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INDO-US RELATIONS UNDER MODI'S ADMINISTRATION: AN ANALYSIS

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Abstract

The United States and India have complementary economic and strategic security goals, since the former seeks to preserve global economic and military dominance. India, for its part, wishes to strengthen security relations with the United States in order to become a major regional and global force in the near future. Their shared perspective of terrorism has strengthened their relationship, with India quickly endorsing the US position on the "War on Terror." The relationship between India and the United States of America is as complex as it is varied. Ideology, strategy, and values have all played a part in Indo-US ties throughout the years. They have had various effects over time, producing incentives for divergence or convergence in the relationship. Over the last few years, India's aggressive and pragmatic diplomatic measures have resulted in unprecedented levels of interaction with a diverse range of countries. Prime Minister Modi has prioritized the building of Indian-American commercial, political, and security ties. This article is an attempt to investigate and analyze the new elements of Indo-US foreign policy, as well as to advocate for India's significant position in world politics under Prime Minister Narendra Modi. However, following his formal designation in 2014, Modi has worked tirelessly to change India's questions into amazing worldwide leaders in terms of adaptability and via profound active activities.

Key words: Terrorism, Indo-US relations, Foreign policy, Chabahar port, Diaspora

Introduction

Because of its dynamic nature, international politics underwent significant upheaval after the Cold War ended. With the fall of the Soviet Union, the globe became unipolar, with the United States emerging as the single superpower. Changes in the global power structure began to characterize state interactions, and international relations began to be characterized by trans-regional security frameworks and growing economic cooperation. South Asia, like other areas, could not stay untouched by new advancements. South Asia emerged as a center of significant worldwide interest after a period of relative marginalization, and it gradually began to enhance its influence in world affairs. A variety of causes pushed the US to make significant political and diplomatic efforts in its involvement with South Asia, which took on fresh vigor after September 11, 2001.¹The change of ties with India was the most significant strategic goal for the United States.

Since India's independence, the political relationship between India and the United States has always been prioritized in terms of economic, strategic, and diplomatic cooperation. George W. Bush, the former President of the United States of America, once stated, "*United States are separated by half of a globe. Yet today our two nations are closer than ever before*".² This comment by Bush plainly referred to the two nations' expanding future connection. While Nehru had earlier recommended in an address to the US Congress in 1949 that, "*Friendship and Cooperation between our two countries are.....natural*".³ The progressive evolution of Indo-US proximity may be demonstrated by integrating three bigger areas of cooperation that notably impact on structural, domestic, and individual leadership aspects, which have therefore altered Indo-US relations into a new viewpoint over the last seven decades. To fulfil the structural partnership resulting from the cold war, the Indian nationalist leader offered a pragmatic inclusion with the US government. At the same time, India's internal relationship with the US is mostly based on economic guarantees. Individually, the political leaders of India and the United States created some immediate political capital to create an environment in which an Indo-US alliance might take realistic form.⁴ These three degrees of understanding between India and the United States represent a new trend in their foreign policy viewpoints from the Cold War to the Modi era. It is clear that Indo-US bilateral ties, particularly in the twenty-first century, have changed into a Global Strategic Partnership based largely on collective democratic principles and rising convergence of bilateral, regional, and global issues.⁵ To accomplish this strategic cooperation, India's political elite, notably after 2014, when the BJP-led NDA Modi government came to power, has shifted dramatically in favor of growth and good governance with the US administration. More precisely create an opportunity for the strengthening of both bilateral connections and the enhancement of the cooperative motto based on the premise of 'Forward Together We Go in to Action' via "shared efforts and progress of all." This is the fruitful outcome of the political spectrum established by both countries during their institutional engagement in September 2014 and January 2015, respectively. For re-engaging a fresh political handshake with the United States, Modi's government often exchanges high-profile political visits from both nations, which have provided sustained impetus to their bilateral cooperation and broad-ranging engagement architecture. Today's bilateral reconciliation between India and the United States includes commerce and investment, civil nuclear energy and space technology, defense and security, research and technology, sustainable energy, and other areas. For the first time in Modi's tenure, the new vision to change India was structured, with a focus on development goals and prospects for strengthening Indo-US economic connections, regional and global stability, and global economic growth. Within this context, President Obama emphasized the US willingness to collaborate with India on this change.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW: As democratic countries, both the United States and India place greater emphasis on foreign policy than the rest of the globe. In the contemporary world, the United States is recognized as the oldest democratic country in terms of power, while India is recognized as the greatest democratic country in terms of people.⁶ Following the establishment of the Republic of India, Jawaharlal Nehru told his fellow legislators that "*India not only stood for progressive democracy in our own country but also in other countries ... it has consistently been part of our policy in distant quarters of the world*".⁷ This Nehru comment had a significant impact on India's identity as a democracy. He hoped to make his country's international identity a foreign policy priority. In the same year, US President William Bill Clinton told the Indian Parliament that the term "virtues of Democracy" is an ideational ideal that unites both India and the United States.⁸ This is obvious from the fact that democratic standards in both nations have played a constructive role not only in establishing a new foreign policy view for seven decades, but also in creating a new international order and balance by promising peace and tranquility, particularly in South Asia and Asia Pacific region. Since its inception, the Indo-US relationship has been shaped by three critical parameters: ideology, strategy, and values. As a result, India's foreign policy initiative has shifted variably on her local, regional, and international structural domains. Based on this criterion, Indian foreign policy has established a space for similar interests and shared political principles between the United States and India after 70 years of strategic handshake. However, the Indo-US cooperation at many levels may be extensively examined via numerous times in which India regularly attempted its level to make Indian foreign policy superior in order to preserve a relationship with the rest of the country in a different way.

Indo-US Relations (1947-2000): The Indo-US relationship is far more traditional, based on a variety of sources of similarities and dissimilarities in their partnership. However, India's presence in the globe since Nehru's time discreetly explains the close relationship with the United States. This has frequently been seen in their relationship through many fold ups and downs. India's foreign policy and admission into the international community may be traced back to the cold war period which resulted in the emergence of the United States and the Soviet Union as two world powers. This would be a reaction to ideological manipulation and a wide spectrum of military conflict, known technically as the cold war. The United States dominated capitalism ideology, whereas the Soviet Union led communist ideology. However, Nehru refused to join any power bloc and instead chose to remain in isolation by instituting an independent foreign policy known as the Non-Alignment Movement (NAM). During the first border battle between India and China, the Indo-US relationship took on new dimensions (1962). It was the United States' diplomatic strategy to back India against China in the Asia-Pacific area.⁹ For the first time, China tested nuclear weapons in early 1964, considerably increasing the weight of power in the Asia subcontinent zone. During such a vital era, India need assured support and hence made an early plea to nearby permanent members, especially the United States, England, and the Soviet Union, for aid in securing her national security first. This, in turn, increases the possibility of India's dilemma toward the United States, notably China¹⁰ Furthermore, after 1967, the ideological conflict between the United States and India became consistent on the regional disagreement and worldwide strategic endeavor. As a result of the NAM's unitary strategy, the US has met another geopolitical hurdle and preserves the possibility of entering South Asia despite Soviet and Chinese opposition. However, after Nehru's death, the inking of India's foreign policy experienced a realistic posture to decide India's future position under Mrs. Indira Gandhi's enabling leadership. This is mostly due to an inability to oversee power politics in its territories. Even restriction of entry to 1967 ASEAN and NPT (presented by world-leading nuclear power) in 1968 is a point of contention with the US, as is the growing strategic gap between the two countries. The Soviet Union had offered some vital crucial protection from the ongoing regional opponent in order to boost India at the strategic level. As a result, the 'Indo-Soviet Friendship for Peace and Cooperation' was officially signed in 1971, in which two nations exchanged their resolution to offer help to each other in order to take over the military danger. Following that, India publicly took out many foreign aids in favor of the Soviet Union in order to remove itself from any type of conflict. However, during the 1971 Bangladesh war, US President Nixon openly abandoned Pakistan and, more crucially, provided technological aid to aircraft and a close relationship between the US and Pakistan on the one hand, which eventually had a detrimental influence on Indo-US relations. At the Pokhran range in 1974, India successfully completed its first set of peaceful nuclear weapon tests. However, the United States has inherited a distinct viewpoint when it comes to prioritizing nonproliferation efforts in South Asia. As Josan Kirk stated, in India's opinion, the nuclear claim of the P-5 countries in the west is highly discriminating, and India's desire to keep its zone free of any outside danger was not significant.¹¹ Nonetheless, with the end of the Cold War, India's foreign policy adopted a fresh attitude to reconsider its national interests not only in global politics, but also as a witness to the rapid changes in Indo-US ties. As a result, two main parallel trends have been widely observed, namely, the need to challenge the West's ideological supremacy and the role of NAM in superpower competition. Following the advice of Monahan Singh, India's then-finance minister, India embarked on a series of reforms to liberalise the Indian economy, with the goal of reopening its narrow economy dimension into a macro payment system for the accumulation of more western capital.¹² After a gap of 24 years, India conducted her second series of nuclear tests in May 1998, performing five underground nuclear explosions at the Pokhran range, and declared herself a nuclear weapon state. This event no longer excludes India from a global stage, notably the government of the United States. As a result, President Clinton and his administration put an economic punishment on India right away. In such a stressful circumstance, several high-level bilateral meetings have taken place to shift the Indo-American dialogue from harsh to normal. According to C. Raja Mohan, "India's second nuclear test in 1998 marked an end to India's worldwide aloofness." They laid the groundwork for our reunification with any sort of global nuclear order and enhanced our relationship with the United Nations.¹³ The visit of US President Bill Clinton to India in March 2000 was a resounding success and watershed moment in the continuous change of Indo-US ties. In the aftermath of the twenty-first century, both Clinton and Vajpayee's administrations committed to establishing a future vision programme to bring about Indo-US bilateral ties via shared efforts

of peace, prosperity, democracy, and freedom. This progressive move forward might be regarded as a "vision for the twenty-first century." When they thought that by working together, they might achieve a lot of unusual and unwanted action plan. They agreed during their conversation that India and the United States are now two pillars of democracy, working in their respective fields to assist bilateral and international endeavours. However, frequent Indo-US connectivity will greatly boost trade and investment prospects in the economic sector, information technology, infrastructure, biotechnology, and services. In addition, both governments have decided to establish a Joint Consultative Group on Clean Energy and Environment, which will be primarily concerned with the development of mutual projects, the development of clean energy technologies, the priority of a mixed economy, climate change, and other environmental issues.¹⁴

Indo-US Relations (2001-2014): Following the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York (9/11) and the Indian Parliament (13/12), the Indo-US relationship gained traction in 2001. As a result, the Indo-US relationship immediately stabilized in preparation for the implementation of a combined action plan against fundamental terrorism. This historical rebirth hurt government machinery while also posing an unanticipated danger to the system's weakening security capabilities. Following a brief period, the Bush Administration pushes his 'War on Terror' declaration, which is predicated on taking action against terrorists. Fighting for collective security and other mass killing occurrences that cause ordinary people to suffer is a societal commitment, generating an urgent need.¹⁵ In this regard, following the terrorist attack on the Indian parliament on December 13, 2001, the US government put significant pressure on Pakistan to stop cross-border terrorism along India's boundary line. The year 2004 may be classified in terms of expanding Indo-US strategic collaboration. The United States and India partnered in the early months of January to design a plan for the Next Steps in Strategic Partnership (NSSP). This mostly relates to the civil nuclear programme, civilian space collaboration, sophisticated trade transaction processes, and increased discussion of the missile defense system. Both the Bush and Singh administrations have maintained that the Indo-US strategic partnership is now a reality. This will need more collaborative efforts on strategic, energy security, and economic challenges. In this strategic partnership, all parties are devoted to nation-building and, as a result, to the remarkable growth of long-term partnerships.¹⁶ Similarly, Monahan Singh's journey to the US on July 18, 2005, was another key breakthrough in India-US relations, namely the 'Indo-US Nuclear Agreement.' The goals of this agreement were to establish a civil and nuclear agenda from India's perspective, as well as to renew civil-nuclear cooperation with the US, which had previously been discontinued in response to India's nuclear explosion in 1974. The most perplexing aspect of this agreement was the Bush administration's commitment on "working with friends and partners to achieve complete nuclear collaboration with India." This agreement specifies some key areas, including (a) the separation of civilian and military nuclear facilities and programmes, (b) the promotion of additional protocol with respect to a civilian nuclear facility, and (c) collaboration with the United States to conclude a multilateral fissile material cut-off treaty.¹⁷ Following the aforementioned approach, it can be safely argued that India earned more potential as a result of the agreement, as well as equal status. However, a year later, in 2006, the Bush administration announced that India is now well positioned to be counted as a country with the capacity and competence to show the world in terms of developing her international obligations and attempted to address any imbalances or impediments.¹⁸ On July 27, 2007, India and the United States inked another type of nuclear trade pact known as the '123 Agreement,' which protects India's civil nuclear reactor. The IAEA proposed this agreement on August 1, 2008. In the same year, for the first time, India obtained an influential claim created by a gathering of 48 country bloc whose member is guaranteed to maintain the broad range of commerce and nuclear accessory exchange with India. In particular, in 2008, India concluded a civil nuclear agreement with the United States, which later enabled India to successfully submit his membership application to the NSG.¹⁹ Additionally, the Indo-US joint conclave made an agreement to look out in the fields of education, information technology, and communication at various times. However, under the guidance of Monmohan Singh and during his visit to Washington in 2009, the 'Obama-Singh 21st Century Knowledge Initiative' was implemented in real-time. The goal is to build a faculty development programme centred on various universities between the two countries. With the inauguration of Obama, the Indo-US strategic handshake handbook gained new momentum, both defining national security and strategic communication on June 1-4, 2010. This articulation was given precedence in order to reaffirm the commitment to broad-based collaboration across a range of linkages, including nonproliferation.²⁰

Modi's Vision of Foreign Policy:

Foreign policy has been a top concern for Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi since May 2014. No Indian leader has demonstrated such extraordinary knowledge to simplify an otherwise complicated issue in a rapidly changing multi-polar globe to which India is closely related.

The foundations of Modi's foreign policy vision may be seen in the 2014 BJP Election Manifesto:

"The vision is to fundamentally reboot and reorient the foreign policy goals, content and process, in a manner that locates India's global strategic engagements in a new paradigm and on a wider canvass, that is not just limited to political diplomacy, but also includes our economic, scientific, cultural, political and security interests, both regional and global, on the principles of equality and mutuality, so that it leads to an economically stronger India, and its voice is heard in the international fora".²¹

Modi's global strategy is built on tying India's foreign policy to internal development. While his policies aim to attract international money, technology, and open foreign markets for Indian products, they also aim to promote regional stability, peace, and prosperity. He has worked hard to promote the NDA government's major programmes such as Make in India, Digital India, Smart Cities, Clean Ganga, Swachh Bharat, Skill India, and Startup India. Modi's foreign policy has a development story.

Modi's outstanding achievement has been to stimulate and inspire the Indian diaspora. The diaspora has evolved as a substantial role in domestic politics in various nations, notably the United States and the United Kingdom. The most noteworthy accomplishment has been a focus on 'India First'. Modi's achievement is that India is equally important for USA, Russia, and China.

Modi began his tenure by overtly solidifying India's regional foundation by inviting leaders of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) to his inauguration. Through this gesture, India's new Prime Minister demonstrated to not just the region, but also the globe, that "India is back," and that Modi's India will be considerably different from the one seen in previous decades. Modi stressed that India was not searching for any old alliances. It is seeking for suitable partners. And the United States was the first to embrace this approach. This enabled him to earn significant benefits for India.

This question is natural that why the US is giving so much importance to India? Answer is in the Morgenthau's theory of international politics- "There is no permanent enemy and there is no permanent friend in international relations"²² National Interest is the most crucial. Indian decisions are based on national interests, even when they conflict with the US global agenda. Given this approach, the following keystones are critical to bringing India and America closer together:

The following points are the main pillars of Indo-US relations:

1. With his foreign policy priorities and actions, there is a symbiotic connection that the Indian Prime Minister has established with the broad panorama of Non Resident Indians (NRIs) and Overseas Citizens (OCIs) of India, which includes those formerly known as Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) scattered over the world. The diaspora provides oxygen for Modi as a world leader, and Modi serves as a beacon for the millions who left India physically but not emotionally or culturally.

2. The depth of Modi's reappraisal of India's role in the world, and the corollary place of its 25 million-plus diaspora, is evident in a phrase he used for the homeland in one of his many electrifying speeches before dotting NRIs and OCIs in September 2016: BahuratnaVashundhara, or a land rich with priceless gems that can continue to give generously for the well-being of the universe. 4 To Modi, India is an unsung hero for the plethora of gifts it has bestowed in international affairs, such as the VashudhaivaKutumbakam ethos, Vivekananda's gospel of spiritual oneness of humanity, Mahatma Gandhi's ideologies of nonviolence and ecological conservation, and the Indian model of "live and let live" and multicultural coexistence. He has left no stone unturned in his appreciation for the Indian diaspora as torchbearers who have been perfect migrants in their host countries, contributing sweat and blood to help other countries prosper. This initiative has served to remind host nations that individuals of Indian ancestry are significant assets to them and, by extension, that bilateral relations with the Indian state are enriched by this unique human resource

component. Modi's diasporic support is now widespread and accurately reflects India's socioeconomic, ethnic, and religious diversity.

Simultaneously, it has made the Indian diaspora more amicable and capable of uniting to advocate for Indian concerns in their individual countries of residence.

3. The Trump administration has used a combination of diplomatic, strategic, and trade actions against its trading partners in order to improve the flow of products and services to those markets while decreasing US imports. It is also reshaping the United States' ties with countries such as China, the European Union, and Canada. "The most crucial item will be the United States' position on India's \$10 billion oil imports from Iran (a country facing US trade sanctions)." "The United States can't easily go to war with China with Pericles at the helm of its fighting fleet." China not only possesses an abundance of nuclear weapons, but also \$1.7 trillion in US Treasury bonds. It's tough to go to battle with someone who controls a major portion of your economy.

China's massive Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which incorporates land and sea connectivity, is challenging US supremacy and extending Chinese influence well beyond the golden time of the Tang dynasty. Today's BRI is known for creating debt traps and effectively stealing sovereign territory. In the current environment, China and India must deepen their cooperation to oppose trade protectionism. The government of India was the first to formally criticise the Belt and Road Initiative, stating that international connectivity programmes must be transparent and financially viable. The United States has been urging India to be more assertive in building a new Indo-Pacific security paradigm, which Beijing views with scepticism.

4. Another irritation has been the United States' attitude regarding China's engagement in South Asia. Every Indian prime minister in recent memory has pledged publicly to increase cooperation and alignment with the US, but in fact, strategic convergence has trailed far behind. For example, at the Shangri-La Dialogue in June, Prime Minister Narendra Modi emphasised the importance of promoting a common rules-based international order in the Indo-Pacific within which all nations can thrive as equal and sovereign entities — a decisive affirmation of the United States' vision for regional security.²³ Notably, Indian strategists insist that the United States' idea of the Indo-Pacific Strategy include the term "inclusive" to ensure that it is portrayed as a broadly favourable agenda for all countries in the area, rather than one for the United States alone. The rebranding of the US Pacific Command to the Indo-Pacific Command by the US Defense Department in 2018 underscored the importance of India's role in sustaining global peace and security. In addition, the US government has reaffirmed India's position as a "Major Defense Partner. in the recently approved Fiscal Year 2019 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) emphasised the significance of the US-India defence alliance in the face of a convergent threat attitudes about China.

5. India is now critical to the US South Asia Policy in Afghanistan. The cause is straightforward: a persistent sense of uncertainty. A year after US President Donald Trump announced his new strategy regarding Afghanistan. The declared objective of the US policy last year was to break the military stalemate on the ground by boosting the deployment and involvement of US and NATO troops in Afghanistan. Another hurdle to the Trump administration's South Asian agenda is Iran. Iran borders both Afghanistan and Pakistan, and any action taken against Tehran will have regional consequences. Second, America's present drive to sanction and isolate Iran will undoubtedly deflect attention away from the aim of resolving the Afghan crisis. Finally, by building the Chabahar port, Iran provides an additional path to the sea for landlocked Afghanistan's commercial routes, which connects in with India's purpose of avoiding Pakistan.

This is why US President Donald Trump's prior objective of defeating the Taliban in Afghanistan has been quietly abandoned. Next, India must do everything it can to assist Afghanistan in making its elections as peaceful and participatory as possible. India's development assistance has given it enormous influence and goodwill among Afghan civilians, Regardless of other circumstances, India's ambitions at Chabahar remain critical to its aspirations to retain relations with Afghanistan. The US deliberately chose to exclude India from sanctions connected to the building of Iran's strategically located Chabahar port. The railway link between Afghanistan and Iran will also be exempt from Washington's sanctions. The Trump administration's historic decision confirms India's involvement in developing Chabahar, as well as its strategic importance for Afghan rehabilitation and prosperity. Trump's move will surely aid in the protection

of both Indian and American interests in Afghanistan. In May 2016, India, Iran, and Afghanistan announced an agreement to construct a transit and transport corridor connecting the three nations, with Chabahar port serving as one of the regional hubs. Last month, Tehran hosted the first trilateral summit to assess implementation. It is also hoped that, once fully operational, the Chabahar port would be able to compete with Pakistan's Gwadar port, which is supported by China. Tehran intends to benefit the most from the Chabahar Port, which would connect Iran with the rest of the world and assist it in recovering from the severe sanctions that have been re-imposed on it. Afghanistan is seeking to re-establish trade ties with India and to become less reliant on Pakistan. One important issue that appears to have persuaded the Trump administration to approve a waiver for the Chabahar Port is that if Afghanistan becomes a theatre of US-Iranian confrontation, any politically mediated settlement with the Afghan Taliban becomes considerably more difficult. Strategically, the Trump administration was wise not to permit the Chabahar port since its operation would bring Afghanistan and India closer together, lessening the strength of Pakistan and China. The exemption for Chabahar is related to the port's importance for both India and Afghanistan, as well as the centrality of India and Afghanistan to US foreign policy interests. The first phase of the Chabahar Port opened in December 2017, and India transported its first shipment of wheat to Afghanistan through this port. India has written history with its engagement in Chabahar and is presently driving regional collaboration and cooperative efforts to assist landlocked Afghanistan. This port is also considered a feeder port for the International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC), which connects India, Russia, Iran, Europe, and Central Asia via sea, rail, and road.

6. Prime Minister Modi's ambitious foreign policy has concentrated primarily on building Indo-American economic, political, and security connections, and he has visited the United States three times in less than two years. Despite the recent glitch in the relationship over US F-16 sales to Pakistan, the US and India are positioned to achieve more progress on defence and security cooperation in the final months of Obama's presidency. While US officials expressed a desire for India to play a bigger role in East Asia as part of the US Asia rebalancing plan, the previous Manmohan Singh administration reacted carefully to US public overtures and looked torn over a strategy to deal with growing China. The signing of the Joint Strategic Vision for the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean in January 2015, pledging the United States and India to collaboration outside of South Asia, is one example of this more forward-thinking approach. The Indo-US security relationship is exemplified by the Defence Trade and Technology Initiative (DTTI), jet engine technology, aircraft carrier systems, and co-production of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and specialised equipment for military transport aircraft. In order to advance maritime security cooperation, Indian Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar visited the United States Pacific Command for the first time in December 2015. During the same trip, US Secretary of Defense Ash Carter and Minister Parrikar flew in a V22 Osprey jointly to the deck of the USS Eisenhower to discuss and assess advanced carrier cooperation. The introduction of the US-India Defence Technology and Partnership Act in late March 2016 was a potentially important move in boosting India-US strategic ties, probably the most significant since the passing of the 2006 Hyde Act in favour of US-India civil nuclear cooperation. Among these steps are designating a point person to coordinate the interagency policy process regarding defence, trade, and technology transfer with India; facilitating the transfer of advanced technology for combined military planning with the Indian military on humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, counter-piracy, and maritime domain awareness; coordinating with India on contingency planning on mutual security threats; and amending the Arms Export Control Act. The United States now treats India as a NATO partner, largely because India maintains strong military ties with Russia and is concerned about technological control. However, the United States must consider the growing security situation with regard to China, as well as the necessity for nations such as India to play a critical role in maintaining the balance of power in Asia and ensuring the freedom of the seaways. India needs significant defence capabilities and access to sophisticated military technologies to play its role in helping to stabilise and protect the Indo-Pacific region. The ongoing global and regional terrorist threats necessitate a stronger foundation of confidence between New Delhi and Washington in terms of homeland security cooperation and intelligence sharing. India and the United States will benefit mutually from expanding their counterterrorism cooperation in terms of sharing best practises for preventing terrorist attacks, countering the ideology that drives terrorism, disrupting terrorist recruitment via social media, and cooperating diplomatically to delegitimize terrorism. Even the United States halted yearly funding of 1.3

million dollars and military aid of 30 million dollars, despite the good news and goodwill on the India-US front, following the United States' refusal to sell F-16 fighter jets to Pakistan due to Indian objection.

The bigger problem now is to recognise that existing nuclear arms control mechanisms can only be retained if they change to account for new realities. The 2018 Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) of the United States reflects a harsher assessment of the security situation in which the country finds itself, and it envisions a more broad role for nuclear weapons than in the past. For the first time, China is defined as a strategic rival pursuing near-term regional hegemony in the Indo-pacific area and long-term displacement of the United States to achieve global preeminence. The essential distinction in today's re-emergence of major power competition is that the world is no longer bipolar, and nuclear weapons control is no longer dictated by a single binary equation. There are several nuclear equations, including US-Russia, US-China, US-North Korea, India-Pakistan, and India-China, but none is stand-alone. During his first two years in government, Modi has worked hard to enhance strategic connections with Washington, raise India's worldwide profile, and indicate his country's willingness to contribute to the stability, security, and openness of the Asia-Pacific region.

7. Bilateral commerce in products and services between India and the United States climbed from \$104 billion in 2014 to \$114 billion in 2016. Both nations have agreed to facilitate the activities required to increase bilateral trade to \$500 billion. In 2017, bilateral merchandise trade is growing at a promising rate. In 2014, India and the United States established a bilateral Investment Initiative with a specific focus on enabling FDI, portfolio investment, capital market growth, and infrastructure funding. US companies will be the primary partners in the development of Allahabad, Ajmer, and Vishakhapatnam as Smart Cities. USAID will act as a knowledge partner for the Urban India Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) alliance, leveraging business and civil society (Gates Foundation) to improve access to safe drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene in 500 Indian cities.²⁴

Modi's rallying cry at Davos was "India Means Business." As the government incorporates GST into the economy, India has made remarkable progress toward increased tax certainty, predictability, and transparency. A significant step forward in improving the investment climate would be to reduce tax uncertainty for multinational corporations and institutional investors, particularly in areas such as resolving transfer pricing disputes, updating the US-India bilateral tax treaty, and overhauling tax litigation and administrative processes, among other things.

Indo-US relations under the Modi government

Within a few months of taking office, Prime Minister Modi travelled to the United States for his first bilateral meeting with President Barack Obama. By June 2016, the two heads of state had met four times, including President Obama's historic visit to New Delhi as the principal guest at India's Republic Day festivities in January 2015. This series of encounters is unprecedented for an Indian prime minister: Modi's predecessors Narashima Rao, A. B. Vajpayee, and Manmohan Singh each held only one bilateral summit with their American counterparts during their first two years in office.²⁵ These regular high-level exchanges have revitalised the partnership. The significance the two presidents have placed on their summits reflects the altered atmosphere in the bilateral relationship. If India has been a "indispensible partner" for Obama, Modi has often emphasised the need of strengthening bilateral ties with the US. During his September 2014 visit to America, the two heads of state even co-wrote an editorial in the Washington Post, referring to themselves as "global partners" and their partnership as "defining the twenty-first century."²⁶ During a subsequent visit to the US in June 2016, Modi referred to Obama as a "friend" with whom he shared a "unique wavelength."²⁷

To some extent, the personalised nature of Modi's diplomacy has helped Indo-US ties to emerge from the old stalemate. Regardless of the atmosphere, Modi's foreign policy practise has demonstrated a solid conviction that if Indo-US ties are to advance, many impediments that have obstructed the route must be eliminated. The two nations created a Contact Group during their first bilateral summit to discuss "all implementation difficulties, including administrative issues, liabilities, technical challenges, and licensing to assist the creation of nuclear parks in India."²⁸ The Contact Group met for the first time in December 2014 in New Delhi, then again in January 2015, soon before President Obama's visit to the city. The focus of these meetings remained India's nuclear liability law, passed in 2010 by the UPA government, which, as

previously stated, held nuclear equipment suppliers responsible in the event of a nuclear accident: this stipulation not only violated established international norms as enshrined in the Convention for Supplementary Compensation (CSC) for nuclear damage, but had also discouraged US firms such as Westinghouse and General Electric from investing in India's nuclear industry. Because altering the 2010 legislation would have been difficult for any Indian administration, New Delhi tackled the liability problem with a two-pronged strategy: damages incurred by suppliers and principally covered by the Indian government. Second, in private, New Delhi informed the US that certain portions of the CLND Act, particularly article 46, which deals with liability in the event of a nuclear catastrophe, would be construed selectively, so that the government of India would hold operators accountable rather than suppliers.²⁹ These tangible actions helped alleviate American worries, and during Obama's January 2015 visit to New Delhi, the two nations claimed that the civil nuclear cooperation stumbling block had been broken. New Delhi also kept its commitments fast. By June 2015, the government of India had established a national insurance pool worth Rs1,500 crores (approximately US\$230 million); in February 2016, India ratified the CSC; and in June 2016, the General Insurance Corporation of India rolled out nuclear insurance policies for the Nuclear Power Corporation of India (NPCIL), the government enterprise that operates nuclear power plants in India.³⁰ The fact that during Modi's visit to the United States in June 2016, the two sides announced the start of preparatory work by Westinghouse to build six nuclear power stations in India demonstrates India's achievement in resolving the vexing problem of nuclear liability.³¹ Closer defense ties have also been a feature of Indo-US relations in the last decade. The two countries agreed on a ten-year framework for defense cooperation in 2005. By 2008, the United States had become India's largest exporter of defense equipment. The two countries' military services take part in several cooperative exercises. However, as previously stated, defense cooperation between the two countries stalled during the UPA's second term. In contrast, during the first two years of the Modi administration, defence cooperation has resurfaced as an important component of the bilateral relationship. Under Modi, the Indian Ministry of Defense (MoD) has taken the lead in pursuing deeper collaboration with the US. During Modi's visit to the United States in September 2014, the two countries agreed to extend the defense cooperation deal for another decade. The 'New Framework for Defense Cooperation' was formally reaffirmed in June 2015, during US Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter's visit to India.³² In September 2014, the two sides had also agreed to reinvigorate the DTTI to 'expeditiously evaluate and decide on unique projects and technologies which would have a transformative impact on bilateral defense relations and enhance India's defense industry and military capabilities'.³³

The DTTI, which was formed in 2012 at the request of then-Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta, had gone into disuse due to the negligence of the Indian Ministry of Defense under A. K. Antony. Senior US officials feel that the Modi government has given the proposal fresh life.³⁴ Since the new regime took power, the DTTI has served as the primary forum for bilateral negotiations on defense technology cooperation, with its first success in August 2015, when two project agreements on mobile electric power sources and a 'new generation protective ensemble' were signed. 35 Working groups on aircraft-carrier technology cooperation and jet-engine technology cooperation have also been created under the DTTI. The Indian Ministry of Defense and the Pentagon agreed on a "master information exchange agreement" involving aircraft-carrier technologies in June 2016. This deal will make it easier to transfer technologies for India's next-generation aircraft carrier development. The signing of the LEMOA in August 2016 marked the most significant development in India's defense relations with the United States. This is an India-specific version of the Logistics Sharing Agreement (LSA) that the US has signed with all of its defense allies and partners worldwide. The UPA government had been hesitant to sign the agreement, partly for fear of attracting Chinese attention and drawing India into a security relationship with the US, but primarily for ideological reasons: the left-leaning sections of the Congress Party that had championed 'non-alignment' during the Cold War did not want to be seen as aligning India with the US. The Modi government, undaunted by Chinese concerns and free of the Congress Party's ideological baggage, recognized early on that foundational defence agreements such as the LSA, as well as BECA (Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement) and CISMOA (Communications and Information Security Memorandum of Agreement), were important facilitators of Indo-US defense cooperation. Rather than establishing permanent bases for US forces, as some critics of the deal claimed, the LEMOA only applies to 'mutual basing facilities' on a case-

by-case basis.³⁶It would assist the Indian military forces, particularly the navy, in expanding their presence in the maritime domain;³⁷ and it would promote joint exercises undertaken by the Indian armed forces with the US and its numerous Asian–Pacific partners. As it did in resolving the deadlock in civil nuclear energy cooperation, the Modi government moved quickly to remove obstacles to Indo-US defense collaboration. This increased defense cooperation highlights another crucial aspect Modi has been able to incorporate into the Indo-US equation: New Delhi now looks eager to work with the US to manage the ramifications of China's growth in the Indo-Pacific.³⁸Unlike the previous UPA administration, Modi has not toned down his criticism of China's aggressive policies. Modi blasted the nineteenth-century attitude of expansionism during his September 2014 visit to Japan, an evident allusion to China's forceful behavior in the South China Sea.³⁹ The same tone could be found in the joint statement published at the conclusion of Modi's first bilateral meeting with President Obama. For the first time, an Indo-US joint statement highlighted worry about "growing territorial conflicts" and challenges to maritime security and freedom of passage. The two leaders also urged all parties to avoid using or threatening to use force in furthering their claims.⁴⁰

Conclusions

The relationship between the United States and India altered considerably between the late 1990s and the late 2000s. What had been a distant and occasionally contentious relationship became one marked by increased collaboration on security and economic problems. Why this happened is intriguing in and of itself, but there are substantial theoretical implications as well. If we assume that state identity is a fundamental element in defining state interests, we must also investigate how variations in the balance of power impact how states define themselves. Because states have numerous identities, they may select which components of their identities to highlight or deemphasize in order to make policy changes more compatible with state identity. State identity influences how states develop their interests and pursue those objectives. For decades, India's identity was heavily shaped by concepts that went opposite to American interests. India, as the leader of the nonaligned movement and a self-proclaimed autarkic growth model, had little interest in the American-led postwar political and economic system. However, with the fall of the Soviet Union and India's departure from the quasi-socialist paradigm that had led it since independence, a path to a stronger partnership with the US was opened. However, the reunion between India and the US in the 1990s, and especially after 2001, could not have occurred without a shift in Indian state identity, which was founded on principles fundamentally incompatible with a deeper security partnership with the US. As the global balance of power shifted, India had compelling reasons to pursue an even tighter engagement with the US in order to secure its basic security interests in the face of China's increasing dominance. However, in doing so, the Indian media's coverage of the Indo–US connection began to stress components of Indian identity that were more closely aligned with American identity, and discussion of common ideals based on the two states' secular democratic identities grew more prominent.

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