks in the Indo-U.S. Counter-Terrorism synergy**

Despite a series of mutually cooperative counter-terrorism measures adopted by India and the USA, the optimum level of synergy in this respect is yet to be achieved. The factors responsible for this under-achievement involve a number of issues relating to both country's implicit endeavor to prioritize their national interest over the common interest revolving around counter-terrorism. Some of such issues are dealt with as follows:

It is an open secret that Pakistan is the breeding ground of terrorism which has now spread far and wide including Asia, America, Europe and Africa. India has spared no pains to drive home the fact that extermination of terrorism in South Asia will never be possible unless Pakistan can be deterred from stealthily contributing to the proliferation of terrorism. That the cross-border terrorism has been abetted by Pakistan since long, has come to light with substantial evidence. Despite India's frantic appeal to the U.S. to take punitive measures against Pakistan for its exposed complicity in harbouring the terrorist outfits like Al Qaeda, Lashkar-e- Taiba, no positive response could be elicited from the United States. The diplomacy resorted to

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<sup>52</sup> Office of the Press Secretary, The White House (2003, September 16). *Homeland Security Presidential Directive / HSPD-6*. <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/09/20030916-5.html> . Accessed on July 20, 2022.

by United States Government was to appease Pakistan to utilize its geo-strategic advantage in containing Taliban activities in Afghanistan and to keep camaraderie with India through agreements to revamp United States' Anti-terrorism mechanism. This diplomatic strategy of the U.S. entailed an Indian trust-deficit as to the real concern of the U.S. Government in mitigating the India's age-old scourge emerging from Pakistan-sponsored terrorism. It is also a reckonable issue that India's reluctance to extend blanket cooperation to the American venture towards toppling the Governments of Iraq, Iran, under the pretext of these countries' abetment to terrorism, incurred the U.S. Governments' ire. The absence of a Central National Level Counter-Terrorism Agency in India hinders effective U.S interaction with India on the counter-terrorism issue as well. Chief structural impediment to future cooperation is the fact that, in India, state Governments are the primary domestic security actors and there is no effective national-level body with which the U.S. Government can engage and coordinate. This authority of individual state Governments in maintaining security within their borders further complicates the central Government's plans for and progress in reforms.<sup>53</sup> Moreover, India's reluctance to share its intelligence structure with foreign countries has acted as a stumbling block in the optimization of Indo-U.S. joint counter-terrorism measures.

India's initiative in establishing a National Center (NCTC) on the lines of the unified Central Agency in the U.S., by merging all counter-terrorism (CT) Agencies, met with the dissensions among the different agencies. The effort of the then Home

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<sup>53</sup> Congressional Research Service. (2013, November 13). *India-U.S. Security Relations: Current Engagement*. R42823. p-15. <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R42823/5>. Accessed on July 28, 2022.



Minister Chidambaram to constitute NCTC was opposed because the agency would be part of India's Intelligence Bureau (and thus not an independent institution). It would also be granted powers of arrest without prior knowledge of state law enforcement agencies (in most democracies, intelligence agencies do not possess such powers).<sup>54</sup>

Some expert commentators have remarked that formation of NCTC in India like that in United States is not possible because of some technical infirmities e.g. non-availability of Indian resources unlike the much greater resources accessible to the U.S. Government and the differing Constitutional context with reference to the Indian and American Constitution, and also the divergent threat perception between these two countries.

The inaction on the part of the U.S. to insist on Pakistan's arresting and convicting the Pakistan-based terrorists involved in the 2008 Mumbai attack, has also been attributed to the tardy progress in the Indo-U.S. counter-terrorism initiatives.

One U.S. expert has identified five key challenges to future U.S.-India CT cooperation:

1. Poor interagency communication and coordination in both countries, and a lack of clarity about issue-area responsibilities;
2. India's limited bureaucratic capacity and its highly centralized decision making processes;

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<sup>54</sup>Congressional Research Service. (2013, November 13). *India-U.S. Security Relations: Current Engagement*. R42823. p-15. <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R42823/5>. Accessed on July 28, 2022.

3. primary law enforcement role of Indian states;
4. divergent views of the terrorist threat itself, related to differing perceptions on the role played by Pakistan; and
5. Indian doubts about the U.S. commitment to counter-terrorism cooperation due to perceptions that Washington's conduct was not always fully transparent.<sup>55</sup>

### **De-radicalization Programme in India**

A supplementary approach adopted by India towards countering terrorism is to focus on 'De-radicalization'. The desperate bid of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) to radicalize the people leveraging the social media platforms came to the notice of the Government of India in 2017, two years after the ISIS' launching of the radicalization programme in around 2015. The rise of the ISIS as a global threat prompted the then Home Minister Rajnath Singh to accord top priorities to the internal security in 2014, and to the setting- up of the new Counter-Terrorism and Counter-Radicalization Division.<sup>56</sup>

In view of the wide diversity in the Indian society, effective implementation of the de-radicalisation programme poses a real challenge. In view of a complex social

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<sup>55</sup> Congressional Research Service. (2013, November 13). *India-U.S. Security Relations: Current Engagement*. R42823. p-15. <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R42823/5>. Accessed on July 28, 2022.

<sup>56</sup> Taneja, K., (2020, August). Deradicalisation as Counterterrorism Strategy: The Experience of Indian States. *Observer Research Foundation*, 262. <https://www.orfonline.org/research/deradicalisation-as-counterterrorism-strategy-the-experience-of-indian-states>. Accessed on July 15, 2022.

ecology in India, it is an inherent problem to entrust the police and anti-terror infrastructure with the responsibility of implementing de-radicalization programmes.<sup>57</sup>

Hence, de-radicalisation process may be segregated into two components- one for the pre-radicalisation phase and the other for the post-radicalisation phase. Involvement of the community is the best option in this phase, as the vulnerable youths can be properly motivated against the propaganda of terrorism under the garb of religion. In the post- radicalisation phase, the police force and other security forces including military serve as the apt authority to contain the radicalised terrorists. Political scientists have suggested incorporation of more parameters in the de-radicalization measures in addition to the enforcement of law and order – e.g. civil audit of the designs and programmes and the outcome ; research on recidivism in the terrorism and sharing of the data among the researchers and policymakers. Above all, in order to make the de-radicalization programme effective, involvement of the law enforcing authority, the cultural and civil society, different research institutions, political parties cutting across all ideological divergences and the other stakeholders is imperative. The best practices of other nations on this issue have to be put into practice.

India and United States have been striving hard to jointly combat the onslaught of terrorism on both the countries. In the United Nations also, this international

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<sup>57</sup> Taneja, K., (2020, August). Deradicalisation as Counterterrorism Strategy: The Experience of Indian States. *Observer Research Foundation*, 262. <https://www.orfonline.org/research/deradicalisation-as-counterterrorism-strategy-the-experience-of-indian-states>. Accessed on July 15, 2022.

problem has been focused. The commitments made in the eighteenth meeting of the U.S.-India Counter-Terrorism Joint Working Group and the fourth session of the U.S.-India Designations Dialogue held in Washington, D.C., on October 26-27, 2021, speak volumes about the Indo-U.S. synergy on the issue of counter-terrorism. Taking into cognisance the great potential of the counter-terrorism operation in elevating the Indo-U.S. relationship, commitment was made by both sides for further expansion of cooperation on law enforcement, information sharing, exchanging best practices, and increasing strategic convergence on counter-terrorism challenges. Any use of terrorist proxies and cross-border terrorism in all its forms was strongly condemned. It was urged that the perpetrators of the 26/11 Mumbai attack must be brought to justice. Concerted action was called for against all terrorist groups, including groups proscribed by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) 1267 Sanctions Committee, such as al-Qaida, ISIS/Daesh, Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (LeT), and Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) in line with UNSC Resolution 2593 (2021).<sup>58</sup>

In conformity with the UNSC Resolution 2396 (2017), discussions were also made regarding imposition of travel restrictions on the international terrorists. The issues of countering terrorism financing, use of internet facilities by the terrorists were also discussed. Possibilities of finding mutual legal and extradition assistance and training programmes was also discussed.

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<sup>58</sup> Office of the Spokesperson, favor. Department of State. (2021, October 28). *Joint Statement on U.S.-India Counterterrorism Joint Working Group & Designations Dialogue*. <https://www.state.gov/joint-statement-on-u-s-india-counter-terrorism-joint-working-group-and-designations-dialogue/>. Accessed on July 26, 2022.

It emerges from the foregoing discussions that the determined approach of India and the U.S. to jointly put in their best effort to wipe out the menace of terrorism is a significant indicator of evolving Indo-U.S. strategic relationship. Against the backdrop of China's predatory and aggressive foreign policy for establishing itself as the Asian hegemon and catapulting itself into the zenith of world power, United States and India think it prudent to enter into a defence partnership agreement to avert and counter such a possibility. The next chapter reveals how a new vista for mutual multilateral defence collaboration grew up.

## CHAPTER – 5

### India –U.S.

## Defense and Strategic Cooperation

### Introduction

The present chapter charts out the trajectory of defence and strategic cooperation between India and the U.S. and seeks to find out evidence for the upgradation in the ties and whether and to what extent these ties can be considered to have constituted a global partnership between the two countries. Even during the Cold war, the U.S. policy toward India has been sympathetic but it never surpassed its support for Pakistan. After all, Pakistan chose to side with the U.S. and join military pacts and alliances with it in contrast to India's preferred nonalignment policy. The U.S. was quite chary of nonalignment in the hey days of the Cold War and as it tried to maintain a political balance between India and Pakistan but on the defence and strategic aspects, the U.S. favoured Pakistan. Though late, but India was given some military support in the aftermath of the 1962 war with China but the U.S. decided against giving any military support to either India or Pakistan. This clearly worked in favour of Pakistan. After all, it already had the U.S. weapons. After the inauguration of the great bonhomie following Richard Nixon's secret visit to China, facilitated by Pakistan, India was obviously concerned that the U.S. was friendly with both the two unfriendly countries to India. This apprehension and more particularly the indirect support to Pakistan by the U.S. in the 1971 India-Pakistan war over east

Pakistan/Bangladesh encouraged India to further boost up its defence and security cooperation with the USSR.

However, both India and the U.S. continued to cooperate, especially in the context of military supplies, a necessity for India and a compulsion too for the U.S. for the sake of its own defence industries. A key issue was the transfer of technology and on this the U.S. was always stingy and this was unpalatable for India. Consequently India-U.S. defence relations could not move forward much in the 1980s. A new complication emerged in the form of the U.S. considering Pakistan as a frontline state and worthy of military aid and huge economic assistance to Pakistan in the wake of the soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the U.S.' resolve to contain the USSR in Afghanistan. Pakistan was a big gainer and the American military and economic aid in regard to Afghanistan was kept in reserve by Pakistan vis a vis India in any future war scenario.

The disintegration of the USSR and the consequent end of the Cold War helped smoothen the U.S.-India relations but even before concrete progresses could be made, India's nuclear weapon programme and the nuclear explosion at Pokhran in 1998 put a hasty brake on the otherwise promising relationship. Attempts were made by both sides to weaken or dilute the sanctions imposed on India by the U.S., but it was the traumatic 9/11 attack on the U.S. by Al Qaida in 2001 that opened up the floodgate of cooperation in several areas and various spheres between India and the U.S. The present chapter has detailed the various phases and turns in the defence and security cooperation between the two countries, the various instrumentalities, dialogue framework and the growing organizational and institutional apparatus to inform the positive turn in the relationship. However, despite the great progresses

made, there are certain bottlenecks and a level of anxiety and suspicion in the defence and strategic cooperation. It is not easy for India not to insist on transfer of technology in the military purchases and it is also not easy for India to not keep its option to purchase advanced military and technology jets and equipment from other countries, particularly Russia. As such the U.S. finds itself on a spot when it comes to taking action against India for its dealings in weapons systems from Russia. The support for extending waiver for India, now a major defence partner and one of the significant friendly countries for the U.S., is getting louder and most of the policymakers in the U.S. cannot accept any dilution in relations with India, particularly in the context of a threat from China for leadership and supremacy in the Indo-Pacific and beyond.

### **Contextualising Defence and Security Cooperation**

India-U.S. defence and strategic cooperation is a remarkable landmark in the growing relationship between India and the United States. The trend of this cooperation had its manifestation through bilateral military exercises, high level military conferences, training facilities, upgradation of defence trades, transfer of defence technology, mutual endeavour for achieving a synergy in the field of defence strategies and continuous exploration of avenues to adapt their mutual defence strategies to the changing international political, economic and security relationship.

### **Pre-Cold War phase**

Indo-U.S. defence ties saw the light of the day with the U.S. approval for the sale of 200 Sherman tanks in favour of India. This was the first military aid received by



India subsequent to its attainment of independence. This was followed by India's receipt of 54 C-119 Fairchild military transport aircraft from U.S. Another tranche of U.S. military weapons like small arms, ammunition and mountain-war compatible communication system were made available from United States after the 1962 India-China war. A pause in the supply of military equipment to India by U.S. prevailed till the termination of Cold War.

### **Post-Cold War phase**

With the cessation of the Cold War, the U.S. felt prompted to forge a cooperative military engagement with friendly countries including India. India too felt the need of an alignment with the U.S. to enhance its military strength in the interest of its national security vis-à-vis the challenges posed by the inimical neighboring countries like China and Pakistan.

### **Joint Collaboration of Indo-U.S. military wings**

The India-U.S. cooperation in the field of defence received the initial momentum with the visit of Lieutenant-General Claude M. Kicklighter, Commander-in-Chief, U.S. army Pacific Command, to India in 1991. In conformity with the Kicklighter proposals, army executive steering groups (ESGs) were established resulting in the formation of navy and air force ESGs in March 1992 and August 1993.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Bishoyi, S. (2011). *Defence diplomacy in U.S.-India strategic relationship*. *Journal of Defence Studies*, 5(1), 65. [https://idsa.in/system/files/jds\\_5\\_1\\_sbishoyi.pdf](https://idsa.in/system/files/jds_5_1_sbishoyi.pdf). Accessed on July 20, 2022.

Indian and the U.S. army and air force paratroopers held for the first time, a joint training exercise named 'Teak Iroquois' in February, 1992 and thereafter again in October 1993. Three joint Naval Exercises were conducted by the Indian and the U.S. Navies as the first initiative, known as Malabar I, II, and III Training Exercises in 1992, 1995 and 1996 respectively.

### **Formation of Inter-Governmental Defence Policy Group**

Another remarkable headway in the joint defence and security strategies was the signing of the 'Agreed Minutes of Defence Relations' between the U.S. Defence Secretary William Perry and Indian Minister for Defence Mallikarjun in 1995. The objective was to initiate a comprehensive interaction in different strata of the Ministerial and Official level of both the countries in the field of defence related Research and Development and also at the implementation stage in the military service level. Subsequently, a decision was taken to constitute the Inter-Governmental Policy Group to deal with a number of issues:

1. Review of post-Cold war security planning and policy perspectives by India and the U.S.
2. Policy advice to the joint Technical Group associated with defence research and production.
3. Resolution of Policy issues raised by the service-to-service steering groups

4. Intensification of senior level civilian exchanges and holding of frequent joint seminars between India and the U.S. on defence and security issues.<sup>2</sup>

It may be mentioned that the said signed Agreed Minutes did not contain any provision for the transfer of technology, joint technology development and sale of arms by the U.S. to India, although those parameters were deemed as sine qua non by India in respect of a military and defence relationship between any two countries.

However, coordination among the Army, Air Force and Navy of India and the U.S. was ensured through exchange of military trainers, doctors, and sale of some Precision Guided Munitions.

### **Temporary setback in the bilateral defence-ties**

India's mission is to carve out an important position in the comity of nations coupled with its imperative need of bolstering up its military strength to safeguard its national security against the aggressive neighboring countries Pakistan and China. These considerations prompted India to go for the Pokhran-II Nuclear explosion in 1998 entailing the U.S.'s economic sanction against India as well as suspension of military assistance to India. However, among waivers of a number of sanctions during 1998-2000, there were waivers of sanctions relating to the sections 101 and 102 of the Arms Export Control Act barring clauses (B), (C) and (G) of section 102 relating to military assistance, arms sales and export of technology.

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<sup>2</sup> Malik, V. P. (2007). Indo-U.S. defense and military relations: From "estrangement" to "strategic partnership". In *U.S.-Indian strategic cooperation into the 21st century*, pp.96-126. New York: Routledge.

## **Resumption of defence-ties**

India's becoming a nuclear power having been a fait accompli, with the Pokhran-II Nuclear explosion in 1998, it dawned upon the United States Government that recognition of the attained nuclear status of India and a strategic engagement with India instead of estrangement will facilitate realization of the U.S. policy towards South Asia i.e. prevention of China's hegemony in South Asia by empowering India and also sustenance of its own status as the world supreme power. This deliberation started taking shape with the beginning of a dialogue in June, 1998 between Jaswant Singh, External Affairs Minister, India and Strobe Talbott, the U.S. Deputy Secretary of State. The visit of the U.S. President Clinton to India on 6<sup>th</sup> March, 2000 was indicative of a positive inclination of the U.S. Government to give a positive momentum to the Indo-U.S. relationship encompassing the common interests in a number of sectors viz defence and security, trade and economy, health, science & technology, education and culture eschewing the divergence in opinion as to the issues like Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), Fissile Material Cut Off Treaty (FMCT) etc. In the Joint Statement issued on the 15<sup>th</sup> September, 2000, the bilateral commitments to forgo nuclear explosive tests were expressed. It was reaffirmed by India that subject to its supreme national interests, its voluntary moratorium would be continued until the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) was enforced. Intention to work for ratification of the Treaty at the earliest possible date was also expressed by the United States.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> The White House. (2000, September 15). *Joint Statement: U.S.-India (9/15/00)*. [https://clintonwhitehouse5.archives.gov/WH/new/html/Wed\\_Oct\\_4\\_105959\\_2000.html](https://clintonwhitehouse5.archives.gov/WH/new/html/Wed_Oct_4_105959_2000.html). Accessed on July 20, 2022.

India gave vent to their sincere and cooperative outlook towards global peace by reconfirming its commitment not to block entry into force of the Treaty. It was India's expectation that all other countries, as included in Article XIV of CTBT, would adhere to the Treaty without reservations. Assurance was given by the United States and India regarding their support for a global treaty to halt the production of fissile material for weapons purposes, and for the earliest possible start of Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty negotiations in Geneva.<sup>4</sup>

Commitment to strengthen the Defence and Security for their respective countries and determination to reinforce the counterterrorism measures to thwart the terrorist's attack found important mention in the Indo-U.S. Joint Statement. It was agreed by both the countries to reduce the divergence in the views on security, non-proliferation and defence posture through continuous bilateral dialogue. A call was given by the two leaders of India and the United States to the international community to bolster up efforts to combat international terrorism.<sup>5</sup>

The striking convergence of the issues leading to the evolution of Indo-U.S. defence and security strategy was amply clarified in the *U.S. National Security Strategy, 2000*. The United States had the conviction that an improved bilateral relationship with India was indispensably required to serve the interest of the United States. The core point of convergence was that India and the United States being largest democracies, both the countries were committed to ensure political freedom

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<sup>4</sup> The White House. (2000, September 15). *Joint Statement: U.S.-India (9/15/00)*. [https://clintonwhitehouse5.archives.gov/WH/new/html/Wed\\_Oct\\_4\\_105959\\_2000.html](https://clintonwhitehouse5.archives.gov/WH/new/html/Wed_Oct_4_105959_2000.html). Accessed on July 20, 2022.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

through a representative Government. Other areas of common interests included free flow of bilateral trades through the Indian Ocean and the collective endeavor to fight terrorism and bring strategic stability in Asia.<sup>6</sup> This favourable trend in the Indo-U.S. strategic relationship was sustained during the Presidency of George W Bush. A meeting of India's Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh with President Bush in presence of Condoleezza Rice, the U.S. National Advisor in Washington, in April, 2001, had a tenor of bonhomie and cooperation in pushing forward the relationship in the mutual interest of India and the U.S..

### **Intensified Symbiotic Relationship after September 11, 2001**

'A friend in need is friend indeed' – this time-tested maxim proved true again in the burgeoning growth in the Indo-U.S. relationship after the terrorist attack on the U.S. World Trade Centre on September 11, 2001. India stood steadfast beside the U.S. and extended all-out cooperation to the U.S. in exterminating the vicious network of the terrorists. Indian Navy escorted the U.S. ships through the straits of Malacca at the time of United States' anti-terrorism initiative 'Operation Enduring Freedom' in Afghanistan. India made its ports available to the U.S. ships for intermediate halt and re-fueling. The U.S. Air-force flights were permitted to fly over India. These transport facilities and logistical supports were of immense help to the U.S. to realize its mission of striking hard at the source of terrorism. India's aforesaid spontaneous support encouraged the United States Government to withdraw the residual post-

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<sup>6</sup> Malik, V. P. (2007). Indo-U.S. defense and military relations: From "estrangement" to "strategic partnership". In *U.S.-Indian strategic cooperation into the 21st century*, pp.96-126. New York: Routledge.

Pokhran sanctions imposed on India to reciprocate India's friendly gestures in the aftermath of September 11, 2001 terrorist onslaught. Relaxations were also made in respect of the Entity Lists. Out of 150 firms which were kept under the Entity List, 134 firms were excluded from the list leaving only the residual 16 firms in the list. Other remarkable developments towards consolidation of the bilateral defence and military relationship may be outlined as follows:

- A military agreement 'General Security of Military Information Agreement' was signed between India and the U.S. in January, 2002 which ensured secrecy in sharing bilateral military information and facilitated the sale of the U.S. weapons to India.
- It was decided by the Naval Executive Steering Groups to ensure the security of sea-lanes, adopt anti-piracy measures and ensure maritime security.
- Decision was taken to revive Malabar series of Joint Naval Exercises by February, 2002.
- 12 Raytheon Systems AN/TPQ-37(V), 3 Fire-finder artillery locating radar systems, GE F404-GE-F2J3 engines were sold to India.
- A 'High Technology Cooperation Group' was set up for promotion of High Technology trade in Information Technology, Bio Technology, Nano Technology, and Defence Technology.

- Confidence building measures were adopted to facilitate an upward rise in the bilateral trade in respect of sophisticated goods and technology.<sup>7</sup>

## **Ascendance in the Strategic Partnership**

### **First phase**

January, 2004 was a landmark in the history of Indo-U.S. Strategic Partnership. Both the countries collectively traversed a notch higher in their strategic partnership ladder by adopting “Next Steps in Strategic Partnership (NSSP)”. Under this initiative, the United States and India expressed their willingness to cooperate in three specific areas: civilian nuclear activities, civilian space programmes, and high-technology trade. Besides, the two countries decided to continue the dialogue on missile defense.<sup>8</sup> The series of reciprocal steps included nuclear regulatory and safety issues, cooperation in missile defense, peaceful uses of space technology, and facilitation of high-technology commerce.<sup>9</sup> In conformity with the respective national laws and international obligations, relevant laws, regulations and export-related procedures were strengthened and measures were taken to increase the

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<sup>7</sup> Malik, V. P. (2007). Indo-U.S. defense and military relations: From “estrangement” to “strategic partnership”. In *U.S.-Indian strategic cooperation into the 21st century*, pp. 96-126. New York: Routledge.

<sup>8</sup> Ereli, A. (2004, September 17). *United States – India Joint Statement on Next Steps in Strategic Partnership*. U.S. Department of State. <https://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2004/36290.htm>. Accessed on July 20, 2022.

<sup>9</sup> U.S. Department of State. (2005, July 18). *Fact Sheet: India and United States Successfully Complete Next Steps in Strategic Partnership*. <https://2001-2009.state.gov/p/sca/rls/fs/2005/49721.htm>. Accessed on July 20, 2022.



bilateral and international cooperation to combat the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Leveraging the NSSP, United States was able to broaden commercial satellite cooperation and the U.S. export license requirements could be removed for most end users. It was also possible to revise export license requirements of items necessary for safeguarding of the civil nuclear power facilities.<sup>10</sup> Under NSSP, India and United States came closer although India was not recognized as a full-fledged nuclear power.

### **Second phase**

In the second phase of NSSP, progress in different areas of operation was reviewed and new areas of cooperation were explored. In a meeting held in India on October 21, 2004 between India and United States attended by Christina Rocca, the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs, tangible progress was made in the spheres of Biotechnology, Nanotechnology, Advanced Information Technology and Defence Technology. During the second bilateral meeting held in Washington in November, 2004, consensus was reached on taking joint initiative in tackling cyber-crime, laying stress on research and development in the field of Cyber Security. Collaboration in the field of defence cooperation and information assurance was also deliberated upon. Issues on augmentation of High-Technology Trades were also discussed by Kenneth Juster, the U.S. Under Secretary of

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<sup>10</sup> U.S. Department of State. (2005, July 18). *Fact Sheet: India and United States Successfully Complete Next Steps in Strategic Partnership*. <https://2001-2009.state.gov/p/sca/rls/fs/2005/49721.htm>. Accessed on July 20, 2022.

Commerce and Shyam Saran, Indian Foreign Secretary in a meeting held in November, 2004.<sup>11</sup>

India negotiated with the U.S. the purchase of a deep sea submergence vessel for rescue of distressed submarines, during the visit of the U.S. the Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld to India in December, 2004. But, despite India's earnest approach for purchasing advanced PAC-3 version of Patriot Missile System from the U.S., the U.S. response was limited to the sale of the older PAC-1 version.<sup>12</sup>

Though the detractors of NSSP hinted at the U.S.'s non-recognition of India as a full-fledged nuclear power and non-acquiescence by the U.S. of India's requirement of appropriate and advanced version of missile and the U.S.'s adherence to sale of F-16 aircraft to Pakistan despite India's persuasion against the sale, NSSP undoubtedly contributed to a perceptible ascendance in the U.S.-India defence and security relationship. The U.S. adopted a focused approach towards extending defence and military supports to India in sequential and gradual relaxation of the inhibiting national rules and regulations and mobilizing international opinions in favour of India citing India's proven track record as a responsible nation committed to the principle of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and an ardent votary of world peace.

The U.S. armed forces and the Indian armed forces collectively launched on the 26<sup>th</sup> December, 2004 the rescue and relief work in the Indian Ocean region for the

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<sup>11</sup> Malik, V. P. (2007). Indo-U.S. defense and military relations: From "estrangement" to "strategic partnership". In *U.S.-Indian strategic cooperation into the 21st century*, pp.96-126. New York: Routledge.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

TSUNAMI victims. This exemplary humanitarian and cooperative approach hinted at an improved defence and strategic relationship between India and the U.S.

### **Hindrances in the path of fruitful relationship**

Although military to military relationship between India and the U.S. has shown a positive upward trend, there still exist a number of hindrances in the path of optimum fruition of this cooperative approach:

- Different perceptions of the world order, determined in part by respective national position in the international system.
- Fears related to continued the U.S. interest toward Pakistan, China and other South Asian countries at ties in disregard of security concerns of India.
- The United States' nuclear nonproliferation objectives, to which it remains extremely sensitive.
- Indian apprehension of the United States' tendency to apply its extensive and complex Congressional laws and international obligations regimes to deny or stop military assistance.
- India's limitations on buying weapons, defence equipment and technology from the United States due to the apprehension of sanctions and the consequent cessation in the supply spare parts and customer support.

- Continuing misperceptions and lack of confidence in the mind of bureaucrats in the United States and political leaders in India.<sup>13</sup>

## **New India-U.S. Defence Framework**

A document with the title, ‘New Framework for the U.S.-India Defence Relationship’ was signed during the visit of Pranab Mukherjee, the Indian Defence Minister to the United States of America on 29<sup>th</sup> June, 2005. The contents of the document contained issues relating to strengthening and modernization of the Indian armed forces and Defence industries in collaboration with the United States. The ‘Framework’ identifies global security threats like terrorism, violent religious extremism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) etc. that have jeopardized the security of India and that of the United States. It also contains provision for cooperation with the U.S. to effectively combat the threats. It reflects joint interest in the security of the sea-lanes and regional and global security and stability. It sets up a new Defence Procurement and Production Group under the existing Defence Policy Group to boost defence trade, production and technology relationship with the U.S.<sup>14</sup>

The signing of the New Defence Framework evoked concerns among the opposition group in the Indian governance. The concerns related to the perceived capitulation of India’s national interest to that of the United States. However, Defence Minister

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<sup>13</sup> Malik, V. P. (2007). Indo-U.S. defense and military relations: From “estrangement” to “strategic partnership”. In *U.S.-Indian strategic cooperation into the 21st century*, pp.96-126. New York: Routledge.

<sup>14</sup> Mukherjee, P. (2005, August 2). *Statement: Regarding New Framework for the U.S. India Defence Relationship*. <https://indiankanoon.org/doc/1439517/>. Accessed on July 20, 2022.

Pranab Mukherjee clarified in his speech in the Parliament that in the said agreement only enabling provisions were laid down instead of any commitments or obligations. It was mentioned by him that the apprehensions expressed in Parliament and in the press that the agreement promoted the U.S. security interests and not India's, and therefore, compromises India's security, was entirely unjustified. He even assured the Parliament of India's adherence to the principle of safeguarding its national interest first and its potential to resist anything prejudicial to its national interest-

“As a trustee of the legacy of independence, secularism, non-alignment and autonomy and independence on our domestic and foreign policies, we have the self-confidence that we will be able to recognize and resist anything that is not in our national interest, not confuse the U.S. interests with ours, or subordinate our interests to the U.S. interests”.<sup>15</sup>

## **First 2 +2 Dialogues between India and the U.S.**

The shared commitment of Prime Minister Modi and President Trump to infuse a synergy in the bilateral diplomatic and security relationship culminated into the first 2+2 Dialogues between India and the U.S. on September 6, 2018. Smt. Sushma Swaraj, Minister of External Affairs and Smt. Nirmla Sitharaman, Defence Minister, discussed the related issues with the Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo and Secretary of Defence James N. Mattis. Both the countries committed to work together to promote global peace, prosperity and security. The two countries looked upon each other as Strategic Partners and expressed their determination to keep in

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<sup>15</sup> Mukherjee, P. (2005, August 2). *Statement: Regarding New Framework for the U.S. India Defence Relationship*. <https://indiankanoon.org/doc/1439517/>. Accessed on July 20, 2022.

touch with each other to materialize their joint vision on global issues. Commitment was given by the Ministers to work together on regional and global issues. It was also decided by both the sides to establish secure communication between the Minister of External Affairs of India and the U.S. Secretary of State, and between the Minister of Defense of India and the U.S. Secretary of Defense, to help maintain regular high-level communication on emerging development<sup>16</sup>.

### **Defence Trade and Technology Initiative (DTTI)**

While exploring the reasons behind stalemate in the sale of the U.S. military equipment to India, the U.S. Government realized that differing bureaucratic processes and legal requirements relating to the sale and purchase methodology were hindering the military trade between these two countries. In order to remove this stumbling block, the then U.S. Secretary of State, Mr. Leon Panetta, issued necessary direction to overcome the bottlenecks. e obstacles. This initiative was referred to as Defence Trade and Technology Initiative (DTTI).<sup>17</sup>

The vision behind DTTI was to facilitate the involvement of the senior leaders of both the countries to contribute to the growth of the bilateral defence relationship. This initiative received all out support from President Barack Obama and Prime Minister Narendra Modi during their meeting in January 2015.

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<sup>16</sup> Press Information Bureau, Government of India (2018, December 31). *Indo-U.S. 2+2 Dialogue*. Ministry of Defence. <https://pib.gov.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1557922>. Accessed on June 18, 2022.

<sup>17</sup> Saxena, V.K. (2018, September 19). *COMCASA-The Bigger Picture*. Vivekananda International Foundation. <https://www.vifindia.org/article/2018/september/19/comcasa-the-biggerpicture>. Accessed on June 18, 2022.

The deal for sale of military weapons and sharing of corresponding technologies between the Governments of India and the U.S. was struck in 2016 . One of the initial A deal for G2G sale of 145 pieces of M 777 155/45 caliber ultra-light howitzers was made Mahindra Defence was selected by the U.S. for Assembly Integration and Testing (AIT) of the weapon system. The U.S. also agreed to Transfer of Capability (TOC, i.e ToT plus) to Mahindra. The deal for Rs, 5000 crores finally got signed in December 2016.<sup>18</sup>

### **Encouraging Outcome of Make in India Initiative**

The concept of Joint ventures, Memorandum of Understanding etc. gained ground in the realm of defence strategy between India and U.S. with Indian Government's adoption of " Make in India" policy in the year 2014 for the foreign defence industries. This led to a surge in the sale of defence materials and clinching of defence agreements between the Governments of these two countries. Defence sales on G2G basis increased. Seven joint working groups (JWG) were constituted to explore collaborative projects and programmes. Two Science and Technology G2G Project agreements were made- next generation protective ensembles and mobile hybrid power sources. The core defence deals rose from \$1 bn to over \$ 15 bn within a few years. 13 Lockheed Martin C 130 Hercules aircrafts, 10 C -17 Globemaster, 12 P-8 Poseidon aircraft from Boeing, 22 AH 64 Apache helicopters, 15 CH 47 Chinook helicopters, 145 M777 Howitzers, all contributed to the rise in the defence

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<sup>18</sup> Saxena, V.K. (2018, September 19). *COMCASA-The Bigger Picture*. Vivekananda International Foundation. <https://www.vifindia.org/article/2018/september/19/comcasa-the-biggerpicture>. Accessed on June 18, 2022.

deals. As to JVs, way back in 2012, Tata Advanced System Ltd (TASL) and Lockheed Martin established a JV to produce C 130 airframes components (50th empennage delivered in 2016). TASL also established a JV with M/s Sikorsky to produce S-92 helicopter cabins.<sup>19</sup>

In addition, a number of bilateral security dialogues, annual military exercises and constitution of joint peacekeeping forces led to an increase in the arms export to India. In such a cooperative ambience, a number of momentous agreements saw the light of the day:

1. Logistic Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA)

The purpose of LEMOA , signed in August, 2016, between U.S. and India was to ensure military related facilities e.g. port calls, joint exercises, training etc. and enhance the capability of the Indian Army to extend facilities like humanitarian assistance and disaster relief etc. in case of any catastrophe. Provisions were also made for accommodation of any future requirement for these two countries, excluding the facilities of using the soil of either country for deployment of troops and stationing of assets.

Indian Navy amply benefitted by being able to use the U.S. bases spread across the globe for getting logistical support for a number of services like food, billeting, water, medical services, transportation, petroleum, oils, lubricants, clothing,

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<sup>19</sup> Saxena, V.K. (2018, September 19). *COMCASA-The Bigger Picture*. Vivekananda International Foundation. <https://www.vifindia.org/article/2018/september/19/comcasa-the-biggerpicture>. Accessed on June 18, 2022.



communication services, storage services, training services, spare parts, component repair and maintenance services, calibration services and port services.<sup>20</sup>

## 2. Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA)

This agreement enabled the U.S. to legally transfer to India the state-of-the-art defence equipment which were fitted with encrypted communication network which enabled optimal use of platforms employing such equipment. For example, the potential of the highly sophisticated instruments devised for military platforms viz. C 130J Super Hercules special mission transport aircraft, P 81 long range maritime reconnaissance and anti submarine jets and C 17 Globe Master III heavy transport aircrafts, purchased by India from America, could not be utilized fully before entering into COMCASA . It is beyond any doubt that the signing of COMCASA paved the way for India's improved sharing of military intelligence with that of U.S. and will continue to ensure the inter-operability between India and U.S. till 6<sup>th</sup> September, 2028 , the date of expiry of the agreement signed on 6<sup>th</sup> September, 2018. With the signing of COMCASA , avenues were opened for India to access U.S. Combined Enterprise Regional Information Exchange System (CENTRIXS) with secure exchange of dialogues between nations in text and web-based formats.<sup>21</sup>

However, the disadvantageous aspect of the agreement cannot be overlooked. The intelligence gathered by India through these advanced platforms will be accessible to

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<sup>20</sup> Saxena, V.K. (2018, September 19). *COMCASA-The Bigger Picture*. Vivekananda International Foundation. <https://www.vifindia.org/article/2018/september/19/comcasa-the-biggerpicture>. Accessed on June 18, 2022.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

the U.S. also, thereby eroding the confidentiality of any information India wants to keep guarded from the reach of other countries. Besides, India being major importer of Russia- made military weapons will find it difficult to make these weapons compatible for use in the advanced-communication based platforms gathered under COMCASA. Moreover, India may also have to accommodate any rider from U.S. regarding periodic inspection of the equipment bought under COMCASA.

### 3. Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA)

This agreement was signed to ensure exchange of geospatial information between India and U.S. for civilian and military strategies.

### 4. Implementation of the Trio- Strategic Agreements

India's apprehension on loss of its military secrecy with the signing of COMCASA was sought to be dispelled by the U.S. Officials. According to the U.S. officials, adequate precautions were taken by the U.S. military in the handling of operational communications so that information was exchanged only on a need to know basis. It was also assured that if New Delhi accepted COMCASA, the U.S. military would maintain information confidentiality and this would be legally ensured.<sup>22</sup> It was also clarified from the end of the U.S. that the goal of the agreement was only to give rise to a common operations picture for shared missions with the thrust on efficient sharing of tactical communications.

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<sup>22</sup> Singh, A. (2018, August 9). The imaginary fears around Comcasa. *Observer Research Foundation*. <https://www.orfonline.org/research/43189-the-imaginary-fears-around-comcasa/>. Accessed on June 8, 2022.

However, India sought to get an assurance from the U.S. that the communication system mentioned in the agreement would not be used by the U.S. military in a manner which may prove prejudicial to the interest of India's defence and security. A certainty in respect of uninterrupted availability of the instruments referred to in the pact from the end of the U.S. was the other area of concern for India. However, it is the opinion of the experts that the India's military and defence related databases will not be accessible to the U.S. through the use of COMCASA agreement related equipment. The utmost importance of this agreement in boosting up and modernize the operational strength of Indian army cannot be overlooked. COMCASA helps Indian armed forces to sustain operations interoperability with the U.S. military. It also enables Indian armed forces to make optimum utilization of high-end communication equipment obtained from the United States.<sup>23</sup>

### **Signing of Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA)**

The inking of COMCASA between India and the U.S. opened a vista for consolidation of military to military ties between these two countries. It was indeed the culmination of a journey of the U.S. to ensure its sale of military equipment to India through incorporation of a few intermediate initiatives on sale methodology. India too gained an opportunity through this agreement to upgrade its military potential with the state-of-the art military equipment and related technologies.

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<sup>23</sup> Singh, A. (2018, August 9). The imaginary fears around Comcasa. *Observer Research Foundation*. <https://www.orfonline.org/research/43189-the-imaginary-fears-around-comcasa/>. Accessed on June 8, 2022.

## **Second 2 +2 Dialogues between India and the U.S.**

The second India-U.S. 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue held on 19<sup>th</sup> December, 2019 at Washington D.C. bore the promise for sustaining the collaborative work between these two countries and realizing the full potential of their strategic global partnership. The participant Defence Minister of India Rajnath Singh , Minister of External Affairs Dr. S. Jaishankar , the U.S. Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo and Secretary of Defense Mark T. Esper together held the opinion that the partnership between India and the U.S. have grown remarkably based on common democratic ideology, mutual trust and dedicated common outlook to ensure welfare of their citizens. It was also iterated that both the countries would spare no pains to implement the shared vision of Prime Minister Modi and President Trump. As regards defence issues, the two nations committed themselves to forge a Major Defence Partnership. The objective was to build a comprehensive , enduring and mutually-beneficial defence partnership encompassing all aspects of bilateral security and defence.<sup>24</sup>

The MDP encompassed the three wings of the Indian armed force- The Army, the Navy and the Air Force. The Malabar Naval exercises were the most remarkable ones. Also worth mentioning was the establishment of the new tri-service, amphibious exercise- TIGER TRIUMPH. Another collective deliberation was on more cooperation between the Indian Navy and the U.S. Navy Fleets under the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, Central Command, and Africa Command. Both India and

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<sup>24</sup> U.S. Embassy & Consulates in India (2019, December 20). *Joint Statement on the Second India-U.S. 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue*. <https://in.usembassy.gov/joint-statement-on-the-second-u-s-india-22-ministerial-dialogue/>. Accessed on June 12, 2022.

The U.S. decided to deploy Liaison Officers to ensure advancement of cooperation in the field of Maritime Security . The success achieved in the fourth India-U.S. Maritime Security Dialogue and the establishment of an Information Fusion Centre for the Indian Ocean region were discussed with due enthusiasm. The feasibility of extending the maritime cooperation with other partner countries in the Indo-Pacific was also discussed. Thrust was also given on the continued implementation of COMCASA and BECA.

Another agreement ‘Industrial Security Annexe’ regarding exchange of classified military information between Indian and the U.S. Defence Industries was also signed. Both the countries affirmed their commitment to launch defence innovation projects. Pakistan, the breeding house of cross-border terrorism, was warned through a joint communiqué not to permit any terrorist organization to use its territory for cross- border terrorism against any country.

Bilateral Judicial Cooperation in dealing with the terrorism cases affecting India and the U.S. was also sought to be implemented. The imperative need for ensuring security for the international supply chain prompted the participating Ministers to finalize a ‘Mutual Recognition Arrangement’ between their ‘Authorized Economic Operator’ programmes. Cyber Security issues were also traversed during the dialogue. It was decided that there would be cyber security cooperation with due safeguard for privacy and sovereignty for the state as per domestic legal framework, particularly in emerging ICT technologies including 5G<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> U.S. Embassy & Consulates in India (2019, December 20). *Joint Statement on the Second India-U.S. 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue*. <https://in.usembassy.gov/joint-statement-on-the-second-u-s-india-22-ministerial-dialogue/>. Accessed on June 12, 2022.

### **Third 2 +2 Dialogues between India and the U.S.**

The third annual 2+2 Dialogue between India and the U.S. held on 28<sup>th</sup> October in India was represented by the U.S. Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo and Secretary of Defense Mark T. Esper and Indian Minister of Defense Rajnath Singh and Minister of External Affairs Dr. S. Jaishankar. The elevation of the U.S.-India Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership was welcomed by both the countries. Thrust was given to increased cooperation in the field of energy, space, sustainable financing for infrastructure development, cyber security, and counterterrorism. As regards defence issues, collaboration between the militaries of both the countries in diverse fields of operation was envisaged. The Secretary and his counterparts also discussed ways to advance the 21st century defense partnership. Increased cooperation between the U.S. and Indian militaries through information-sharing, defense trade, joint service coordination, and interoperability, were welcomed. Increased bilateral and multilateral cooperation was also welcomed. Conclusion of the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement to expand geospatial information sharing between the United States and the Indian armed forces was welcomed and commitment was made for the exchange of additional liaison officers.<sup>26</sup>

### **Fourth 2 +2 Dialogues between India and the U.S.**

This dialogue held in Washington on the 11<sup>th</sup> April, 2022, followed a virtual meeting between Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the U.S. President Joseph Biden

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<sup>26</sup> U.S. Embassy & Consulates in India (2020, October 28). *Highlights of 2020 U.S.-India 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue*. <https://in.usembassy.gov/highlights-of-2020-u-s-india-22-ministerial-dialogue/>. Accessed on June 12, 2022.

. The U.S. Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken and Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III and India's Minister of Defence Rajnath Singh and Minister of External Affairs Dr. S. Jaishankar. The leaders of both the countries deliberated on a number of issues relating to the international peace and security and the importance of the U.S.-India Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership in ensuring the same. The theme of discussion was based on the September 2021 meeting between President Biden and Prime Minister Modi, and their respective participation in Summits related to COVID-19, climate, infrastructure and supply chain resilience.

As regards Defence and Security partnership, it was reaffirmed that an advanced and comprehensive bilateral defence partnership encompassing all military domains would be continued in response to the progress achieved from the U.S.-India Defence Policy Group meeting in October, 2021. The areas of cooperation in new defense domains, including space, artificial intelligence (AI), and cyber were deliberated upon. The Ministers also recommended advanced course of training on the emerging domains for the military personnel of both the countries for their effective skill enhancement. The tangible progress achieved in respect of implementation of the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA) received appreciation of the Ministers. Stress was laid on Maritime cooperation including sub-marine activities as the Indian Navy has been playing an important role in sustaining the shared interests of both the countries in the Indian Ocean Region and the wider Indo-Pacific. India also decided to join the Combined Maritime Forces Task Force as an Associate Partner to expand multilateral cooperation in the Indian Ocean. Indo-Pacific Military Health-Exchange was also launched in 2022 in joint collaboration between India and the U.S. with the participation of experts from 38 countries to deliberate on the military medical

issues. It has also been decided that India will co-host Indo-Pacific Army Chiefs Conference and Indo-Pacific Armies Management Seminar in 2023.

Regular bilateral logistics operations e.g. replenishments at sea, air to air and ground-refueling were put into action. Enhancement of such cooperation were also committed. The importance of continuance of the bilateral and multilateral military exercises was reaffirmed and both sides reaffirmed the importance of regular bilateral and multilateral exercises, including the MALABAR exercise with inclusion of Australia, the tri-service TIGER TRIUMPH exercise, the multilateral MILAN naval exercise, the bilateral YUDH ABHYAS and VAJRA PRAHAR Army exercises, the bilateral COPE India air exercise, and Indian participation in RED FLAG. Deepening of cooperation between the Special Forces of both countries were also sought.<sup>27</sup>

A number of ongoing projects launched under the auspices of the U.S.-India Defence Technology and Trade Initiative ( DTTI) were appreciated by the participant Ministers. They also encouraged innovations in respect of varying military support systems. They persuaded both sides to consider projects, like ‘a counter-unmanned aerial (UAS) system’ and ‘an Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance (ISTAR) platform’.<sup>28</sup> Decisions were also taken to sustain the bilateral defence supply chains. Commitments were also made to work together on co-production, co-development, cooperative testing of advanced

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<sup>27</sup> Office of the Spokesperson, U.S. Department of State. (2022, April 11). *Fourth Annual U.S.-India (2+2) Ministerial Dialogue*. <https://www.state.gov/fourth-annual-u-s-india-22-ministerial-dialogue/>. Accessed on June 12, 2022.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.



systems, investment promotion, and the development of Maintenance Repair and Overhaul (MRO) facilities in India.<sup>29</sup> It was also decided to explore the possibilities of repair and maintenance of ships of the U.S. Maritime Sealift Command (MSC) in the Indian shipyards to support mid-voyage repair of the U.S. Naval ships.

The 2+2 dialogue thus has accelerated the pace of Indo-U.S. cooperation in the field of Defence. The post-cold war global scenario awakened the two great democracies, India and the U.S. to the imperative need of a symbiotic relationship between them. Post Pokhran-II stand-off between these two countries notwithstanding, the U.S. did not dither to embrace India as its strategic partner. A boost in the bilateral defence trade became a common concern. Empowerment of India with state-of-the art defence technology was considered by the U.S. as an antidote to the aggressive dissemination of China's clout particularly in Asia and in other countries in general. India was keen to implement its 'Make-in-India' policy to be self-reliant in the interest of its national defence and security. Improvement of communication in the field of defence and security was effected through the agreements like COMCASA. The global menace of terrorism, surfaced more acutely post September 11, 2001 terrorist attack, prompted the U.S. to take India in its stride in combating the same.

The 2+2 dialogue is an attempt to deal squarely with all the bilateral defence and security issues with a pinpointed focus. The issues like cyber securities, judicial cooperation in formulating apt laws to adopt effective penal measures against the

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<sup>29</sup> Office of the Spokesperson, U.S. Department of State. (2022, April 11). *Fourth Annual U.S.-India (2+2) Ministerial Dialogue*. <https://www.state.gov/fourth-annual-u-s-india-22-ministerial-dialogue/>. Accessed on June 12, 2022.

terrorists were also attached due importance in different phases of the dialogue. The joint military exercises have gained a momentous role in giving a fillip to the morale of the armies of both the countries through honing their skills in using latest high-end military technologies and showing to the inimical countries the solidarity between India and the U.S. to deter their adventurism to destabilize the peace and prosperities of these two countries. Innovation in the field of Artificial Intelligence was also attributed weightage to equip the defence technology with an advantageous edge. The major importance of cooperation among the defence industries of India and the U.S. has also been in the center- stage of discussion. Discussion on maritime cooperation between these two countries extended its ambit beyond the Indian Ocean Region to ensure international peace, progress and prosperity. India, the major stakeholder in the Indian Ocean Region, was assured unstinted support from the end of the U.S. along with other stake-holders to ensure utilization of this natural pathway in sustaining the unfettered communication, trade and supply chain in the interest of the world population at large.

Apart from the discussions on the defence related issues in the 2+2 dialogue, the issues like improvement of the health and treatment facilities for general wellbeing of the people also came up for deliberations. The issues on availability of energy in adequate quantum to bolster the progress on developmental works were also addressed to meet the needs of each country. Exchange of expertise in space science and implementation of joint ventures in respect of launching of satellites were also in the realm of bilateral cooperation between India and the U.S.

Thus, the 2+2 dialogues are contributing to a remarkable extent not only in promoting the Indo-U.S. relationship in the defence and security arena, but it has

widened the spheres of interaction and cooperation in almost all the aspects of development of these two countries.

## **India -U.S. Defence Relations & influence of Neighboring Countries**

### **1. Pakistan's Influence**

The commitment of the U.S. regarding a comprehensive military aid to Pakistan dates back to October, 1954 when an 'aide-memoire' was signed. Pakistan was looked upon as a reliable ally by the U.S. in its bid to curb the spread of communism in Asia. Pakistan became a member of the military and security alliances forged by the U.S. in the mid-1950s. In 1959, it was announced that the U.S. had been granted a ten-year lease to set up a 'communications facility' near Peshawar. This was one of the electronic intelligence gathering stations set up by the United States to spy on the Soviet Union. CIA was permitted by Pakistan to use Peshawar airport for flights over the Soviet Union by its U2 spy planes.<sup>30</sup>

United States effort to align India with its policy of curbing the expansion of communism in Asia failed as India was committed to Non-alignment policy. Contrarily, Pakistan was eager to enhance its military prowess through acquisition of military arsenals from the U.S. by acting as an U.S. agent for implementation of the said U.S. Asian policy, with the sole intension of using the weapons to destabilize India's peace and progress. This ulterior motive of Pakistan was brought to the

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<sup>30</sup> Tomar, R. (2002, June 25). *India-U.S. Relations in a Changing Strategic Environment*. Research Paper no. 20, 2001-2002. Parliament of Australia. [https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id:%22library/summary/summary.w3p;query=Source%3A%22RESEARCH%20PAPERS%20\(FOREIGN%20AFFAIRS,%20DEFENCE%20AND%20TRADE%20GROUP\)%22](https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id:%22library/summary/summary.w3p;query=Source%3A%22RESEARCH%20PAPERS%20(FOREIGN%20AFFAIRS,%20DEFENCE%20AND%20TRADE%20GROUP)%22). Accessed on March 12, 2022.

notice of the U.S. by India consequent upon the U.S. supply of military weapons to Pakistan in the 1950s. However, this view of India was not subscribed to by United States.

However, subsequent to the India-China war of 1962, the U.S. promised to supply arms to India at the instance of India, but the supplied arms were only a small fraction of the promised ones. A pro-Pakistani tilt of the U.S. in supplying arms to India and Pakistan was evident in its decision in 1967 to lift the ban on supply of nonlethal spares of military weapons. After all Pakistan had acquired majority of its weapons from the U.S. at that time. In the 1971 Indo- Pak war, the U.S. threw its weight behind Pakistan by sending the U.S. 7<sup>th</sup> fleet, led by the aircraft carrier USS Enterprise in Bay of Bengal , officially to secure American citizens in Bangladesh , unofficially to threaten India to prevent the liberation of Bangladesh from the clutches of Pakistani rulers.

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan led to the resumption of arms supply to Pakistan to the utter apprehension of India regarding future use of those weapons against India. The United States was determined to thwart the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and it was considered a necessity to strengthen Pakistan in every possible way as the “frontline state” to resist the Soviets. Consequently, U.S. empowered Pakistan militarily to thwart Soviet Union’s invasion of Afghanistan and ensured the supply of arms and other aids to the Afghan rebels through Pakistan. Pakistan reciprocated by permitting the U.S. to use its territory to keep a vigil on the activities of Soviet Union. The capability of Pakistan's armed forces was boosted considerably as they received modern artillery, Patton tanks, howitzers, transports and other state-of-the-art equipment. The air force received modern F86 jet fighters

and B57 bombers. Pakistan's military training was improved by the United States' military team. United States President Reagan agreed to provide Pakistan with a U.S.\$3.2 billion multi-year aid package equally divided between military and economic assistance. By 1982, Pakistan was receiving the U.S.\$600 million a year in assistance including 40 advanced F16 aircraft. In return, the U.S. with help from Pakistan and matching funds from Saudi Arabia, was helping fund resistance against the Soviet presence in Afghanistan. The military aid to Pakistan by the United States was highly criticized by India as it was certain that such military weapons received by Pakistan would be used against India.<sup>31</sup>

The U.S. did not dither to waive the Glenn Amendment in 1981 regarding prohibition of giving aid to countries developing nuclear weapons so that offer of aid to Pakistan by the U.S. is not hindered. A telling proof of the U.S.'s bias towards Pakistan in respect of economic assistance and supply of military weapons was its issuance of certificate to the effect that Pakistan was not possessing a nuclear device, as required under Pressler Amendment, although it was well known to the U.S. that Pakistan was very much producing nuclear weapons. Issuance of this undue certificate was continued till 1990. Thereafter, President Bush (Senior) refused to follow this undue practice.

The September, 2001 terrorist attack prompted United States to establish a close link with Pakistan through lifting the imposed sanctions on Pakistan and extending

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<sup>31</sup> Tomar, R. (2002, June 25). *India-U.S. Relations in a Changing Strategic Environment*. Research Paper no. 20, 2001-2002. Parliament of Australia. [https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id:%22library/summary/summary.w3p;query=Source%3A%22RESEARCH%20PAPERS%20\(FOREIGN%20AFFAIRS,%20DEFENCE%20AND%20TRADE%20GROUP\)%22](https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id:%22library/summary/summary.w3p;query=Source%3A%22RESEARCH%20PAPERS%20(FOREIGN%20AFFAIRS,%20DEFENCE%20AND%20TRADE%20GROUP)%22). Accessed on March 12, 2022.

financial assistance to Pakistan for utilizing this country as a conduit for launching attack on the terrorists who had taken shelter in Afghanistan. Unlike in the past, India was reticent in response to this gesture of the U.S. to Pakistan for a number of reasons : the speed, range and depth of strategic convergence with the United States; the type of the U.S. military aid being provided did not threaten India, and the crackdown on terrorists operating out of Afghanistan would have a beneficial impact on the level of terrorist activities in Kashmir.<sup>32</sup>

However, as conveyed by Deputy Secretary of State Armitage in 2002, the U.S. had spoken to Pakistan in no uncertain terms that it should stop cross-border terrorism. The U.S. National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice also stated in an interview that they had very clearly advised Musharraf not to support the extremists. She had also expressed that the United States was inclined to work very closely with India.<sup>33</sup> The unflinching military and financial assistance extended by the U.S. to Pakistan dwindled with the withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan by the Soviet Russia.

The Kashmir-issue has always been tried to be projected by Pakistan in different International fora seeking third-party mediation for solution of the problem. In response, initially, United States offered to extend its assistance if agreed to by both India and Pakistan. However, the firm stand of India for only a bilateral solution of the problem elicited a changed the U.S. response in favour of India's view. Pakistan,

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<sup>32</sup> Tomar, R. (2002, June 25). *India-U.S. Relations in a Changing Strategic Environment*. Research Paper no. 20, 2001-2002. Parliament of Australia. [https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id:%22library/summary/summary.w3p;query=Source%3A%22RESEARCH%20PAPERS%20\(FOREIGN%20AFFAIRS,%20DEFENCE%20AND%20TRADE%20GROUP\)%22](https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id:%22library/summary/summary.w3p;query=Source%3A%22RESEARCH%20PAPERS%20(FOREIGN%20AFFAIRS,%20DEFENCE%20AND%20TRADE%20GROUP)%22). Accessed on March 12, 2022.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

then, took recourse to a proxy-war through cross-border terrorism which escalated into the heinous attack on Indian Parliament, Mumbai Taj Hotel, Pulwama attack, to name a few, taking a toll of many lives from the civil as well as military sectors. But for India's restrained response, those terrorist attacks could have culminated into another full-fledged Indo-Pak war. This approach of India once again established its status as a responsible country committed to a peaceful solution of every problem. Appreciation of the U.S. was also noticed with its spontaneous overtures of forging Indo-U.S. Defence and Strategic relationships de-hyphenating India and Pakistan. India's responsible behavior in the non-proliferation of nuclear technology in sharp contrast with that of Pakistan, accelerated and strengthened the Indo-U.S. bonding in the field of defence and national security. Thus Pakistan has miserably failed to secure an all-out support of the U.S. in tarnishing India's image in the comity of nations raising false issues against India. Pakistan's endeavour to destabilize India's progress through terrorist activities has also drawn flak and warning from the U.S. There is, however, no denying the fact that the Afghanistan issue will keep Pakistan's importance to the U.S. still alive, although, hopefully, not to the absolute detriment of India's interest. The Pakistan – China nexus also contributes to the sustenance of the U.S.-Pakistan relationship in view of the U.S. President Biden's adopted policy of 'Competition with China instead of Conflict'.

## **2. China's Influence**

India and China, the two Asian giants, are in a state of strained relations at present. A study of India-China relationship during the past decades shows a combination of bonhomie and rivalry leading to the signing of 'Panchsheel' in 1954 and the occurrence of 1962 war between these two countries. The relationship between

China and the U.S. has always been associated with a policy antagonism, their basic foundational structure being poles apart- the U.S., a democratic country while China, a communist one. The U.S. has always been keen to put a curb on the ascendance of China as an Asian hegemon as well as its aspiration of attaining a global supreme power status vis-à-vis the United States. However, the U.S. has never been in favour of getting involved in a direct confrontation with China. Rather, a diplomatic approach for maintaining a relationship with China and simultaneous adoption of measures to outgrow China's economic and military strength has been the preferred policy of the U.S. In realizing this objective, United States embraced Pakistan as a mediator for normalization of its relationship with China, in view of amity between Pakistan and China. Pakistan, at the instance of the U.S., negotiated a secret trip to China for Henry Kissinger, the Secretary of States. This secret trip was made public by the U.S. President Nixon on the 15<sup>th</sup> July, 1971 together with his plan for visiting China. India's threat perception at this U.S.-Pakistan-China nexus prompted it to sign the Indo-Soviet Friendship Treaty on 9<sup>th</sup> August, 1971.

A dip in the Indo-U.S. relationship ensued when a task force of eight ships including the aircraft Carrier USS Enterprise was sent to the Bay of Bengal with the declared purpose of evacuating the American citizens from East Pakistan during Indo- Pakistan war of 1971, while the ulterior motive was to threaten India and support Pakistan to defeat India. However, the Pakistani army in East Pakistan had capitulated to the Indian army before the U.S. Task- force arrived. This pro-Pakistan and pro-China but anti-Indian gesture of the U.S. was of grave concern to India. The situation, however, took a different turn after China's atrocious action on the student activists in Tiananmen in June, 1989. The sale of arms to China by U.S. was stopped. The Sino-U.S. relationship got embittered over China's aggressive gestures towards Taiwan and



China's covert export of missiles and related technology to Pakistan, Iran and North Korea, as alleged by the U.S.

The border dispute between India and China created a hiatus in relationship between these two giant Asian neighbors. However, India, beginning from the days of Jawaharlal Nehru strived to sustain its bonhomie with China. It was also declared by the Prime Minister Indira Gandhi that India's doors were open for normal peaceful relations with China. In 1976, ambassadors were re-exchanged after a lapse of fifteen years. Thereafter, the visit of the then Indian Foreign Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee took place in February, 1979 after a span of 17 years since 1962. High level contact continued to be maintained over the years and in 1989 a Joint Working Group (JWG) consisting of diplomatic and military experts was constituted. In the meetings of the JWG two agreements were reached- i) the Agreement on Maintaining Peace and Tranquility in the Border Areas along the Line of Actual Control (1993) and ii) the Agreement on Confidence-Building Measures in the Military Field along the Line of Actual Control in the India-China Border (1996).<sup>34</sup>

Besides, India's matured and restrained response against Pakistan's attack in Kargil sector earned appreciation from both the U.S. and China. President Clinton subscribed to India's views on expansion of security during his visit to India in the month of March 2000. China also responded positively to India's proposal of an expanded UN Security Council when Indian President K R Narayanan visited

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<sup>34</sup> Tomar, R. (2002, June 25). *India-U.S. Relations in a Changing Strategic Environment*. Research Paper no. 20, 2001-2002. Parliament of Australia. [https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id:%22library/summary/summary.w3p;query=Source%3A%22RESEARCH%20PAPERS%20\(FOREIGN%20AFFAIRS,%20DEFENCE%20AND%20TRADE%20GROUP\)%22](https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id:%22library/summary/summary.w3p;query=Source%3A%22RESEARCH%20PAPERS%20(FOREIGN%20AFFAIRS,%20DEFENCE%20AND%20TRADE%20GROUP)%22). Accessed on March 12, 2022.

Beijing two months later. Indian External affairs Minister Jaswant Singh delivered a speech in the Shanghai Institute for International Studies during his visit to China in March - April 2002. In his speech, he highlighted that the relationship of India with the U.S. , China and Russia should not be seen through the refracting vision of any third country.

What was worth noting was that United States was also eager to dispel any misconception of China about India- U.S. cooperation in the field of military cooperation. The U.S. Ambassador Blackwill perhaps had China in mind when, at a speech delivered in Mumbai in September 2001, he said,

“U.S.- India relations will stand on their own during the Bush Administration. They will not be directed against any third party”<sup>35</sup>

## **Indigenization of India’s Defence Industry**

India imports about two-thirds of its defence hardware requirements which makes a heavy dent in the exchequer of India. The imported military weapons are not always of state-of -the art quality, since the exporting countries are chary of arming other nations with their latest variety of the weapons, as they want to sustain their defence supremacy vis-à-vis the importing countries. Besides, the exporting countries does not always adhere to the time schedule in respect of delivery of the military

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<sup>35</sup> Tomar, R. (2002, June 25). *India-U.S. Relations in a Changing Strategic Environment*. Research Paper no. 20, 2001-2002. Parliament of Australia. [https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id:%22library/summary/summary.w3p;query=Source%3A%22RESEARCH%20PAPERS%20\(FOREIGN%20AFFAIRS,%20DEFENCE%20AND%20TRADE%20GROUP\)%22](https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id:%22library/summary/summary.w3p;query=Source%3A%22RESEARCH%20PAPERS%20(FOREIGN%20AFFAIRS,%20DEFENCE%20AND%20TRADE%20GROUP)%22). Accessed on March 12, 2022.

equipment. A way forward to tide over these economic constraints faced by India in procuring military equipment and to minimize its defence equipment procurement expenditure lies in indigenization of its defence industry. The Defence public Sector units (DPSUs) and the Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) failed to perform to the desired level. More than 50 Defence Research and Development Organization facilities, 41 ordnance factories and nine DPSUs have failed to raise production level up to an optimum level to cater to the needs of the Indian defence forces. Their combined production has contributed to only one-third of the required defence hardware in India. Consequently, issue emerges as to whether private sectors of India and foreign countries may be inducted to take part in the production of defence items in India.

Although private sectors were allowed to be stakeholders in the Indian defence industry in 2001, thrust was given for procurement of the defence items from DPSUs. This policy was not conducive to the desired growth of India's defence industries and inclusion of foreign private investors was deemed essential. The provision for mandatory purchases from Indian makers, as laid down in the Defence Procurement Procedure 2013 (DPP), was favourable for the Indian private sector. However, the private sector being not adequately equipped with the operational experience, technology and resources, could not be the sole supply resource. Also, monopoly of the DPSUs in respect of supply was also not desirable. Thus, optimum

utilization of both the DPSUs and the private sector requires a healthy partnership and competition between these two military weapons supply resources.<sup>36</sup>

India should make itself capable of designing and manufacturing defence weaponries through purchasing technologies along with the defence equipment from the exporting countries to make its indigenization efforts viable. So, joint collaboration with the U.S. in this regard is a way forward on this issue. The meeting between Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and the U.S. President Barack Obama in September, 2013 was a remarkable achievement towards greater cooperation in the defence trade and technology relationship. Consensus was reached between the U.S. and India to improve defence technology transfer, trade, research and joint development and joint production, including the most advanced and sophisticated technologies. Agreement was also reached to expedite license approval processes to facilitate co-operation and to protect each other's sensitive technologies and information.<sup>37</sup>

Thus, a symbiotic defence relationship grew between India and the U.S., simultaneously catering to India's imperative requirement of state-of-the-art defence technology and securing profitable trade of defence equipment for the U.S. This agreement on transfer of defence technology contributed to endowment of India with the potential of exporting defence items to other countries in future

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<sup>36</sup> Singh H. K. & Pulipaka, S. (2014). The missing military-industrial complex. *ICRIER, Wadhvani Programmeme of Research Studies on India-U.S. Relations and Policy Issues*. [https://www.delhipolicygroup.org/uploads\\_dpg/pastpub/files/the-missing-military-industrial-complex-1301.pdf](https://www.delhipolicygroup.org/uploads_dpg/pastpub/files/the-missing-military-industrial-complex-1301.pdf). Accessed on March 13, 2022.

<sup>37</sup> Kanwal, G. (2014). India-U.S. defence trade and technology initiative: Moving to a higher trajectory. *ICRIER Wadhvani Programmeme of Research Studies on India-U.S. Relations and Policy Issues*.

thereby opening up the possibility for India's consequent economic growth . A tangible change in the approach of the U.S. towards technology transfer to India was apparent at the offer of ten joint production projects to India by the U.S. Deputy Secretary of States Ashton Carter during his visit to India prior to the Washington Summit in September 2013. This offer included a maritime helo, a naval gun, a surface-to-air missile system, and a scatterable anti-tank system. The United States has been the second largest supplier of defence products to India ( around 6.77% of India's defence import) while Russia is the largest one ( around 75.68%).

The Defence Procurement Procedure (DPP) adopted by India to pave the way for indigenization of defence industry was amended with indigenization –friendly conditions relating to the purchase of defence items. A few of the important amendments related to 'preferred categorization' in the following order - 'Buy (Indian)', 'Buy & Make (Indian)', 'Make (Indian)', 'Buy & Make', 'Buy (Global)'. While seeking the approval for Accord of Necessity (AoN) in a particular category, say, 'Buy (Global)', it would be necessary to provide a justification for not considering the other higher preference categories. Prescribed indigenous content, e.g. 30% in the Buy (Indian) category, was to be achieved on the overall cost basis, as well as in the core components i.e. the basic equipment, manufacturer's recommended spares, special tools and test equipment taken together. In addition, the basic equipment must also have at a minimum 30 per cent indigenous content at all stages, including the one offered at the trial stage.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Pulipaka, S. & Mishra, S. (2014). Building partnerships and strengthening capacities: India's defence industry, *ICRIER Wadhvani Programmeme of Research Studies on India-U.S. Relations and Policy Issues*.

It is worth noting that participation of private companies in the defence production has got a spurt with the Government of India's acquiescence in the policy of roping in the private sector in the defence production domain. There is no denying that the capability of India's private companies in the defence production is not commensurate with the requirement. However, this shortfall has been sought to be tidied over by the India's private companies through forming joint ventures with other global units . Some such Joint –Venture companies are: <sup>39</sup>

- The U.S. Defence Company
- Lockheed Martin
- Boeing
- Lockheed Martin
- Telephonics Corporation
- Raytheon and Lockheed Martin
- Sirkosky
- Thales
- Indian Partner
- Wipro Technologies
- Tata Industries
- Tata Advanced Systems
- Mahindra & Mahindra
- Bharat Dynamics
- Tata Systems
- Centrum Group

A congenial eco-system of expeditious issuance of approvals, licenses and business permits coupled with enhanced Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) limits , improved defence offset policy and larger participation of small and medium enterprises in the

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<sup>39</sup> Pulipaka, S. & Mishra, S. (2014). Building partnerships and strengthening capacities: India's defence industry, *ICRIER Wadhvani Programmeme of Research Studies on India-U.S. Relations and Policy Issues*.

defence industries is a sine qua non for sustenance of such defence joint-venture companies. Synergisation of India's civil needs and defence needs is a must for effective indigenization of defence industries. This is because defence industry involves both civilian and defence components. Besides, in order to make a domestic defence industry a viable one, there should be designated vendors who should be assured of purchase of the produced defence items. However, the Government being the sole buyer of the equipment, there is always an uncertainty regarding placement of orders with the private companies. This uncertainty poses a problem for the private companies working in the defence sector. This issue can however be addressed if some vendors are treated as "designated vendors" to ensure that there is certainty in placement of orders. Arrangement of a multi-tiered vendor structure is indispensable for creating a proper eco-system for the emergence of a domestic defence industry.<sup>40</sup>

As regards enhancement of FDI limit to attract foreign defence industries to make their joint venture in India lucrative, divergent opinions emerged from the Department of Defence and the Commerce Ministry's Department of Industrial Promotion and Policy (DIPP). While the Commerce and Industry Ministry was of the opinion to increase the FDI limit from 26% to 74%, the Defence Ministry held the views that the decisions on the issue of allowing higher FDI beyond 26% could

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<sup>40</sup> Pulipaka, S. & Mishra, S. (2014). Building partnerships and strengthening capacities: India's defence industry, *ICRIER Wadhvani Programmeme of Research Studies on India-U.S. Relations and Policy Issues*.

be taken on a case to case basis by the Cabinet Committee on Security , if it resulted in access to state-of-the-art technology.<sup>41</sup>

However, the Government of India's latest stance on the FDI issue is that the Government has liberalized and allowed FDI under automatic route up to 74% and up to 100% through Government route, wherever access to modern technology is likely. Since the notification of revised FDI policy, the total FDI inflow reported till May, 2022 was approximately RS. 494 Crores.<sup>42</sup>

The Department of Defence Production (DDP) has introduced a number of policy reforms for attracting more investment in the defence sector:

- Higher multipliers assigned in Offset Policy to attract investment and Transfer of Technology for Defence manufacturing.
- Foreign Original Equipment Manufacturers (FOEMS) are regularly consulted.
- Defence Corridors have been established in Tamil Nadu and in Uttar Pradesh for providing Plug and Play support to the industries including FOEMS in the Corridor.

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<sup>41</sup> Pulipaka, S. & Mishra, S. (2014). Building partnerships and strengthening capacities: India's defence industry, *ICRIER Wadhvani Programmeme of Research Studies on India-U.S. Relations and Policy Issues*.

<sup>42</sup> Ministry of Defence, Government of India (2022, July 25). Press Note No.4 (2020 Series) dated 17.09.2020. Press Information Bureau, Delhi. Retrieved from <https://pib.gov.in>. Accessed on March 10, 2023.



- Webinars are conducted with Friendly Foreign Countries (FFCs) under the aegis of DDP, Ministry of Defence, through Indian Missions abroad and Industry Associations with active participation from Indian Defence Industries . Webinars have been conducted with 27 FFCs till July, 2022.
- Defence Investor Cell has been created to provide all necessary information including addressing queries related to investment opportunities, procedures and regulatory requirements for investment in the sector. 1,445 queries have been addressed by the Cell till July, 2022.<sup>43</sup>

India's felt need of being self-reliant in the defence sector was thus sought to be fulfilled through indigenization of the production of defence items with the liberalized policy of allowing participation of not only domestic private companies but also of the Indo-U.S. joint venture companies. The Indo-U.S. convergence on this joint defence collaboration issue has gone a long way in consolidating the bonding between these two countries. The two hostile neighbours of India i.e. China and Pakistan have thus indirectly been made wary of possible consequences of their future aggression against India. China will also feel deterred from taking any overt or covert strategy to intensify its clout over Indo-Pacific region. The imperative need of the hour is to adhere to the time-line of any such collaborative defence-production agreement which in turn demands an unflinching commitment of the Government of India to ensure unhindered availability of the related approvals , funds , expertise and manpower in conformity with the scheduled time- slot.

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<sup>43</sup> Ministry of Defence, Government of India (2022, July 25). Press Note No.4 (2020 Series) dated 17.09.2020. Press Information Bureau, Delhi. Retrieved from <https://pib.gov.in>. Accessed on March 10, 2023.

Otherwise, the delayed defence products will suffer from obsolescence. An underpinning of enhanced defence budget both for production and research and development works relating to defence items is indispensably required. A trilateral synergy among university & technological research institutions, the defence industry and DRDO & DPSUs, backed by the budgetary support, can pave the way for realization of the goal of indigenization of military products.

### **The U.S. warning to India for purchase of S-400 from Russia**

India's national security is under threat in its border areas with China and Pakistan. This has necessitated bolstering up of India's military strength with state-of-the-art weapons to shield itself against any invasion from the said two neighboring inimical countries, Russia being India's largest supplier of military weapons, India entered into an agreement with Russia in October, 2018 for purchase of 5 (five) S-400 Surface-to-Air Missile Defence Systems at U.S. \$ 5 Billion. The 'Triumph' interceptor-based missile system can destroy incoming hostile aircraft, missiles and even drones at ranges of up to 400 km. This deal had to be clinched by India to safeguard its national security by deploying the said defence system in such a way that it could cover parts of the border with China in the northern sector as well as the frontier with Pakistan, braving a warning from the then Trump administration that the said deal might attract the U.S. sanctions under 'Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA)', July, 2017. The purpose of introducing this U.S. Act was to impose sanctions on the countries that buy defence weapons from Russia and thereby to take punitive measures against Russia as a sequel to Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 and its alleged meddling in the 2016 U.S. Presidential elections.

United States already imposed CAATSA on Turkey and China for their purchase of S-400 from Russia. The U.S. removed Turkey, a NATO ally, from the F-35 joint strike fighter (JSF) programme in July 2019, on the ground that Ankara's decision to purchase the S-400s rendered its continued involvement with the JSF untenable. A White House statement declared that the F-35 could not coexist with a Russian intelligence collection platform, as that could be used to learn about its advanced capabilities.<sup>44</sup>

This unprecedented punitive act on the part of the U.S. could not deter India from choosing S-400 'instead of rival systems like Lockheed Martin's Patriot Advanced Capability-3 or PAC-3 or the analogous Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) systems which were already offered for sale to India at least decade back, as purchase of S-400 had an edge over that of the said PAC or THAAD on the grounds of its being cheaper and purchasable without any stringent rider usually applicable in any such purchase from U.S. and also because of its operational and technical superiority.

According to Air Marshal V.K. 'Jimmy' Bhatia (retired), the military analyst, the S-400 system is operationally more versatile, accurate and multi-faceted in all aspects compared to its U.S. rivals.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Bedi, R. (2022). Why Is the U.S. Saying India Could Face Sanctions for Buying Russian S-400 Missile Systems. *Wire*. <https://thewire.in/us-india-sanctions-caatsa-s40-russia>. Accessed on November 15, 2022.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

## **Operational edge of S-400 vis-à-vis PAC and THAAD**

The S-400 has an operational edge over PAC and THAAD as it integrates the 91N6E multi-function panoramic radar with a 600 km range, autonomous detection and targeting systems and launchers. It can fire four missile types with strike ranges of between 400 km and 40 km. to provide multi-layered defence. It can simultaneously locate 72 targets and track another 160 alongside, compared with PAC-3s 36 and 125 respectively. The deployment time for S-400s is five minutes, while that for the PAC-3 is at around 25 minutes. The Russian air defence system can also down targets as low as 10 m and as high as 30 km, while the corresponding ranges for the PAC-3 system are 50 m and 25 km, respectively. The THAAD system can hit targets at altitudes of 45-50 km. But, it is relatively ineffective against incoming aircraft.<sup>46</sup>

However, Unlike the PACs, the operation of S-400 has not been tested. Although it was employed in Syria, it was not used. It is also believed that S-400 is capable of tracking the low radar signature of F-35s and China's J-20 advanced fighters. But, the S-400's overall effectiveness in this regard has also not been proved.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Bedi, R. (2022). Why Is the U.S. Saying India Could Face Sanctions for Buying Russian S-400 Missile Systems. *Wire*. <https://thewire.in/us-india-sanctions-caatsa-s40-russia>. Accessed on November 15, 2022.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

## **CAATSA against S-400 sparing India's other purchases from Russia**

What is worth noting is that the U.S. issued warning against India's purchasing S-400 Missile System from Russia although procurement of a few defence products from Russia by India was in the pipeline. Those defence equipment included 'four Admiral Grigorovich-class stealth frigates and leasing a second Project 971 'Akula'-class nuclear-powered attack submarine (SSN) for the Indian Navy for 10 years. Besides, negotiations were on for the licensed production of 750,000 Kalashnikov AK-203 assault rifles by India's state-owned Ordnance Factory Board and the acquisition of 200 Kamov Ka-226T 'Hoodlum' light multi-role helicopters by a joint venture led by the public sector Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) and acquisition of 21 more MiG-29 fighters and Sukhoi Su-30MKI multi-role combat aircraft.<sup>48</sup>

An answer to this apparent paradox can be traced out from the remarks of the returning the U.S. ambassador to Delhi, Kenneth Juster, in his farewell speech, "the S-400 could gather electronic signatures of the U.S.-origin aircraft which India's military operates. These include C-17 and C-130J-30 transport aircraft and AH-64E Apache attack and CH-47F Chinook heavy-lift helicopters, for now."<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Bedi, R. (2022). Why Is the U.S. Saying India Could Face Sanctions for Buying Russian S-400 Missile Systems. *Wire*. <https://thewire.in/us-india-sanctions-caatsa-s40-russia>. Accessed on November 15, 2022.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

## **India's simultaneous purchase of defence equipment from the U.S.**

In order to assuage the U.S.'s ire incurred by India for the purchase of S-400 from Russia, India placed requisitions with the U.S. in July, 2018 for the purchase of Raytheon's National Advanced Surface to Air Missile System-2 (NASAMS-2) worth \$1 billion. Since 2002 till 2021, India purchased the U.S. military equipment worth around \$20 billion worth and purchase of equipment worth \$5-6 billion was under negotiation. It cannot be ascertained whether this gesture of India had any impact on the U.S. policy towards invoking CAATSA against India.

However, the U.S. was very circumspect in assessing India's stance on purchase of S-400 vis-à-vis its security dilemma with reference to China and Pakistan. This is amply borne out from the farewell address of the U.S. Ambassador Kenneth Juster. While warning India that the U.S. might invoke CAATSA in the event of India's purchasing S-400 from Russia, he iterated in the same vein, "CAATSA sanctions were never designed to harm friends and allies, of which Delhi was undoubtedly one."<sup>50</sup>

The tenor of the above speech was reverberated in the statement of two very influential U.S. Senators- Mark Warner of the Democratic Party and John Cornyn of the Republican Party – who appealed in a letter to President Biden in October, 2021, for waiver of CAATSA provisions in respect of India's purchase of S-400 on the ground of the U.S. national security interest,

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<sup>50</sup> Bedi, R. (2022). Why Is the U.S. Saying India Could Face Sanctions for Buying Russian S-400 Missile Systems. *Wire*. <https://thewire.in/us-india-sanctions-caatsa-s40-russia>. Accessed on November 15, 2022.

“We strongly encourage you to grant a CAATSA waiver to India for its planned purchase of the S-400 Triumpf surface-to-air missile system. In cases where granting a waiver would advance the national security interests of the U.S., this waiver authority, as written into the law by Congress, allows the President additional discretion in applying sanctions.”<sup>51</sup>

India’s imperative need for purchasing S-400 from Russia for safeguarding its national security and the U.S.’s national security interest both had common concern – China. It dawned upon the U.S. administration that the aggressive China, desperate in its bid to expand its influence in Asia and beyond, can be contained by empowering India militarily. This realization prompted the U.S. to exempt India from the ambit of CAATSA sanction, deviating from its earlier stance of imposing provision of sanctions under CAATSA on China and Turkey for their purchase of S-400 from Russia. Through a legislative amendment, passed by the U.S. House of Representatives on July14, 2022, India was exempted from economic sanctions under CAATSA for purchasing the S-400 missile defence system from Russia in 2018. The amendment was introduced by Indian-American Congressman Ro Khanna. He stated,

“The United States must stand with India in the face of escalating aggression from China ...I have been working to strengthen partnership between our countries and ensure that India can defend itself along the Indian-Chinese Border...U.S. should take additional steps to

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<sup>51</sup> PTI (2021, November 16). *U.S. concerned over delivery of Russia's S-400 missile system to India.* <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/us-expresses-concern-over-delivery-of-russias-s-400-missile-system-to-india/articleshow/87736447.cms>. Accessed on March 15, 2022.

encourage India to accelerate India's transition of Russian-built weapons and defence systems while strongly supporting India's immediate defence needs."<sup>52</sup>

In April 2021, Republican Senator Todd Young , a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee , wrote that if the Joe Biden administration imposed sanctions on India , it would undermine the mutual relations and also affect the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD), the strategic security grouping of the U.S., Japan, Australia and India that was billed as a network of democracies in the Indo-Pacific Region.<sup>53</sup>

India's steadfast stance on adhering to its independent foreign policy once again proved that it would never play a second fiddle to any country in safeguarding its national interest. Keeping in mind its national interest, the U.S. was averse to the imposition of sanction on India under CAATSA which was couched in diplomatic statements of the U.S. leaders and diplomats on different forums. The foregoing analysis shows that the pragmatic approaches of India and U.S. on different defence related issues, contributed effectively to the consolidation of Indo-U.S. bilateral defence relationship. However, these two largest democracies will have to bear the brunt of establishing regional and international peace and prosperity by protecting the global commons from the onslaught and depredation of aggressive nations with the active participation and cooperation of stake-holder countries. This regional as well as global approach has been dealt with in the next chapter.

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<sup>52</sup> Singh, R. (2022, July 8). Explained: U.S. exempts India from CAATSA , what is it?'. *The Indian Express*. <https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/us-caatsa-india-russia-s400-missile-weapons-system-8016536/>. Accessed on February 2, 2023.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.



## CHAPTER – 6

# India–U.S. Cooperation in Indo-Pacific

### Backdrop

Since time immemorial the seas have acted as the veritable gateway upon which, in peace and war, huge loads of goods and commodities can travel. This relevance of sea has made it imperative to ensure the unimpeded conduction of commercial pursuits and to prevent their intrusion by ambitious and potentially aggressive powers. While exploring the probable responses of the question, “why do nations seek to acquire sea power?” Mahan conceived of the term ‘sea power’ signifying crucial intersecting facets like commerce, shipping and military strength intact. Primarily sea power and ocean policies delve into the exploitation and optimum utilization of the resources available in the sea suited to serve the interests of the countries. Seas have been vital predominantly for three purposes like transport and communication, projection of military prowess and resources.<sup>1</sup>

The Indo-Pacific region has always been a part of our civilizational consciousness and centuries of economic and political interdependence has largely impacted our strategic concerns. It is argued that the term ‘Indo-Pacific’, which is a recent entrant in the international discourse of geo-strategic dynamics, signifies perhaps the shift of prominence from the West to the East and is primarily associated with the pursuits of

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<sup>1</sup> Mahan, A.T. (2007). *The influence of sea power on history 1660-1783*. (12<sup>th</sup> ed., p.23). Boston: Little Brown and Company.

maritime security and cooperation. Indo-Pacific region geographically entails the stretch from East Africa across the Indian Ocean to the Western Pacific including the countries like Japan and Australia. To reinvigorate the essence of regionalism, the Indo-Pacific strategy emphasizes on the cooperation between the developed Pacific states (primarily the U.S., Japan and Australia) and the emerging Asian economies. The term Indo-Pacific has been found to be used frequently in geopolitical discourses since 2011. The Indian and the Pacific Oceans—represents the new strategic reality of the twenty-first century.

India's engagement with the Indo-Pacific region is predominantly driven by the interplay of the strategies of expanding its outreach, developing extra regional ties with the players like the U.S., Japan, Australia, balancing against China's expansionist moves, promotion of maritime strategic vision and developing a multipolar regional system and a new Asian balance of power. China's ambitious pursuits in the South China Sea, its territorial claims on the Spratly and Paracel Islands (at times flouting the rules of the UNCLOS) and differences with Japan over the Senkaku Island reinforce the imperative of India's balanced approach towards this region.

Geographically, Indo-Pacific region consists of the tropical waters of the Indian Ocean, the western and central Pacific Ocean, and the seas connecting the two in the general area of Indonesia. The region comprises 14 countries: Australia, Bangladesh, Burma, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, and Vietnam. The Indo-Pacific region is one of the greatest current and future engines of the global economy.

India, China, the United States, Australia, Japan, members of ASEAN, and other maritime nations that hold key positions in the Indian and Pacific Oceans, including small island nations, are major players in the Indo-Pacific.

### **Reasons for importance of the region**

The concept of the Indo-Pacific caught the attention of the Indian academicians from the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the first decade of 21<sup>st</sup> century. In January 2007, Captain Gurpreet S. Khurana formally introduced and explained in an academic paper the concept of the Indo-Pacific for the first time.<sup>2</sup> In geopolitical and strategic discourse, the discussion on Indo-Pacific gained ground among Indian policy-makers, analysts and academics since 2011.<sup>3</sup>

In the geo-strategic discussions, Indo-Pacific' is being used as a substitute for the term 'Asia-Pacific'. However, the connotations of two terms 'Indo Pacific' and 'Asia-Pacific' are intrinsically different. The term 'Asia Pacific' refers to the stretch of Asia lying in the Pacific Ocean. It is coined by Asia's Pacific powers to identify their commonalities and shared interest in their common region. The Asia Pacific consists of north-east Asia, south-east Asia and Oceania (South Western Pacific). This region came in the limelight since late eighties because of burgeoning markets

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<sup>2</sup> Khurana, G. S. (2007). Security of sea lines: Prospects for India–Japan cooperation. *Strategic Analysis*, 31(1), 139-153.

<sup>3</sup> Saran, S. (2011, October 29). Mapping the Indo-Pacific. *The Indian Express*. <https://indianexpress.com/article/opinions/columns/mapping-the-indopacific/>. Accessed on August 7, 2022.

and rise in economic growth. India is neither territorially a part of Asia-Pacific nor a member of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum.

The Indo-Pacific region is the stretch integrating the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean and the land area surrounding them. This region has become significant from the strategic and economic point of view as this region serves as the sea-lines of communication linking the littorals of the two oceans. The range of this region is from the coast of East Africa, across the Indian Ocean, to the Western Pacific including countries like Japan and Australia. This region has turned into a hot bed of power politics as it has been a conduit of seaborne trade passing through the Strait of Malacca, the Straits of Singapore and the Gulf of Hormuz. The key stakeholders of this region viz. the United States, Japan, Vietnam, Australia and India have become wary to keep this region free from any blockade to the smooth seaborne trades, sea lane communications, freedom of navigation, deep seabed exploration etc. China's aggressive occupation of the South China Sea has evoked volumes of protest from many countries of the Indo-Pacific region. The key players of Indo-Pacific region are keen to thwart China's ambition of establishing its domination over the Indo-Pacific Region<sup>4</sup>. The peace and stability of the Indo-Pacific Region gets affected because of China's aggressive approach to aggrandize its position in the South China Sea.

The Indo-Pacific region has become very important in respect of political, strategic and economic issues with reference to two very vital developments. The first of such

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<sup>4</sup> Kipgen, N. & Nayar, S. (2018). India needs new strategy in the Indo-Pacific region. Bangkok Post. <https://www.bangkokpost.com/opinion/opinion/1476885/india-needs-new-strategy-in-the-indo-pacific-region>. Accessed on July 6, 2022.

developments relates to China's irredentist claims over the East and the South China regions vis-à-vis that of the claims of the states viz. Japan, Vietnam and the Philippines. The other development is the initiative taken by the states like India, Japan and Australia to ensure political stability and sustain economic growth in the Indo-Pacific region, consequent upon the attenuation of U.S. clout in the Indo-Pacific region.<sup>5</sup>

This region has become cynosure of the countries belonging to this region as well some countries from afar as well. The reason is that the population of this region covers almost 65% of world population. GDP of this region contributes to about 63 % of world's GDP. Moreover, merchandise trade in this region is about 46% of the world's merchandise trade. In addition, 50% of the world's maritime trade takes place through this region.<sup>6</sup>

### **Divergent Interests of the Stakeholder Countries**

The stakeholder countries of the Indo-Pacific region are keen to harness the potential of the region to their strategic, economic and political requirements. Naturally, therefore, the views expressed by such countries as regards their commitment towards forging a stable sustainable and accessible Indo-Pacific region are tinged with their characteristic needs. However, some common need parameters encouraged such countries to work in tandem for the development

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<sup>5</sup> Ghosh, A. K., Sarkar, D., & Chaudhury, A. B. R. (2022). Security, Economy, and Ecology: Setting Priorities for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific. *Special Report no. 184, Observer Research Foundation*. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/358890967\\_Security\\_Economy\\_and\\_Ecology\\_Setting\\_Priorities\\_for\\_Cooperation\\_in\\_the\\_Indo-Pacific](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/358890967_Security_Economy_and_Ecology_Setting_Priorities_for_Cooperation_in_the_Indo-Pacific)

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

progress and accessibility of the region to squarely combat man-made as well as natural calamities. A study of stands taken by the concerned countries in respect of this region reveals the scenario vividly.

## **The United States' Stand**

The United States decided to pursue five objectives in the Indo-Pacific in close collaboration with its allies and partners-

1. To ensure a free and open Indo-Pacific
2. To build connections within and beyond the region.
3. To help in attainment of regional prosperity
4. To beef up Indo-Pacific security
5. To make the Indo-Pacific region resilient to transnational threat<sup>7</sup>

### **1. To ensure a free and open Indo-Pacific**

The prerogative of every Government is to have freedom to constitute its own sovereign policy conforming to the principles enunciated in international law. The natural commons like seas and skies should be accessible to all the states for development and progress of the individual states and the world as a whole. But, the irony is that some nations are bent on grabbing major portion of natural resources to the deprivation of other states, using their military prowess. This parochial and aggressive approach has evoked volumes of protest from the victim nations and

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<sup>7</sup> The White House, Washington (2022, February). *Indo-Pacific Strategy of the United States*. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/U.S.-Indo-Pacific-Strategy.pdf>. Accessed on September 28, 2022.

precipitated cooperation among them to stand united against such onslaught on their sovereignty, economy, trade and overall progress.

The United States, having an edge over all other nations of the world in respect of its economy and military strength, took up the gauntlet to ensure a free and open Indo-Pacific both for itself and its allies and partner nations. The measures taken by the U.S. to realize the goal, encompassed different domains of activities e.g. investments to promote democratic institutions, a free press, a responsive civil society, media literacy, pluralistic and independent media, and collective collaboration to combat threats from information manipulation.<sup>8</sup> Elimination of corruption through fiscal transparency has also been one of the components of U.S. policy towards Indo-Pacific. The U.S. is also committed to ensure advancement of emerging technologies, internet and cyber space among the partner nations and allies.

## **2. To build connections within and beyond the region**

The United States vision of ensuring a free and inclusive Indo-Pacific region necessitated pooling - together of its allies and partner countries leading to consolidation of relationships by U.S. with its five regional treaty alliances—Australia, Japan, the ROK, the Philippines, and Thailand—and strengthening its relationships with leading regional partners, including India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mongolia, New Zealand, Singapore, Taiwan, Vietnam, and the Pacific Islands.

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<sup>8</sup> The White House, Washington (2022, February). *Indo-Pacific Strategy of the United States*. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/U.S.-Indo-Pacific-Strategy.pdf>. Accessed on September 28, 2022.

The ASEAN, endowed with the potential of leading the Southeast Asia and contributing effectively to the growth of the Indo-Pacific region was also given a prominent position by the U.S. in the relationship network of its allies and partner countries. The issues on health, environment, energy, transportation, gender equity and equality were considered to be of immense significance in the cooperative relationship with the ASEAN. Partnership with South Asian countries was also considered by the U.S. to deal with the matters involving disaster-relief, humanitarian-assistance, maritime security, pandemic problems etc.

Another remarkable way forward in the U.S.' Indo-Pacific policy was to rope in the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

### **3. To help in attainment of regional prosperity**

The Indo-Pacific prosperity lies in the economic integration among the partner nations and allies with the United States. Bilateral trades between the U.S. and the Indo-Pacific region was to the tune of 1.75 trillion \$ in 2020. The United States surpasses other members of this region in respect of its investment in monetary terms and in respect of export of services in this region. Post-pandemic economic condition of this region has dwindled so much that an intensive economic investment is required in this region to restore its economic health. Thrust should be given on encouraging innovation. Economic opportunities for middle-class families have to be ensured.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> The White House, Washington (2022, February). *Indo-Pacific Strategy of the United States*. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/U.S.-Indo-Pacific-Strategy.pdf>. Accessed on September 28, 2022.



#### **4. To bolster Indo-Pacific security**

The U.S.'s core policy of sustaining its military supremacy in the global arena has prompted the U.S. Government to make a strong military presence in the Indo-Pacific region. At the same time, through forging military coordination among its allies and partner countries, the U.S. has sought to deter country like China which is bent on preying the natural bounties of Indo-Pacific region and usurping its common maritime transit and trade facilities by entrenching its position around this region. The tactic resorted to by China in achieving this objective has been to exploit the economically backward nations of this region by extending economic assistance to them at an extremely high rate of interest for the development of their projects with the ulterior motive of grabbing the project property at the inevitable failure of loan repayment. However, the declared deterrence objective of the U.S. and the Indo-Pacific Coalition of Nations does not rule out the possibility of launching a concerted military attack against any country which embarks upon destabilizing the stability of this region by altering territorial boundaries or undermining the rights of sovereign nations at sea through coercive measures.

The upgradation of the military strength has been sought to be achieved through related research and consequent innovations in the military technology and warfare to combat the aggression with aplomb. The strategic military exercise and interoperability of the allies and partners with the U.S. has been the bedrock for ensuring security in the region as well as to empower the concerned nations to safeguard their sovereignty against any invasion of the aggressive countries. The United States is committed to steadily advance its major Defence Partnership with India and support its role as a net security provider.

This security-coalition network has also been sought to be extended beyond the Indo-Pacific region to include the European partners of the U.S. by linking the U.S. defence industrial bases and defence supply chains with those of the European partners. Co-production of the defence items with the allies and the partners constitutes another component of the collective Indo-Pacific defence security strategy.

The tenor of the Indo-Pacific security comprises specific plans and activities to take on the civilian security challenges, terrorism, drug trafficking etc. and to cope up with natural disasters too. In order to meet the challenges, training of Coast Guard and extension of their area of operation have been deliberated upon. Decision was taken to keep a vigil on the movement of the foreign fighters in the region. Consensus was reached to adopt measures to curb online radicalization. Collective counterterrorism operations in the Indo-Pacific region was also thought to be one of the most prioritized action points. Other decided collective regional measures were to respond to the natural disasters and to curb trafficking of weapons, drugs and people. Commitment towards ensuring regional cyber security was also made.<sup>10</sup>

## **5. To build regional resilience to transnational threat**

The most intimidating threat of the Indo-Pacific region is the climatic crisis leading to the rise in natural catastrophes in the region. Remedy lies in collective effort of the regional countries to restrict the rise of temperature to 1.5 degree Celsius

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<sup>10</sup> The White House, Washington (2022, February). *Indo-Pacific Strategy of the United States*. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/U.S.-Indo-Pacific-Strategy.pdf>. Accessed on September 28, 2022.

conforming to the Paris Agreement on temperature goal. The cooperation of China in meeting this objective is indispensable. The concerted effort can meet success only if the allies and partners of the developing nations who are in an economic disadvantageous position are provided with required funds by the U.S. and other affluent nations to effect the required transition to environment friendly zero-emission industries, transportation vehicles and clean-energy technologies etc. The United States has a major role to play, it being capable of being a potential donor and thereby to induce other economically affluent nations to follow the suit. The commitment of the U.S. was to enhance investment in the clean-energy technology and also in the climate-friendly infrastructure to enable the countries in the region gradually adopt the green technology and pave the way for a clean environment. The sustainability of the oceans of the region being considered indispensable, a collaborative effort was also promised to protect the oceans from any unhealthy and illegal exploitation.<sup>11</sup>

Implementation of health security in the Indo-Pacific region in collaboration with the World Health Organisation, and the multilateral fora like G7, G20 and advancement of resilience effort in coordination with ASEAN, APEC, the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), and other organizations are other measures to be adopted for enhancing the potential of the Indo-Pacific region in the interest of making this region a free and open, connected, prosperous, secure, and resilient for generations to come.

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<sup>11</sup> The White House, Washington (2022, February). *Indo-Pacific Strategy of the United States*. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/U.S.-Indo-Pacific-Strategy.pdf>. Accessed on September 28, 2022.

## **The European Union's Stand**

The European Union (EU) deemed it imperative to subscribe to the Indo-Pacific strategy to serve its economic interest and also to bolster up its image as a potential entity to act in tandem with its allies and strategic partners in Asia to ensure global security. So far as the economic interests of the European Union countries are concerned, their trade through the sea lanes in the heartland of the Indo-Pacific played a very important role. This consideration prompted the EU to throw its weight behind the proponents of an Indo-Pacific region where free movement of ships or flights are ensured and a rules based international order prevails.

In reality, the concept of empowerment of Indo-Pacific region owes its origin to the aggressive economic and military expansion of China with its ulterior aspiration for establishing its hegemony in Asia surpassing the economic and military rise of India and also threatened the economic and security conditions of other stakeholder countries like Japan, the United States and Australia. The issues of governance of the Indo-Pacific Region are heavily impacted by the power rivalry between the United States and China.<sup>12</sup>

What is alarming about China's aggressive approach is that it is desperate in its bid to grab 90% of the three million square kilometer South China Sea over which it makes sovereignty and maritime claims and also to enhance its influence over Indo-Pacific region.

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<sup>12</sup> Iuppa, G. (2020). An "Indo-Pacific" Outlook for the European Union. *European Institute for Asian Studies, Briefing paper*, 8. <https://www.eias.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/IPO-Briefing-Paper.pdf>. Accessed on February 15, 2022.

The significance of the rise of China and India constituted a very important topic of academic researches at the beginning of the twenty-first century. The simultaneous rise of China and India, metaphorically called as Dragon and Elephant respectively, caused remarkable impact on the world politics. In the discussions of different issues e.g. global warming, world's energy markets regulation, adaptation to the changes in the international economic order, balance of power in Asia, food security etc., the significance of rise of those two countries have acquired center stage.<sup>13</sup>

The South China Sea provides an essential trade route specifically for the European Union countries like Germany, Italy and France. Hence, freedom of navigation and safety of sea lanes are indispensable for the economic growth for both the Asian and the European countries. Strait of Malacca is a very important sea lane through which the trade between Europe and Asia is run. Hence, economic prosperity of both Asia and Europe largely depends on the navigational freedom and security of the Strait of Malacca. Hence, the interest of the European union will be best served if Indo-Pacific region is accorded top strategic importance by the European Union.<sup>14</sup>

### **Lukewarm response of EU to Indo-Pacific Concept**

European Union has attached a marginal importance to the Indo-Pacific concept in its foreign policy. France and Germany have formulated their own strategies to combat the challenges in the Indo-Pacific region. France runs administration of

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<sup>13</sup> Smith, D. (2007). *The Dragon and the Elephant: China, India and the New World Order*. Profile Books, London.

<sup>14</sup> Iuppa, G. (2020). An "Indo-Pacific" Outlook for the European Union. *European Institute for Asian Studies, Briefing paper*, 8. <https://www.eias.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/IPO-Briefing-Paper.pdf>. Accessed on February 15, 2022.

some territories outside Europe as French Colonies. While unveiling France's Indo-Pacific Strategy in October 2019, French President Emmanuel Macron stated that France was a maritime and island Indo-Pacific country anchored to the Indo-Pacific space through La Réunion (an island). France still administers territories outside Europe as French colonies. These are designated as a group as "Overseas France". Five of its domains —New Caledonia, French Polynesia, Wallis and Futuna, Reunion Island and Mayotte— are located in the Indo-Pacific region. Since, these territories represent more than two thirds of the French Exclusive Economic Zone, France is always in favor of a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific Region. In the interest of better coordination among the European Union nations, positive response from France will always be necessary on the issue of European Union's more involvement in the South China sea.<sup>15</sup>

Germany has also declared a slew of measures in support of the Indo-Pacific policy. Some of those are: extending support to a legally binding South China Sea code of conduct between China and ASEAN member states, strengthening human rights, avoidance of unilateral dependency through diversification of economic partnerships etc. However, unlike France, Germany was reluctant to take Indo-Pacific membership. On the lines of the UK and Italy and the EU in general, Germany and France signed the G-7 Foreign Ministers' Declaration on Maritime Security in Lübeck in April 2017.

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<sup>15</sup> Iuppa, G. (2020). An "Indo-Pacific" Outlook for the European Union. *European Institute for Asian Studies, Briefing paper*, 8. <https://www.eias.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/IPO-Briefing-Paper.pdf>. Accessed on February 15, 2022.

However, the EU has no official strategy concerning the Indo-Pacific. EU uses the term “Asia-Pacific” in policy documents, bilateral agreements and official statements. However, as an exception, former Vice President and High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini stated in her keynote address at the second EU-Australia Leadership Forum, in 2018 that “security in the Indo-Pacific region is today also crucial to our own European security”.<sup>16</sup>

Political, geographical and strategic constraints have been attributed to the failure of the European Union to formulate an Indo-Pacific strategy. Consequent upon the assumption of charge of the Indo-Pacific region by the United States of America as the main security provider, after the Second World War, Europe’s clout in the region has dwindled. The tackling of the problems in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, the Levant, and North Africa became the main concern of Europe compared with the issues related to the Indo-Pacific region.<sup>17</sup>

Although the European Union (EU) is not a security provider especially in Asia, it is well poised to contribute its mite to combat traditional and non-traditional security challenges in the Indo-Pacific being well recognized as a “normative power”. Freedom of navigation in the Indo-Pacific region can be defended by the European Union with the help of the naval forces deployed by its member states like the European Union Naval Force Atlanta which was raised to combat piracy in the

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<sup>16</sup> Iuppa, G. (2020). An “Indo-Pacific” Outlook for the European Union. *European Institute for Asian Studies, Briefing paper*, 8. <https://www.eias.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/IPO-Briefing-Paper.pdf>. Accessed on February 15, 2022.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

Horn of Africa and in the Western Indian Ocean. Participation of the EU in the High-Level Dialogues on maritime security with ASEAN, India, and China gives it a platform to help in ensuring the security and development of the region. Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM) platform is also accessible to EU. The other forums where EU is represented are ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF); the East Asia Summit; ASEAN Regional Forum Inter-Sessional Meeting on Maritime Security; South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC); Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) etc. Besides, Japan, South Korea, China and India are strategically related to EU. There is also a cooperative relationship of EU with Australia and Pakistan. Thus, by virtue of its being associated with multiple platforms and forums pertaining to Asia, European Union has a significant stake in the Indo-Pacific region.<sup>18</sup>

### **Japan & the U.S.’ United Stand Vis-à-vis China**

In 2007, the Japanese Prime Minister, Shinzo Abe introduced the concept of ‘the two seas of Indian and Pacific Oceans’ to visualize ‘a new broader Asia’. Subsequently, in November, 2017, at the APEC CEO Summit in Vietnam, the U.S. President, Donald Trump remarked about the USA’s ‘vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific’. India is highly concerned about the maritime security and development of the Indo-Pacific region as it is intimately related with its national interest. Japan, India, the USA and Australia are the key stakeholders of this region. The rise of China and

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<sup>18</sup> Iuppa, G. (2020). An “Indo-Pacific” Outlook for the European Union. *European Institute for Asian Studies, Briefing paper*, 8. <https://www.eias.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/IPO-Briefing-Paper.pdf>. Accessed on February 15, 2022.



India; strengths of Japan and South Korea; the potential of Indonesia and Australia and the involvement of the United States both militarily and politico-economically in the Indo-Pacific region, have added enormous strategic importance to this region. It has been a unanimous decision of India and Japan to jointly defend the navigational freedom and ensure security of both the Indian and the Pacific oceans in view of the aggressive attempt of China to establish its influence in the area. Under Prime Minister Abe, Japan has also highlighted its efforts to realize the idea on a larger scope. In his address at the Opening Session of the Sixth Tokyo International Conference on African development in Kenya in August 2016, Prime Minister Abe stated, “Japan bears the responsibility of fostering the confluence of the Pacific and Indian Oceans and of Asia and Africa into a place that values freedom, the rule of law and the market economy, free from force or coercion and making it prosperous”<sup>19</sup>

The salient features of Japan’s Free and Open Indo-Pacific strategy consists of activities on counterterrorism; humanitarian assistance for refugees, stability of society, peace building measures ; and enforcement of rule of law to ensure maritime security.

In 2008, Japan took the initiative to enter into an agreement with China for joint development in the East China Sea with an eye to the Asian security. However, this cooperative approach of Japan did not mitigate the tension between China and Japan as China unilaterally went on extracting natural gas from the Senkaku/Diaoyu

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<sup>19</sup> Abe, S. (2016, August 27). *International Situation and Japan's Diplomacy in 2016*. Diplomatic Blue Book. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. <https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/other/bluebook/2017/html/chapter1/c0102.html>. Accessed on January 15, 2022.

archipelago of uninhabited islands although the region lay in the overlapping economic zone of both the countries in the East China Sea for more than a century. China took recourse to this unilateral approach to avail itself of not only the natural gas and oil but the fishing areas and the shipping routes. China's other overriding consideration relates to its military operations. In the East China sea, through the Bashi Channel and the Miyako strait, China's navy gets an entry into the Pacific Ocean and a passage to international waters and airspace via Japan's Exclusive Economic Zone.<sup>20</sup>

In its desperate bid to grab exclusive control of the South China Sea, the Chinese Government declared the establishment of the East China Sea Air Defence Identification Zone in 2013. This approach evoked strong international criticism. The South China Sea has become the cynosure of China because of its suitability for the operations of the Chinese submarines.

The Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe could foresee the imperative need of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy in view of China's strategy of usurping the common natural assets through military aggression. So, although initially he introduced the Indo-Pacific concept, later he inducted the strategy of Free and Open Indo-Pacific in 2016 at the sixth Tōkyō International Conference on African Development to ensure stability and prosperity of the world through the union of the

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<sup>20</sup> Iuppa, G. (2020). An "Indo-Pacific" Outlook for the European Union. *European Institute for Asian Studies, Briefing paper*, 8. <https://www.eias.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/IPO-Briefing-Paper.pdf>. Accessed on February 15, 2022.

two free and open oceans and two continents thereby creating a zone that values freedom, the rule of law, and the market economy, free from force or coercion.<sup>21</sup>

The Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe showed his inclination for inducing China to terms of conciliation in tune with the international norms, shunning the path of confrontation, for the peace, stability and progress of the Indo-Pacific region specifically and for the world at large. This would be evident from Prime Minister Abe's speeches, statements, declarations in different bilateral and multinational conferences. At the 2018 joint press conference with Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir bin Mohamad, Prime Minister Abe officially described FOIP as a 'vision' and committed to develop the Indo-Pacific as 'international public goods' to ensure connectivity between Asia and Africa and with ASEAN. In 2019, Taro Kono, the Foreign Minister of Japan laid importance on developing relationships with China and South Korea also. These initiatives taken by Japan amply prove that it is keen to establish an order in the Indo-Pacific region.<sup>22</sup>

Japan has been balancing a delicate relationship with India and China. The economic rise of India coupled with the India-China rivalry prompted Japan to forge a global partnership with India with the shared democratic values and commitment to human rights, pluralism, open society and the rule of law, having the common objective of ensuring global peace, stability and progress.

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<sup>21</sup> Iuppa, G. (2020). An "Indo-Pacific" Outlook for the European Union. *European Institute for Asian Studies, Briefing paper*, 8. <https://www.eias.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/IPO-Briefing-Paper.pdf>. Accessed on February 15, 2022.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

India also reciprocated by launching its “ Act East Policy” under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2014 for developing economic, strategic and diplomatic relations with South and East Asian countries with the common objective of combating China’s growing military and economic influence in the region. In 2018, Prime Minister Modi spoke about this policy in his keynote address at the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore . Modi also emphasized that his mission was to make Indo-Pacific region, a free, open and inclusive region. Hence, India has taken up the task of integration with the countries of Indo-Pacific region in partnership with Japan without antagonizing China.

### **‘QUAD’ & Indo-Pacific**

The ‘QUAD’ (Quadrilateral Security Dialogue between the United States, Australia, India and Japan) was initiated in 2007 by the Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. However, it was discontinued after the withdrawal of Australia under the Premiership of Kevin Rudd. Thereafter, it was revived in November, 2017 in Manilla at a meeting of senior diplomats from the four nations on the sidelines of the ASEAN summit with the commitment to maintain a free and open order in the Indo-Pacific.

The relevance of QUAD in reference to Indo-Pacific construct revolves around the economic rise of India, India- China rivalry and the covert objective of the QUAD members to contain China’s aggressive leap to attain hegemony in Asia. The speech of Japan’s Prime Minister Abe on ‘Confluence of the Two Seas’ before Indian Parliament in 2007, highlighted the ‘dynamic coupling’ of the Indian and Pacific oceans, as well as their identity as ‘seas of freedom and of prosperity’. The concept

of open, inclusive and prosperous Indo-Pacific region found place in the Australia's 2017 foreign-policy White Paper also. U.S. President Donald Trump referred to the coinage 'free and open Indo-Pacific region' a number of times during his five-nation tour of Asia in 2017. In the Press release after November 2017 QUAD meeting, India declared that a free, open, prosperous and inclusive Indo-Pacific region would serve the long-term interests of all countries in the region and of the world at large. All these value-oriented declarations from powerful countries owe their genesis to China's tactic of attaining geo-political gain in the region through infrastructural investment coupled with its lukewarm adherence to the rules-based international order in respect of maritime issues and the consequent collective effort of the stakeholder countries to strongly resist such aggressive approach of China.

Besides, modification of the term 'Asia-Pacific' into 'Indo-Pacific' is indicative of recognition received by India as the reckonable pivotal country for the progress and stability of Asian region. India has carved out for itself an esteemed niche in the 'QUAD' by virtue of its adherence to democracy and international laws .<sup>23</sup>

However, India, Australia and Japan are not confident about steadfastness of U.S. commitment to the security of the Indo-Pacific region and as such they are very wary about not to cause any provocation to China. Besides, India is always chary of aligning itself with any country through alliance in the fear of undermining its independence. India is also keen to maintain a cordial relationship with ASEAN member states through its 'Act East' policy. These inhibitions and predilections

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<sup>23</sup> Roy-Chaudhury, R., & de Estrada, K. S. (2018). India, the Indo-Pacific and the Quad. *Survival*, 60 (3), 181-194. DOI:10.1080/00396338.2018.1470773

have found their reflections in the manifestations of responses of those countries subsequent to the meeting of the QUAD in Manila in November 2017. In the press release, Indian Government remained reticent about 'Quadrilateral'. Moreover, as a stark departure from its usual practice, Indian Government consciously skipped mentioning its support for its cherished principle of freedom of navigation and flight, and respect for international law or maritime security in the said press release. Besides, four separate statements were issued by the four Governments of the QUAD.<sup>24</sup>

### **Varied definition of the Indo-Pacific region**

The four QUAD members define the Indo-Pacific regions differently. According to the U.S. National Security Strategy, released in December 2017, the stretch of Indo-Pacific region is from the west coast of India to the western shores of the United States. In the 2017 Australian foreign-policy White Paper, the region has been shown as an area including the westernmost point in India and arching southwards to excluding much of the western Indian Ocean. The 2017 edition of Japan's Diplomatic Blue Book depicts the region as stretching from Japan to the east coast of the African continent, including both the eastern and the western Indian Ocean.

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<sup>24</sup> Roy-Chaudhury, R., & de Estrada, K. S. (2018). India, the Indo-Pacific and the Quad. *Survival*, 60 (3), 181-194. DOI:10.1080/00396338.2018.1470773

In the May 2017 vision document for an Asia–Africa Growth Corridor, preference for trade and infrastructural connectivity across the region was expressed by both Japan and India.<sup>25</sup>

## **Prime importance of Indian Ocean to India**

The importance of Indian Ocean to India need not be overemphasized. Indian Ocean serves as the resource of natural raw materials like oils and gases, sea foods and also is very important sea route for different trades. However, because of China's expansionist activities over Indian Ocean both from its military point of view and acquisition of resources, India has been more concerned to intensify its grip over Indian Ocean to contain China's calculated move to enhance its influence over Indian Ocean. The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) by China includes two projects affecting security of India:

- Under the 62 billion dollar China– Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project, China has sought to be linked to the Indian Ocean through Pakistan's Gwadar port.
- Under the BRI's Maritime Silk Road Project, key strategic points across the Indian Ocean would be traversed.

India's unique maritime predominance over Indian Ocean because of its geographical position is an undisputed fact. This tactical advantage of India both

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<sup>25</sup> Roy-Chaudhury, R., & de Estrada, K. S. (2018). India, the Indo-Pacific and the Quad. *Survival*, 60 (3), 181-194. DOI:10.1080/00396338.2018.1470773

from military point of view and availability of sea-resources, has been sought to be undermined by China through the implementation of the said two projects.<sup>26</sup>

### **Merits and Demerits of India's initiative beyond Indian Ocean**

India has become a member of the QUAD with the objective of improving the regional security around Indian Ocean and around Pacific Ocean as well. Relationship with the ASEAN member countries have also been forged by the Indian Government. In January, 2018, ASEAN-India summit was held in New Delhi to ensure maritime cooperation. Also, the bi-annual Milan exercise was held off the coast of the Andaman and Nicobar in which Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand participated. This association of India with the ASEAN and the deep involvement of ASEAN in India's 'Act East' policy, poses a problem for India's membership of the QUAD, as India traditionally subscribed to the view that it was ASEAN countries' central responsibility to ensure the regional security.<sup>27</sup>

Besides, another question emerges as to whether India's interest will be best served if it ventures to play its role as a security provider for the Pacific region also in addition to its prime responsibility in the Indian Ocean region. It is the Indian Ocean region where India can build up a resistance network against China's Belt and Road Initiative program. Moreover, India will have to gear up bilateral relationship with the Indian Ocean littoral states to deter China from engaging such littoral states against India through winning over them with bait of financial development loan

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<sup>26</sup> Roy-Chaudhury, R., & de Estrada, K. S. (2018). India, the Indo-Pacific and the Quad. *Survival*, 60 (3), 181-194. DOI:10.1080/00396338.2018.1470773

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.



which will however spell a doom for them by ensnaring them in debt resulting in the attachment of their developments. India may take part in the security related activities as QUAD member if it is treated with at par by the other members and its commitment to the countries of Indian Ocean region is not hampered. The successful performance of the QUAD hinges on proper realisation of the fact that Indian ocean is of prime importance to India and that India faces immense constraints in projecting its sea power. It is the bounden duty of the Indian bureaucratic and security establishments to implement the already committed measures. In order to uphold India's position in the Indian Ocean region, the performances of the already existing platform e.g. Indian Ocean Rim Association have to be geared up although the activities of the other forum i.e. Indian Ocean Naval Symposium are up to the mark.

India must not lose sight of the stark reality that it is only in the Indian Ocean region where its Navy far outweighs that of China. However, shunning any complacency as to this relative advantage over China, India ought to enhance further its capabilities at sea in the Indian Ocean. Besides, the other most important strategy of India lies in its developing and upgrading bilateral relations with the Indian Ocean's island and littoral states. It is desirable that the powerful countries beyond the region fully appreciate India's priorities in the Indian Ocean region and embrace India preferably as an equal partner, if true and effective cooperation is expected from India on maritime issues.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Roy-Chaudhury, R., & de Estrada, K. S. (2018). India, the Indo-Pacific and the Quad. *Survival*, 60 (3), 181-194. DOI:10.1080/00396338.2018.1470773

## **The U.S. - Japan Alliance**

On 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2022, in a meeting, Prime Minister of Japan Kishida Fumio and American President Joseph R. Biden affirmed their partnership and expressed their commitment to ensure a free and open Indo-Pacific region. The committed partnership between Japan and the United States owes its origin to their common adherence to democratic ideals and rule of law. This relationship has been all the more strengthened by the remarkable growth and progress of these two countries in the domain of science and technology and the consequent developed economies. Another contributing factor to the U.S.- Japan mutual partnership is the deep bonhomie between the people of these two nations. The U.S.- Japan alliance plays a pivotal role in ensuring a free and open Indo-Pacific region.

Prime Minister Mr. Kishida and President Biden highlighted the immense importance of the Indo-Pacific region towards global peace, security, and prosperity. President Biden also assured that there would be no resource crunch for implementation of the Indo-Pacific strategy. Both the leaders also referred to the very significant contribution of different forums e.g. QUAD, AUKUS etc. in the successful implementation of the Indo-Pacific strategy. The importance of ASEAN unity to make the Indo-Pacific strategy effectively implemented was also brought to focus. Moreover, it was also agreed that support and cooperation from the countries like Europe and Canada would also be an additional edge in steering the Indo-Pacific strategy to an effective implementation.<sup>29</sup> Both the leaders apprised China about

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<sup>29</sup> The White House (2022, May 23). *Japan-U.S. Joint Leaders' Statement: Strengthening the Free and Open International Order*. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/05/23/japan-u-s-joint-leaders-statement-strengthening-the-free-and-open-international-order/>. Accessed on October 15, 2022.

their strong reservations against its aggressive and unilateral attempt to unilaterally modify the status quo position in the East China Sea. China was also exhorted by them to work in consonance with the international rules and norms. It was emphasized by both the leaders that they were firmly committed to the freedom of navigation and over flight, consistent with the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).<sup>30</sup> The President reaffirmed that Article V of the treaty applies to the Senkaku Islands, and the two leaders reiterated their opposition to any unilateral action that seeks to undermine Japan's longstanding administration of the Senkaku Islands.

### **Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF)**

Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) was launched on 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2022, in Tokyo by President Biden with the initial partners: Australia, Brunei, India, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. The launching of IPEF was done to frame the rules by the United States and its allies so that the American workers, small businesses, and ranchers can compete in the U.S. foreign direct investment in the region. As per statistics, in the year 2020, the U.S. directly invested in the region to the tune of more than \$969 billion. The United States has been the leading exporter of services to the region helping fuel regional growth. Trade with the Indo-Pacific supports more than three million American jobs and is the source of nearly \$900

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<sup>30</sup> The White House (2022, May 23). *Japan-U.S. Joint Leaders' Statement: Strengthening the Free and Open International Order*. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/05/23/japan-u-s-joint-leaders-statement-strengthening-the-free-and-open-international-order/>. Accessed on October 15, 2022.

billion in foreign direct investment in the United States. With 60 percent of the world's population, the Indo-Pacific is projected to be the largest contributor to global growth over the next 30 years.”<sup>31</sup> IPEF also holds promise for achieving following objectives:

- **Connected Economy:** On trade, work will be done with the partners to seize opportunities and address concerns in the digital economy, in order to ensure small and medium sized enterprises can benefit from the region's rapidly growing e-commerce sector,
- **Resilient Economy:** supply chain commitments will be sought that better anticipate and prevent disruptions in supply chains to create a more resilient economy and guard against price spikes that increase costs for American families.
- **Clean Economy:** Concrete and high-ambition targets will be taken that will accelerate efforts to tackle the climate crisis, including in the areas of renewable energy, carbon removal, energy efficiency standards, and new measures to combat methane emissions.
- **Fair Economy:** Commitments will be sought to enact and enforce effective tax, anti-money laundering, and anti-bribery regimes that are in line with our existing multilateral obligations to promote a fair economy.

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<sup>31</sup> The White House (2022, May 23). *Fact Sheet: In Asia, President Biden and a Dozen Indo-Pacific Partners Launch the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity*. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/05/23/fact-sheet-in-asia-president-biden-and-a-dozen-indo-pacific-partners-launch-the-indo-pacific-economic-framework-for-prosperity/>. Accessed on October 15, 2022.

## **The United States in Indo-Pacific**

In view of China's burgeoning economic growth making it a potential contestant to become the world's largest economy, the concept of 'order for the Indo-Pacific region' has stirred the mind of the leaders of the stakeholder countries of the region in the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The United States of America had been dominating this region for the last 70 years without facing any challenge from any country of the world. However, China's desperate bid to impose its supremacy in the region through a slew of programs, the most remarkable one being the "Belt and Road" Initiative (BRI), goaded United States under President Donald Trump to combat Chinese challenge by adopting a strategic concept "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" (FOIP) to counter the potential Sino-centric reorganization or restructuring of the region. The other countries e.g. Japan, Australia, India and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) had also defined their own concepts of the "Indo-Pacific". From among the European Union Nations, only France had adopted the term "Indo-Pacific" and formulated its strategy accordingly.

China deemed the concept of "Indo-Pacific" – and the FOIP in particular as a containment strategy directed against Beijing. However, the U.S. had increased pressure on states in and outside the region, including Germany and other EU member states, to commit themselves directly or indirectly to the concept of the "Indo Pacific".

As an alternative to BRI, India had developed infrastructure partnerships with Japan, Russia and Iran. Till then, India was not participating in the "Blue Dot Initiative" of the United States, Japan and Australia.

What is worth noting is that, although the like-minded countries had adopted the term “ Indo-Pacific”, their concept and connotation of the term varied. For example, the Trump administration’s FOIP aimed at containment of China’s growing influence in the region while the FOIP of the ASEAN states directly included China.

While Japan was in favor of conclusion of multilateral free trade agreements, India withdrew from the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) negotiations at the end of 2019. The Trump administration was also opposed to multilateral free trade agreements but was seeking to conclude bilateral agreements.

The United States attached utmost importance to its security and defence policy. But, for India , infrastructure development and connectivity had got priority.

In economic policy, all actors, with the exception of the United States and India, preferred predominantly multilateral approaches.

However, there was a consensus among different stakeholder countries on certain common issues: All the actors agreed to the rules-based international order and international norms; All of them were in favor of improving the regional infrastructure and expanding connectivity, although their attached weightages varied ; all actors, except the United States, directly or indirectly were not in favor of the securitization of the Indo-Pacific, especially with regard to its economic dimension; besides, in the official documents, unlike the U.S., none of the stakeholders supported concepts which were openly directed against China.<sup>32</sup> Under President

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<sup>32</sup> Heiduk, F. & Wacker, G. (2020). From Asia-Pacific to Indo-Pacific Significance, Implementation and Challenges. *SWP Research Paper*, 29. [https://www.swp-berlin.org/publications/products/research\\_papers/2020RP09\\_IndoPacific.pdf](https://www.swp-berlin.org/publications/products/research_papers/2020RP09_IndoPacific.pdf). Accessed on May 3, 2022.

Trump's leadership, the United States had been implementing a whole-of-government strategy in conformity with the values that helped in the attainment of peace and progress of the Indo-Pacific region: (1) respect for sovereignty and independence of all nations; (2) peaceful resolution of disputes; (3) free, fair, and reciprocal trade based on open investment, transparent agreements, and connectivity; and (4) adherence to international law, including freedom of navigation and overflight.<sup>33</sup>

Leaders from the United States, India, and Japan met in November 2018 and June 2019 to promote shared fundamental values such as freedom, democracy, and the rule of law, and to exchange views on pressing security and economic issues. All four countries elevated their Quadrilateral Consultation to the ministerial level in September 2019.<sup>34</sup>

With a view to equipping the Indo-Pacific region with trade, energy and digital facilities etc. in addition to strengthening the defence and security of the region, the United States of America played its coordinating role very well.

## **Business /Trade**

In order to build business ties in the Indo-Pacific region, the U.S. Department of Commerce took the leading role. This Department made an arrangement for an

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<sup>33</sup> U.S. Department of State. (2019, November 4). *A Free and Open Indo-Pacific- Advancing a Shared Vision*. <https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Free-and-Open-Indo-Pacific-4Nov2019.pdf>. Accessed on May 3, 2022.

<sup>34</sup> U.S. Department of State. (2019, November 4). *A Free and Open Indo-Pacific- Advancing a Shared Vision*. <https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Free-and-Open-Indo-Pacific-4Nov2019.pdf>. Accessed on May 6, 2022.

outreach program ‘Access Asia Outreach Program’ through which American firms can access the Indo-Pacific markets. Since 2018, more than 1000 U.S. Companies have got themselves engaged in the Business in the Indo-Pacific region. The Indo-Pacific business contacts got further boost through the Department’s largest annual domestic conference, ‘Discover Global Markets’. One hundred U.S. companies visited India and Bangladesh under the largest U.S. trade mission ‘Trade Winds’, of 2019. brought 100 U.S. companies to India and Bangladesh.

India was granted Strategic Trade Authorization Tier 1 status by the United States in July 2018. Conferment of this status enabled American companies to export more high-technology items under a streamlined process. This regulatory change will facilitate enhancement of the bilateral defense trade relationship and the quantum of the U.S. exports to India.<sup>35</sup>

## **Energy**

At the 2018 Indo-Pacific Business Forum, the United States launched Asia EDGE, an entirely Government initiative to ensure energy security, and encourage private firms to invest in energy markets, and also to guide partners set transparent, market-based energy policies. These programs garnered \$806 million in public and private investment across 11 renewable energy projects, including developing its power grid and first wind farm in Indonesia. These projects also helped the Indonesian Government integrate energy conservation targets into its 20-year

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<sup>35</sup> U.S. Department of State. (2019, November 4). *A Free and Open Indo-Pacific- Advancing a Shared Vision*. <https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Free-and-Open-Indo-Pacific-4Nov2019.pdf>. Accessed on May 8, 2022.



electricity general plan. They have helped increase the capacity for cross-border electricity trade between Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. It also supported the adoption of flexible resources, such as gas and batteries, needed to integrate renewables through the U.S.-India Clean Energy Finance Task Force.<sup>36</sup>

## **Defence and security**

The Indo-Pacific countries like India, Bangladesh have also contributed to the UN peacekeeping missions. Through this and other forms of collaboration with the United States, the Indo-Pacific countries were jointly combating security challenges and fostering a stable and secured future for the Indo-Pacific region and the world. The Trump Administration had invested more than \$54 million to enable Indo-Pacific partners to deploy their respective armies worldwide in support of UN peacekeeping missions.<sup>37</sup>

In a nutshell, during President Trump's administration, the Department of State and USAID provided more than \$4.5 billion in foreign assistance to the Indo-Pacific region. The U.S. Lawmakers were very cooperative in respect of the U.S. investment in the Indo-Pacific. The BUILD Act in October 2018 and the Asia Reassurance Initiative Act in December 2018 was passed with the spontaneous support of the U.S. Congress. For more than 70 years, The United States, along with its allies and partners, had been pursuing and defending for a free and open

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<sup>36</sup> U.S. Department of State. (2019, November 4). *A Free and Open Indo-Pacific- Advancing a Shared Vision*. <https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Free-and-Open-Indo-Pacific-4Nov2019.pdf>. Accessed on May 8, 2022.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

environment in the Indo-Pacific region. It was highly hoped that a collective effort of all the concerned nations under the leadership of the United States would be strong enough to withstand any onslaught on the Indo-Pacific region from any aggressive country. Besides, the concerted approach of the stakeholder nations of the Indo-Pacific region would go a long way in making the region peaceful, prosperous, and secure<sup>38</sup>.

### **India-China Strategic Equations in the Indo-Pacific Region**

The Sino-Indian border war of 1962 is the genesis of acrimonious relationship between India and China. A feeling of mutual distrust had caused a stand-off between them. The border dispute still lingers with occasional flare-up resulting in loss of human and economic resources. The fear of insecurity has goaded both these countries to vie with each other in the arms race. It is claimed by China that the entire Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh, which borders Tibet, belongs to China. The India's claim is that about 15000 square miles of India's territory in Aksai Chin, located in the Himalayas have been occupied by China.<sup>39</sup>

Apparently, though, it seemed that consequent upon the resumption of Indo-China Border trade in 2006, the border dispute had petered out, the ground reality was otherwise. In 2006, during delivery of speech in a public forum, the Chinese

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<sup>38</sup> U.S. Department of State. (2019, November 4). *A Free and Open Indo-Pacific- Advancing a Shared Vision*. <https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Free-and-Open-Indo-Pacific-4Nov2019.pdf>. Accessed on May 8, 2022.

<sup>39</sup> Emmott, B. (2008). Rivals: How the Power Struggle Between China, India and Japan Will Shape Our Next Decade. *Policy*, 24 (3). [https://www.cis.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/images/stories/policy-magazine/2008-24-3\\_Eric\\_Jones.pdf](https://www.cis.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/images/stories/policy-magazine/2008-24-3_Eric_Jones.pdf). Accessed on May 9, 2022.

ambassador to Delhi vociferously stated that the whole of Arunachal Pradesh belonged to China. What followed was that a proposed visit of more than 1000 officials to China on a confidence building mission had to be cancelled as a mode of protest when China declined to issue visa to a member of the mission team who belonged to the state of Arunachal Pradesh. The plea taken by China was that being an inhabitant of Arunachal Pradesh, he was a Chinese national and hence did not require any visa.<sup>40</sup>

As the link between the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea, the Strait of Malacca is the shortest sea route between India and China and hence is one of the most heavily travelled shipping channels in the world. China was concerned that its oil import might be hindered through the Malacca Strait because of its acrimonious relationship with India. In order to avert the Malacca Dilemma, China went for some policy changes as to the energy issues-

- China preferred to reduce the dependence on import of energy and to explore alternative sources of energy.
- Decision was taken to invest in the construction of pipelines bypassing the Malacca Strait.

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<sup>40</sup> Emmott, B. (2008). Rivals: How the Power Struggle Between China, India and Japan Will Shape Our Next Decade. *Policy*, 24 (3). [https://www.cis.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/images/stories/policy-magazine/2008-24-3\\_Eric\\_Jones.pdf](https://www.cis.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/images/stories/policy-magazine/2008-24-3_Eric_Jones.pdf). Accessed on May 9, 2022.

- It was also decided to build potent naval capabilities for safeguarding China's SLOCs (sea lines of communication).<sup>41</sup>

In the recent period, China has taken a lot of measures, as summarized below, to strengthen its maritime potentials:

- In order to ensure access to the sea in China's southwest region, harbor wharves were constructed by China in the Eastern Indian Ocean in Myanmar and Mekong waterways were unloaded.
- In 2003, China leased a port in Russia's far east and persuaded Russia to advance the mouth of the Tumen River.
- With a view to enhancing China's geostrategic influence and setting up a trade and transport hub for Central Asian nations, China launched the project of constructing a deepwater port at Gwadar in Pakistan.
- China has extended its economic and trade cooperation with Africa and the Caribbean region by virtue of its being a member of the World Trade Organisation. It has also developed economic and trade relations with the South Pacific region.

All the afore-mentioned factors have played a positive role to the development of China's maritime geostrategic equations.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Storey, I. (2006). China's 'Malacca Dilemma'. *China Brief*, 6 (8). <https://jamestown.org/program/chinas-malacca-dilemma/>. Accessed on May 10, 2022.

<sup>42</sup> Mohan, C.R. (2013). *Samudra Manthan, Sino-Indian Rivalry in the Indo-Pacific*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

The Arabian Sea, the Bay of Bengal and the South China Sea are the three maritime zones prone to be associated with a fierce rivalry between India and China for reaping the benefits of available resources. Both India and China are in dire need of energy for the development and progress of their vast countries and huge population. Arabian Sea being a highly rich energy resource, India and China are very keen to harvest the same. However, till now, Arabian Sea is beyond the maritime and naval outreach of these two countries since the United States has been dominating this area with its supreme naval power and the most powerful nation.

In the Bay of Bengal, India holds its supremacy since long . This traditional edge of India now faces challenge from China because of China's interest to exploit the sea resources, energy resources and the maritime trade facilities of Bay of Bengal to offset its brewing troubles in trade through the Malacca Strait.

However, in its bid to give a fillip to its military relationships with the United States and Japan, India is very keen to secure its access to South China Sea. Contrarily, China is endowed with the natural advantage over this sea resulting in its strong hold in this arena.<sup>43</sup>

Although, the United States is in supreme command over the Arabian sea, China and India have been prompted to initiate strategic relationship with the key littoral states of the Arabian sea. The reason being that China and India has been under dire need to import huge quantity of crude oil to meet their energy needs and hence they deemed it imperative to develop economic and political coordination with not only

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<sup>43</sup> Mohan, C.R. (2013). *Samudra Manthan, Sino-Indian Rivalry in the Indo-Pacific*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

the powerful and resourceful nations of Anglo-America and Western Europe, but also with the Arabian Sea littorals. These initiatives of India and China owed their impetus to the first-ever visit of Saudi King Abdullah to China and India in January 2006. Despite having substantive stronghold on the Arabian Sea, the United States has been mobilizing their internal resources and external networks in the Arabian Sea with a view to finding solutions to the Western Pacific problems.<sup>44</sup>

A brief review of the historical records reveal that during the nineteenth and twentieth century, India used to supply men and material to the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden and the littoral of East Africa. However, the Persian Gulf was destabilized with the partition of the Indian Subcontinent.<sup>45</sup>

The bilateral contention between China and India has intensified in respect of the Bay of Bengal and the Andaman Sea, as these two serve as the juncture between the Eastern Indian Ocean and the South China Sea and hence play a central role for the security of the sea lines of communication in the Indo-Pacific .

Another issue of bilateral contention between the India and China has come up because of the increased political opening up of Myanmar in the past about two decades. The new strategy adopted by the Western countries to extend their outreach to Myanmar has also contributed to this complex issue.

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<sup>44</sup> Kemp, G. (2010). *The East moves West: India, China, and Asia's growing presence in the Middle East*. Brookings Institution Press, Washington, D.C.

<sup>45</sup> Caroe, O. (1976). *Wells of Power: The Oilfields of South-Western Asia: A Regional and Global Study*. Macmillan.

Myanmar is now very keen to recoup its position in Asia and the world. Prior to emergence of Myanmar from its isolated position, India and China used to enjoy economic and strategic privilege in the Asian region. In its bid to get back its linkage with the Asian region and the world, Myanmar moves for the liaison with the West. This approach of Myanmar has cast an impact on the strategic policy of India and China. Myanmar by virtue of its position at the Asian crossroads and on the Indo-Pacific hinge, is likely to engage with India and China under its own terms.<sup>46</sup>

It has been an objective of India to facilitate the pace of partnership with regional and global navies in the South China Sea. The probable adverse impact on India's security in the event of India's inconclusive competition with China in the South China Sea is well under contemplation of India's policymakers. India is keen to reap the advantage of the new diplomatic leverages in South China Sea. However, India is not in favor of antagonizing China too much on this score. To dispel any confusion, it has been clarified by India that India is in need of exploring oil in the South China Sea to meet its commercial needs. To substantiate India's said clarification, it may be said that in 2012, ONGC Videsh Limited( OVL) stopped its exploration work in Block 128 of South China Sea , it had acquired from Vietnam, after no tangible outcome was obtained out of the said exploration work. However,

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<sup>46</sup> Myint-U, T. (2011). *Where China Meets India: Burma and the New Crossroads of Asia*. Faber & Faber.

India has also declared that it will continue its oil exploration work in the disputed waters of South China Sea braving any threat or political pressure from China.<sup>47</sup>

The transportation of Gulf oil through the strait of Hormuz into the Arabian Sea is necessary for shipping the same to other countries. India and China are heavily dependent on the gulf oil. Their need for the gulf oil has prompted both these countries to put in effort to establish their leadership in the Persian Gulf and Middle East region. However, India's effort towards achievement of this objective has received a set back because of an acrimonious relationship between India and Pakistan. Unlike India, China took advantage of its bonhomie with Pakistan and adopted pragmatic strategies to forge a relationship with the leaders ruling in the Persian Gulf and the Middle East region. The pragmatism of China was evident from the fact that the ideological divergence between China and the rulers of those two regions did not stand in the way of China's accosting the concerned rulers of the said two regions. The *raison d'être* behind China's push for such an asymmetric ideological relationship was its dire need of adaptation to the geopolitical balance of power and realignment with the strategies of great-power relations with reference to their implications on China's south western periphery.<sup>48</sup>

India is very much concerned at China's construction of ports in the Indian Ocean known as 'string of pearls' and other naval headways and intrusions in the Indian Ocean since these activities of China have the potential of making India's defence

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<sup>47</sup> Pandey, P. (2012). ONGC Videsh Limited pulls out of block in South China Sea. *The Times of India*, 16. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/ongc-videsh-limited-pulls-out-of-block-in-south-china-sea/articleshow/13159451.cms>. Accessed on May 16, 2022.

<sup>48</sup> Vertzberger, Y. (1985). *China's Southwestern Strategy: Encirclement and Counterencirclement*. New York: Praeger.



and national security vulnerable to Chinese military aggression. As a safeguard, India has been taking different measures to upgrade its own naval potential. In 2009, it was declared in India's naval planner under Defence Ministry that 107 warships including aircraft carriers, destroyers, frigates and nuclear submarines would be manufactured over the next decade to combat China's naval forces.

China had made a considerable advance in developing its own navy for getting an edge in the Indian Ocean region.

In order to encounter Chinese Military in the Southern Tibet and to withstand frequent cross-border intrusions by Chinese patrols, India moved, in 2009, two army divisions to areas adjacent to the border with China, and had constructed three new airstrips in the Himalayan foothills.<sup>49</sup>

India has been prompted to take measures to develop infrastructure along the Himalayan region to combat China which had made damaging strides on the Tibetan plateau. The other compelling reason for India's said measures for developing infrastructure is : the frequent India- China border disputes.<sup>50</sup>

## **India's Role in the Indo-Pacific Region**

A comparative analysis of defence capabilities, economic and financial resources of India vis-a vis those of China, project China far ahead of India in respect of those parameters. Added to that, India is also under a plethora of challenges relating to its

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<sup>49</sup> Ford, P. (2009). Rivals China, India in Escalating War of Words. *The Christian Science Monitor*. <http://www.csmonitor.com/2009/1020/p06s04-woap.html>. Accessed on May 17, 2022.

<sup>50</sup> Arnoldy, B. (2009). Growing number of China incursions into India lead to a strategy change. *The Christian Science Monitor*, 9.

national development and national defence. Critics raise question as to India's ability to contain China's aggressive intrusion into the Indo-Pacific region and to play the role of a key balancer of power in this region in view of the glaring disparity between India and China on the economic and military might. It is also mentioned by the critics that China's expertise in the use of electronics, technology, precision-guided munitions etc. far outweighs those of India.

However, the efficiency of India as a key balancer of power in the Indo-Pacific region arises out of its traditional policy of maintaining cooperative and friendly relations with the countries of the region coupled with its modest approach sans any show of over lordship. It is also alien to India's policy to meddle in any country's domestic affair. Thus, in sharp contrast to the aggressive and interfering nature of China, India, by virtue of its policy of non-interference, non-dominance and non-aggression has elevated itself to the position of a reliable and trusted nation well poised to be at the helm of Indo-Pacific issues. China's over ambitious policies have created a disequilibrium in the balance of power in the Indo-Pacific region and thereby has posed a challenge to the national defence and security of India. The resources of the Indian Ocean have been the cynosure of all the stakeholders of this region. Accordingly, there has always been a clash of interest between India and China in reaping the advantages in any realm involving this region. However, in the common interest of both these countries and the region at large, the issues on harnessing the natural bounties of the region should be dealt with jointly by both these countries with due deference to the mutual needs keeping the environmental matters in the center stage. But, China's indiscriminate constructions of dams in the Indian Ocean region have stood as an impediment to the implementation of India's plans and schemes relating to India's energy needs. Thus, in the prevailing

aggressive stance of China in grabbing the resources and advantages of the Indian Ocean unilaterally, India needs to garner the support of the other stakeholders of the region to dissuade China from executing its aggressive projects in the Indo-Pacific region. That the peaceful co-existence in the Indo-Pacific region is a sine qua non for the progress of the region, is well acknowledged by both the nations. But, while India is keen to adhere to this policy, China prefers to obey this principle more in its breach than in its observance. Another momentous measure required to be taken in this region is the maintenance of ecological balance. While it is incumbent upon all the stakeholders of this region to take part in ecological-balance maintenance, China's investments in the areas surrounding the Indo-Pacific region seems to be apathetic to the ecological implications of the area.<sup>51</sup>

India has ventured to forge ties with ASEAN (Association Of South East Asian Nations) and IORA (Indian Ocean Rim Association), and the diplomatic network QUAD to expand its external outreach to curb any aggressive advance of China in the Indo-Pacific region. In the prevailing geo-political situation, India is quite concerned about China's Belt and Road Initiative. India's apprehension is that the roads, bridges ports etc. constructed by China under BRI have the potential of being used for both civil and military purposes. The formation of QUAD owes its genesis to the deliberations of the QUAD members who are keen to enhance their respective military strength to restrain and thwart any attempt of China to establish its domination over the region. India being not economically and militarily resourceful compared with more powerful stakeholders of the region, it has taken recourse to

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<sup>51</sup> Prakash, M. V. (2015). India, China and Adam's Ale. *Indian Ocean Digest*, 35 (55), 57.

diplomatic and strategic measures to make itself an indispensable power to be relied upon as an effective balancing power of the region. The primary role entrusted on the Indian Navy has been to enhance its maritime capability to fend off any external invasion and to make its presence felt in the region as a capable force to be reckoned with. The role of Indian Navy in the 21<sup>st</sup> century transcends its mere war related activities and embraces the role of peacekeeping, natural disaster combating in the Indian Ocean region and also assisting the maritime needs of other countries.<sup>52</sup>

The adopted policy of India to upgrade its navy includes joint naval exercises with the navies of other powerful nations. As a part of this program, two Indian navy ships participated in the joint sailing of the navies of Japan, the Philippines and the U.S. through the South China Sea during 2<sup>nd</sup> May, 2019 to 8<sup>th</sup> May, 2019. Another such joint naval exercise was held in the same year by the navies of India and Singapore.

The stakeholder countries of the Indo-Pacific region are now committed to assert their clout to make this region free and open for the common progress of the concerned nations countering the unilateral approach of China to consolidate its hold on this region to achieve its parochial objective of serving the interest of China only.

This united approach of the littoral states was evident from the focused mention of the term ‘Indo-Pacific’ made by the U.S. President Donald Trump during his 12-day

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<sup>52</sup> Mohan, C.R. (2013). *Samudra Manthan, Sino-Indian Rivalry in the Indo-Pacific*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Asian tour in November 2017 with the representatives of Australia, India, Japan and the U.S. on the sidelines of the East Asia Summit in the Philippines during that period. A unanimous response was received from all of them towards making the Indo-Pacific region a free, open, prosperous and inclusive region for the benefits of the concerned countries and the world at large, as well. The formation of QUAD has been a consequence of China's defiance of international norms in attempting to construct military facilities on reclaimed islands in the South China Sea. Besides, China, using its economic and military power, is trying to influence the economically and militarily weak neighboring countries by aiding them with economic loan for their infrastructural developments. Thereafter, China captures those assets when the beneficiary countries fail to repay the loan. These captured structures are then utilized by China as their military posts. This tactic is being pursued by China to intensify its stranglehold on the Indo-Pacific region and thereby to pose a security threat to the countries in the Indo-Pacific region. The belligerent attitude of China in expanding its influence gives rise to the apprehension that China is desperate in its bid to militarily occupy South China Sea and/or the Senkaku / Diaoyu islands. China's aggressive attitude to resolve any bilateral dispute through coercion is inimical to the national interest of the concerned nations and the world as a whole.

Intervention of the United States in collaboration with the other stakeholder nations is imperative to put a halt to such anarchic approach of China. The U.S.-India strategic partnership has been very inspiring and formation of a cooperative security framework by other stakeholder countries has been encouraged. In order to create a very unified, strong and credible Indo-Pacific force to maintain peace and stability in

the Indo-Pacific, countries like South Korea, Singapore, Vietnam may be associated with the existing strategy partners of the Indo-Pacific region.

However, the probability of roping in China within the cooperative security framework is less as it seems that China prefers to frame its own individual strategy rather than cooperate with its regional neighbors, although 'Cooperative Security' has a wider meaning apart from military alliances. This term comprises a number of mutually beneficial factors e.g. sharing of intelligence, joint counterterrorism and counter proliferation attempts, adherence to the rules and norms governing maritime trade; extending help to the littoral states to meet their security needs; combating piracy, restraining arms smuggling and narcotics trafficking; and adoption of joint relief measures to help the disaster affected people in the region. A vast span from the South China Sea in the east to the Horn of Africa in the west constitutes the strategic domain of India. In order to discharge its responsibilities towards regional security, India needs to develop its military capabilities for intervention in the Indo-Pacific region. According to the defence experts, India will be well poised to counter its enemies in the Indian Ocean, if it gets itself equipped with two rapid reaction-cum-air assault divisions backed by air support, air lift and sea transportation and logistics resources for thirty days by 2025-30.<sup>53</sup>

In its bid to upgrade the potential of its naval force, India is very keen to acquire amphibious ships. The trend of past purchases serves as a pointer. In early 2007, India purchased the former USS Trenton from the United States. It pertains to the

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<sup>53</sup> Kanwal, G. (2019). Moving towards cooperative security in the Indo-Pacific: India must work with the Quad and pull in more members. *The Times of India*, Kolkata.

Austin class landing platform dock ships that are conducive to move troops and project force. India continues to buy the smaller Shardul and Magar class ships meant for amphibious activities. It has three fleet replenishment tankers. Another innovative strategy has been introduced in Indian Navy. Small units of the army are being attached with the navy to serve as the marine expeditionary force. Indian navy is focusing on expanding its naval aviation and C4ISR ( Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance ) capabilities.

India has also geared up its capacity for Ship production at the industrial level with the help of new private sector shipyard. The Government has taken measures to adopt policies conducive to the participation of the private sector companies in the production of naval equipment. India also conducts routine

two to three month-long deployments in the South and East China Seas as well as the Western Mediterranean simultaneously.<sup>54</sup>

Indian Navy has taken up its fleet modernization plan of acquiring three aircraft carriers, keeping two carriers fully active at any given time. On 16<sup>th</sup> November, 2013, Russian built INS Vikramaditya was formally commissioned in Russia. The Prime Minister of India formally inducted it for the Indian fleet on the 14th June, 2014. India's second Aircraft Carrier INS Vikrant , was commissioned in September, 2022 and is currently undergoing aviation trials . It is expected to be operationally ready by the end of 2023. India's need for a third Aircraft Carrier arises from several

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<sup>54</sup> Mohan, C.R. (2013). *Samudra Manthan, Sino-Indian Rivalry in the Indo-Pacific*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

factors including the increasing geopolitical tensions in the region, the growing need for maritime security and the need to project India's power and influence in the region. The three carriers are expected to render a marked improvement over India's current ability and would provide the Indian navy true with blue-water potential.<sup>55</sup>

The indigenous aircraft carrier also has a range larger than that of INS Viraat (the flagship of the Indian Navy until INS Vikramaditya was commissioned in 2013) at about 7500nm. It is expected to carry 12 MiG-29s and possess a STOBAR (short takeoff, barrier-arrested recovery) design. The third aircraft carrier will be larger than the indigenous aircraft carrier (37000 tons) and will displace about 64000 tons. The navy plans it to equip it with steam catapults, a technology currently found only in the U.S. and French navies.<sup>56</sup>

The strategic dynamics in the South China Sea has prompted the Indian Navy to base some of its crucial resources on the eastern seaboard at the Vishakhapatnam-based Eastern Naval Command. In consonance with the Act East Policy of India, Indian Navy has been building an enduring base on the eastern front aimed at providing India militarily a greater footprint in the South China Sea.

By the year 2027, the Indian Navy is expected to have 500 aircraft, of all varieties, and 150 ships. In 2011, with the Project Varsha underway, which is a special

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<sup>55</sup> Scott, D. (2008). India's drive for a 'Blue Water' Navy. *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies*, 10 (2). <https://jmss.org/article/view/57675>. Accessed on May 20, 2022.

<sup>56</sup> Holmes, J. R., Winner, A. C., & Yoshihara, T. (2009). *Indian naval strategy in the twenty-first century*. New York: Routledge.



berthing base for India's indigenous SSBN INS Arihant class nuclear-powered submarines, the Eastern Naval Command possessed 45 ships and six submarines.<sup>57</sup>

Despite being in possession of nuclear facilities, India has never shown any belligerent attitude. Rather, it has always emphasized on the imperative need of peaceful solutions of disputes and differences in the region. China apparently tries to achieve its ends through diplomacy and economic means, with occasional signs of military intimidation in the backdrop of the diplomatic gestures. Through the Project Varsha, which is a special berthing base for India's indigenous SSBN INS Arihant class nuclear-powered submarines, the Eastern Naval Command possessed 45 ships handshakes and actually expanded its influence. It is now evident that although the regional powers are eloquent in respect of peace, security and stability, they, in reality prepare for war. In other words, the major powers indulge in enhancing their respective military strength under the garb of discussion on international peace and cooperation. For example, it has often been commented that Russia is aligned towards China in the Pacific region. But, in reality, Moscow is suspicious about China and is keen to find out how to regulate its strategic equations with China.<sup>58</sup>

India adheres to its policy of freedom of navigation and a peaceful resolution of the territorial disputes in respect of the South China Sea issues. At the East Asia Summit in Bali in November 2011, India gave vent to its concerns on the South China Sea

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<sup>57</sup> Sharma, S. (2011). Navy Ready to Flex Muscles in South China Sea. *The Sunday Guardian*. New Delhi.

<sup>58</sup> Australian National University (2012, August). Roundtable Summary: Russia and the Indo-Pacific. *Australian National University's Centre for European Studies*, 2 (4).

and reiterated its policy towards South China Sea, although Prime Minister of India Manmohan Singh was requested by Wen Jiabao, the Prime minister of China, not to raise the dispute in the said Summit. In response to a query by Wen Jiabao about India's interests in the South China Sea, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh emphatically said that India's interests were purely commercial and that China must settle its disputes in the waters in accordance with international law.<sup>59</sup>

India has adopted a policy of counter-containment in respect of China. This is evident from India's cooperation with the ASEAN members and its efforts to promote Vietnam as a safeguard against the Chinese sphere of influence. Besides, India's burgeoning military ties with both Australia and Japan, and its development of a cooperative relationship with Mongolia, also indicate India's adoption of the policy of counter-containment towards China.<sup>60</sup>

India's interest to access the South China Sea revolves round a number of issues:

- India's trade with East Asia has increased considerably compared with those with Western Europe, the Middle East and Africa. India is now concerned about its sea lines of communication not only in the Indian Ocean but also those in the Western Pacific.
- Secondly, in view of the importance of maintaining the freedom of the high seas in the Western Pacific, India is reluctant to totally rely on the United

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<sup>59</sup> Bagchi, I. (2011, November 19). PM Manmohan Singh to China's Wen Jiabo: Back Off on South China Sea. *The Times of India*.

<sup>60</sup> Rehman, I. (2009). Keeping the Dragon at Bay: India's Counter-Containment of china in Asia. *Asian Security*, 5 (2). DOI:10.1080/14799850902885114

States or China for its maritime needs in the Western Pacific. This view of India is akin to that of China which does not want to fully depend on the United States or on India for safeguarding its Indian Ocean Sea Lines of communication.

- Thirdly, India has already remonstrated with China's objections to Indian companies exploring for oil in South China Sea in collaboration with Vietnam. Besides, it is India's apprehension that China may convert the South China Sea into a "Chinese lake" through the assertion of its territorial claims.
- Moreover, at the operational level, domain awareness in all areas of maritime interest has become an imperative for the Indian navy; hence its security might be jeopardized in its maintaining a presence to track potential developments.
- Finally, it is the view of the Indian navy that a forward maritime presence and naval partnerships are indispensably required to combat potential adversaries, for example, China in the South China Sea and western Pacific. The reason being that the formation of partnerships or coalitions and alliances serves as a deterrence and thereby enhances the capacities of partner maritime forces.<sup>61</sup>

India was able to conduct its naval advances beyond the South China Sea toward the upper regions of the western Pacific within a short span of time. In the spring and

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<sup>61</sup> Ranjan, A. (2000, October 14). China Objects to Indian navy's Presence in South China Sea. *Indian Express*.

summer of 2007, the Indian navy sailed till Vladivostok, the home port of the Russian Pacific Fleet, and carried on a series of bilateral and multilateral operations with the United States, Japan, Russia and China as well as a number of other nations.

India planned to participate in the annual bilateral Malabar naval exercises with the United States in the western Pacific to assert India's potential in northeast Asian waters. The move was significant as it was the first-ever trilateral exercise with the United States and Japan in Tokyo Bay.

India conducted its maritime exercises in and out of the Western Pacific, with many countries like Singapore, Vietnam and the Philippines. According to official U.S. sources, in the Malabar 2009 exercise, interdependence and interoperability among the three navies were strengthened and regional stability in the Pacific was expanded.

The balance of power in the Western Pacific can be maintained if the bilateral defence relation can be completely utilized by the United States and India. It was remarkable that the United States permitted India to access the military stores of the U.S. although sale of its arms to China and its European allies was not permitted by the United States. India's emerging clout drew attention of major powers like Japan. China became highly concerned at the strengthening of Indo-U.S. defense cooperation. China's concern was all the more accentuated as Tokyo joined with Washington in the security outreach to New Delhi<sup>62</sup>.

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<sup>62</sup> Mohan, C.R. (2013). *Samudra Manthan, Sino-Indian Rivalry in the Indo-Pacific*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

As the geographic perceptibility of Asia expanded beyond Myanmar in the west, Japan entered into a strategic partnership with India. This partnership opened an avenue for Japan to initiate the possible redistribution of power in Asia and thereby to create a stable balance of power in the region. India, on the other hand, became the recipient of immense strategic complementarities from Japan. This forging of ties between Japan and India was catalyzed by India's improved bilateral ties with the United States. It is worth mentioning that a dip in the Sino-Japanese relationship have dealt a blow on Tokyo. Abe's proposal for deeper political cooperation among Asia's four leading democracies got immediate approval of India in view of the new dynamism evinced by Japan. It is heartening that there is remarkable cooperation between Tokyo and New Delhi in the stabilization of a bilateral security relationship. This positive development in the realm of bilateral security has brought their armed forces closer to each other. Collaborative military missions like securing the sea lines of communication in the Indian Ocean and Western Pacific have also been taken up.<sup>63</sup>

## **Conclusion**

The current focus and preoccupation with the Indo-Pacific is the right call given the overall significance of the region in political and economic terms as well for the purposes of necessary strategic balance. The rationale for such interest in the Indo-Pacific also stem from the rise of the Chinese power, in political, economic and military terms and the implications of Chinese ascendancy in the region for the

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<sup>63</sup> Naidu, G. V. C. (2007). Ballistic missile defence: perspectives on India–Japan cooperation. *Strategic Analysis*, 31(1), 155-177.

countries of east and south-east Asia as well as for the interest of the countries such as the U.S., Australia and India. The European Union countries, particularly, France and Germany also would like to part of the emerging security architecture in the region. Lately, the United Kingdom has also intensified its engagement with the region.

It is well established that a strengthened and strong India-Japan understanding and ties is crucial for all the stakeholders in the Indo-Pacific region. The United States is fully aware of the reality and as such is encouraging of efforts made by India and Japan to bolster their relations. Secondly, the U.S. is motivated by the idea of burden sharing in regard to the security and stability of the region. Consequently, a QUAD structure appeals to the U.S. even though it means that the U.S. would be a participant and a contributor in the formal and institutional processes in the QUAD and not necessarily the leading light. After all, countries like India and Japan are neighbors of China and are much more directly affected and impacted by policies and strategy of China in the region. Hence, a consultation process amongst the stakeholder nations is also advantageous to the US and agreeable to India as this would restraint any abrasive decision or action.

# Conclusion

This thesis has presented a comprehensive account of the bilateral relationship between India and the United States of America within the framework of multilateral and interdependent issues and challenges facing the two largest democracies of the world. The scope of the research work has entailed the entirety of relations between India and the U.S. in so far as these impact the foreign policy and security relations of the two countries. The research scheme has sought to highlight the transition of the relationship from the ‘low’ of 1998 when the U.S. imposed a series of sanctions against India in the wake of India’s assertion as a nuclear weapon state through Pokhran-II tests to the high point in the relations recently achieved through an active and ongoing 2+2 dialogues, India’s identification as a ‘major defence partner’ by the U.S., the QUAD processes and a broad convergence in the international outlook and approach toward the Indo-Pacific region. An Introduction to the thesis has been followed by the six chapters constituting the research work.

## Chapters

The subject matter of **Chapter 1** was the relationship between India and the U.S. during the formative years and subsequently up to 1998. The content was analysed from a variety of perspectives and developments over more than five decades. It was possible to extensively consult the primary source materials, now unclassified to conclude that notwithstanding assertions in favour of India’s freedom, the U.S. was constrained by its relations with Great Britain from pursuing it boldly and vociferously. Moreover, the Cold War ideological rivalry and political and military confrontation with the USSR dictated America’s choices of friends and partners.

Pakistan was willing to sub-serve the American interest and India clearly was against military entanglement. As such, even while the U.S. considered India in a positive light, on the question of democracy and development, foreign aid and some military support post the border war with China, India and the U.S. were not aligned in political and security terms. The divergences between the two countries during the Cold War period and India's reasoning in favour of a policy of non-alignment and stance against bloc politics, have been analysed in this chapter. It was also necessary to chart the policy and approach of the U.S. Government during the four wars India fought since its independence up to 1971. Three of these wars were against Pakistan and there was also the 1962 border conflict with China. Pakistan received the priority in the foreign policy matrix of the U.S. and though the U.S. was neutral during the 1965 India-Pakistan war, its biasness in favour of Pakistan was obvious during the 1971 confrontation and war. The chapter has also focused on India's peace advocacy, and the debate over the U.S. support in the 1950s for India's membership in the Security Council. Pokhran-1 had led to rethinking on the part of the U.S. on the continued support for fueling of Tarapur nuclear power plant and the difficult negotiations carried out by the two sides.

The **Chapter 2** of the thesis essentially focused on the developments prior to and more extensively subsequent to the "1998 Moment" constituting India's decision to go nuclear. Following the end of the Cold War with the disintegration of the Soviet Union, it was open to the United States to reorient its foreign policy and international relations anew. Relationship with India emerged as an important component of the U.S. policy towards South Asia. In India too, inauguration of liberalization in the era of globalization contained the possibility of opening up to the world economy, broadening of the economic ties and foreign trade. This helped



shape up a new understanding of India in the international arena. The U.S. and India embarked on revitalizing their relations and rapid progress in certain sectors were made. However, the Pokhran-II nuclear tests to assert India's nuclear weapon capabilities in May 1998 complicated the ongoing progresses in bilateral relations. The tests were an assertion of India's new found status as a nuclear weapon state, completely overshadowing the concerns and reservations over nuclear proliferation. In pursuance of its strong anti-proliferation stance, the U.S. not only imposed sanctions on India but it went on to encourage other countries to follow suit. The backdrop and the context of the "1998 Moment" which was a milestone development in the foreign policy of the country, in its relations with the United States and the international community and a culmination of developments actuated both by security considerations vis a vis China and Pakistan has been analysed in the chapter. The decision to go nuclear was also a result of domestic public opinion and political dynamism in the context of India's vulnerabilities. The international fallout of the nuclear tests in the form of sanctions and how constructive diplomatic engagements paved the way for a gradual thaw in the India-U.S. relations, and finally withdrawal of the sanctions, albeit in the light of the devastating 9/11 attack on the U.S., was also extensively captured in the chapter.

The second Chapter had delineated the course of India-U.S. relations in the wake of Pokhran-II and how a debilitating sanctions regime against India imposed by the U.S. and other international actors had pushed India into a corner. The **Chapter 3** of the thesis essentially recounts the circumstances and developments leading to the weakening, dilution and finally the withdrawal of sanctions in the backdrop of active negotiations between the two sides. A great facilitation in the process undoubtedly was the devastating 9/11 attack on the U.S. This convinced the U.S. the imperative

of befriending India and to do so even to go to the extent of effecting necessary changes in its domestic legislation concerning nuclear proliferation. The U.S. was also interested in not isolating a democracy like India when the business and trade ties were expected to bear fruit for American companies and corporations. The U.S. therefore was not interested in isolating India and was ready to calibrate its non-proliferation concerns in a way that India gets the necessary breather. India was also interested in ending its isolation and wished to gain access to international markets and as such both sides decided to leave enough room to maneuver and negotiate. An intense phase of negotiations across various sectors but essentially concerning cooperation in civil nuclear domain was launched by both the sides.

A difficult part was how best to address the concerns and apprehensions of the U.S. domestic political opinion and the hard stance of U.S. lawmakers who were upset with India's flouting of international nuclear non-proliferation regime. The U.S. administration attempted to make separate the two aspects- cooperation in civil nuclear energy sector and the supply of fuel and other essentials in regard to manufacturing of nuclear weapons and capabilities for the same. India reasoned that it is not interested and nor dependent on international cooperation and supply for its nuclear weapons and the necessary deterrence capacity in this respect. However, India argued that its civilian nuclear energy programme should not be affected. The U.S. administration attempted to assuage its domestic opposition and Congressional leaders about the usefulness of the distinction and value of India's friendship for America's economic, security and strategic interests.

The civil nuclear agreement was an outcome of parleys over the years undertaken by the Vajpayee Government in India and the Bush administration in the U.S. It was

carried forward by Manmohan Singh's Government and the two sides could conclude a historic agreement on civil nuclear cooperation. These involved overcoming oppositions both in India as well as in the U.S. However, structural and legal impediments have thwarted extension of cooperation though India's isolation could end as it gained U.S. support to obtain waiver from many of the countries which had imposed sanctions.

The context, contour and the direction of cooperation between India and the U.S. on counter-terrorism are analysed in **Chapter 4** of the thesis. While India has battled and suffered from the scourge of terrorism for long, the full weight and terrorizing consequences of extremist action was felt by the United States when 9/11 attack were perpetrated on the American territory. The American –led 'war on terrorism' needed worldwide friends and allies and there was no hesitation in the U.S. to court India's support. This support was readily extended by India and both the countries in subsequent years have achieved a lot of synergy and have established a good and effective cooperative mechanism. The cooperative synergy was powerful enough to persuade the administration and the law-makers in the U.S. to weaken, dilute and then even finally withdraw the series of sanctions imposed on India following Pokhran-II.

The India-U.S. cooperation on counter-terrorism has witnessed unprecedented level of information and intelligence sharing, joint training, use of a variety of consultation mechanism, involvement of officials charged with the responsibility of police and security functions as well as the organizations and agencies mandated to cover organized crimes and international terrorism. The chapter describes the approach and action of the United Nations against terrorism, growing number of

international conventions against terrorism, the nature and extend of terrorism directed against India and the United States and finally described, charted and analysed the policy response and measures adopted by the two countries against terrorism. Cooperation in security matters invariably involves a lot of secrecy as well as a lot of reservations. As such, failure to coax Pakistan and China to join the efforts to designate individuals and groups responsible for terrorist acts has often acted as a dampener in the relationship. However, in an indirect way, Pakistan's encouragement and complicity in many of the terrorist attacks, in India and in Afghanistan has been exposed and consequently the U.S. has been able to take action against Pakistan in certain limited way. Cooperation framework advanced through dialogue and deliberations between the two countries on counter-terrorism has helped the bilateral relations to advance into a partnership between the two of the largest democracies of the world fighting the menace of terrorism.

The **Chapter 5** detailed the trajectory of defence and strategic ties and cooperation between India and the U.S. and sought to find out evidence for the upgradation in the ties. The analysis sought to find answers to the question as to whether and to what extent these ties can be considered to have constituted a global partnership between the two countries. The U.S. was sympathetic to the cause of India's independence but the compulsion of a strengthened relationship with Great Britain, especially during the course of the Second World War, and immediately later on due to dawn of the Cold War, the U.S. support for India's freedom was never vociferous. The so-called ideological struggle vis-à-vis the USSR took the center stage in the U.S. policy and approach to international issues and affairs. Therefore, even though the U.S. policy toward India was sympathetic but it never surpassed its support for Pakistan. After all, Pakistan joined military pacts and alliances led by the U.S., in

contrast to India's nonalignment. The U.S. tried to maintain a political balance between India and Pakistan but on the defence and strategic aspects, the U.S. favoured Pakistan. Consequently, India-U.S. defence relations could not move forward.

A new complication emerged in the form of the U.S. considering Pakistan as a frontline state in the wake of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The U.S. was determined to contain the USSR in Afghanistan during 1980 to 1989 and this broader goal dictated its lukewarm attitude and approach to India. Subsequently in the early through late 1990s, however, India-U.S. defence ties and security cooperation underwent various phases and turns. A number of instrumentalities, dialogue framework and the growing organizational and institutional apparatus started to inform the positive turn in the relationship.

Over the last decades, a lot of progress in the defence and security domain has been made by the two countries. This however has not been able to completely remove the reservations especially on the question of transfer of high-end technology. There are certain bottlenecks and a level of anxiety and suspicion in the defence and strategic cooperation. It is not possible for India not to source its defence requirements from Russia. The U.S. finds itself on a spot when it comes to taking action against India for its dealings in weapons system from Russia. The support for extending waiver for India, now a major defence partner and one of the significant friendly country for the U.S., is getting louder and most of the policymakers in the U.S. cannot accept any dilution in relations with India, particularly in the context of a threat from China for leadership and supremacy in the Indo-Pacific and beyond. It is also significant to note that India and the U.S. are on completely different pages

on some of the most pressing and challenging developments in the international arena. Russia-Ukraine war is the prime example. The differing and even contrasting stance of the two countries on the ongoing war shows the limitations of the defence and security partnership between India and the U.S.

**Chapter 6** of the thesis has focused on the Indo-Pacific region- a region of prime importance and significance for both the countries. The buoyancy in the relationship has much derived from the common approaches both the countries are trying to develop. The need and necessity to politically balance China and contain the military might of China is in the declared interest of both the U.S. and India. This however does not mean that the two countries follow a similar view. There are important differences in the two country's construct of the Indo-Pacific region. Again, both the countries are engaged and involved with China in many respects, particularly in the economic domain. Moreover, countries like Japan and India are more directly impacted by the Chinese ascendancy in the region in immediate terms and hence their approach may not coincide with that of the United States. The U.S. is fully cognizant of the reality and is therefore encouraging of the good relationship between the stakeholder countries. This strategy also fits in with the U.S. policy to encourage burden sharing in matters related to defence and security in the region. It is worth noting that countries like Germany and France have also decided to pull in their weight in favour of an open and inclusive Indo-Pacific. The United Kingdom has also lately started taking an active interest in the region. Therefore, a consultation process amongst the like-minded countries for a consensus on the security architecture in the Indo-Pacific is in common interest. The United States and India both benefit from an expanded and common approach amongst the stakeholder

countries and the positive relationship between the two countries would play a constructive role in the security and development of the Indo-Pacific region.

## **Research Findings**

The research undertaken in this thesis has attempted to answer the research questions raised on the entirety of relationship of the India and the United States as well as questions related to specific areas of cooperation between the two countries.

## **Research Questions**

The following set of research questions covering the entirety of relationship of the two countries as well as questions related to specific areas have been raised in the research work:

Broad Questions:

1. Is it possible to contextualize the India-U.S. strategic relationship as a global partnership or it is best to understand it as a strengthened bilateral partnership?
2. Is it possible for India-U.S. strategic partnership to overwhelm and overshadow the U.S.-China and the U.S.-Pakistan relationship?

Issue Specific Questions:

1. Have there been substantive changes in the level of collaboration between India and the U.S. on counter-terrorism efforts?
2. Have India and the U.S. been able to overcome the structural and legal constraints for achieving enhanced cooperation in the civil nuclear domain?

3. How are India and the U.S. conducting their defence ties and strategic cooperation?
4. What is the outlook and approach of the two countries toward Indo-Pacific region?

It has been asked in the research questions, if it is possible to contextualize the India-U.S. strategic relationship as a global partnership or is it best to understand it as a strengthened bilateral partnership. Despite an unprecedented level of synergy and cooperation, India and the U.S. are not global partners in any specific domain or area of international engagement. Though there has been significant convergence, there are no indications that divergences in the relationship, whether on the question of international outlook or on issues related to peace and conflict in the Middle East, democratization of international institutions, strategy vis a vis China, war between Russia and Ukraine, a common position on Pakistan etc. have been sorted out between the two countries. As such, even when the two countries have been able to arrive at a strengthened relationship and extended the scope of their cooperation, the two countries are far removed from achieving a global partnership.

Another broad research question addressed by this thesis is whether it has been possible for India-U.S. strategic partnership to overwhelm and overshadow the U.S.-China and the U.S.-Pakistan relationship? The research undertaken for this thesis has demonstrated that the answer to this question is in the negative. The U.S. and India are both committed to contain China, more specifically in the context of an open and inclusive Indo-Pacific. But this understanding has not been enough to undercut the U.S.-China relations, specifically in terms of economic interdependence of the two countries. Lately, the U.S. and China have differed and clashed on a number of issue



areas but these have been short of building up of any coalition against each other. On Pakistan too, the U.S. policy and stance have undergone significant changes in the last two decades but this has been confined more in the realm of the U.S.' counter-terrorism effort. As such even when the U.S. has been critical of Pakistan and has cut out financial packages to the country, it has enjoyed good understanding and accommodation with Pakistan on Afghanistan, to the extent of intensive negotiation and active collaboration for the facilitation of the return of the Taliban in the aftermath of the withdrawal of the U.S. troops from that country.

Certain questions related to specific area of collaboration between the two countries were raised in the thesis. Have there been substantive changes in the level of collaboration between India and the U.S. on counter-terrorism? The answer to the question is in the positive. India had long suffered the painful consequences of terrorist activities and terrorism and this was not much appreciated by the U.S. in the 1990s. However, both the countries are on the same page on the threat posed by terrorism especially in the backdrop of the 9/11 terrorist attack on the U.S. There have been a very high level of cooperation and collaboration between the two countries and India has been able to garner the support of the U.S. on terrorism related aspects and issues, emanating from Pakistan. It has also been possible for India to achieve the active support of the U.S. in the UN and other international forums against Pakistan, especially in the context of designating some of the prominent terrorist groups as such and build up international opinion against them and their sponsors. Both the U.S. and India have been able to scale up and infuse qualitative collaboration against terrorism and terrorist groups and a very high level of convergence in this regard is seen.

Yet another research question asked if India and the U.S. have been able to overcome the structural and legal constraints for achieving enhanced cooperation in the civil nuclear domain. The answer to this question is complex. India has received the support of the U.S. in overcoming the sanctions imposed in the wake of the Pokhran-II nuclear tests. The civil nuclear cooperation as such was expected to be revitalized. However, due to a number of legal issues related to full scope safeguards, it has not been possible for the two countries to achieve cooperation at a desired level. In fact, despite the support of the U.S., India has not been able to become part of the nuclear suppliers group though India has been able to access the international nuclear market and has received waiver and exceptions for its nuclear facilities for peaceful uses.

Last two question raised in this thesis is about the conduct of defence and security cooperation between India and the U.S. and approach and outlook of the two countries toward Indo-Pacific region. Chapter 5 and 6 of the thesis were devoted to the examination of these two questions. The answer is that the two countries have strengthened their defence ties and security cooperation. A lot of agreements have been inked to facilitate defence cooperation and mechanisms at the highest levels of the Governments of the two countries has been established. Defence purchases from the U.S. has been prioritized by India. However, this has not meant ending of defence relations with Russia. Despite the reservations openly expressed by the U.S. Government, India has gone ahead with defence purchases with Russia. Moreover, the differing approach of India and the U.S. over Russia-Ukraine war has shown that there are effective limitations on the India-U.S. relations. The bilateral content in the relationship has grown richer over the years but independent course of foreign policy choices and priorities of India cannot be discounted by the U.S.

With regard to the outlook toward the Indo-Pacific region, the two sides have been able to achieve a great degree of convergence. The interests of the two countries converge on Indo-Pacific region and therefore both the countries have achieved a lot of synergy in their approach toward the region. However, this has not been enough to overcome the differences amongst the partners and some of the allies of the U.S. in the region. There is no unanimity on a definitive approach towards China. India, Australia, and Japan are not confident about steadfastness of the U.S.' commitment to the security of Indo-Pacific region. They are also wary of causing any provocation to China. Besides, India is always chary of aligning itself with any country through an alliance system as this would undermine its independence. Therefore, it may be said that both India and the U.S. are engaged in building framework of cooperation but they are not necessarily aligned to each other's approach and stance toward China in the region.

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