

## How India Matters in World Power Politics

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### ABSTRACT

India matters since its independence in 1947 for United States. For India and United States are countries whose basic ethos of government and governance are based on democratic principles, 'We, the People.' It is the people that decide the fate and future of their countries in these two cases. India since its foundation laid on the ideologies of different countries and their prescriptions naturally prefers to remain a non-aligned country to any power blocs. Thus the definition implies non-aligned country as a country whose decision is based on self-judgment. It can remain party to either of the blocs, neither of the blocs or both of the blocs. If one retrospects Indian foreign policy ever since its independence, it has been guided by this non-aligned policy.

**Keywords:** India matters, World power politics, Democratic principles

The reason for adopting such foreign policy was simple that India got her independence from the British imperialist with non-violent method led by Mahatma Gandhi, who became the 'Father of the Nation.' Now, many may think how India became a nation? Well, the answers to this question can be answered with the federal structure it laid in its constitution, the Union of States.

Many scholars assumed that Indian federalism is State Nation as states are provided autonomy particularly in the cases of Jammu and Kashmir with Article 371 and 35 A, which was abrogated recently but its abrogation and the method it adopted remained an interrogation by European countries and others. As are also the cases of Article 371 series, where maximum autonomy, mechanism was provided to. Other Unitary features of the constitution reveal India's Centrifugal (Centralized federalism) rather than centripetal as is the case of United States with fifty federating states with its own constitutions.

The cold war was over in the 90s of the 20th century (1990s) Soviet Union was disintegrated/collapsed as communist ideology. Gorbachev played a key role in moderating Russia's aggressive policies. In 1988 Russian

troops were withdrawn from Afghanistan (as is now US Forces were withdrawn as the last batch yesterday the 1st September, 2021). In 1989 Berlin wall collapsed/the two Germanys were integrated into one/reunification. These events are represented by two ideologies (USA and former USSR). Now capitalism/all the Republics of former Soviet Union subscribed to capitalist mode and joined NATO. Thus United States emerged as the sole super power in the world.

### What is the importance of NAM?

1. NAM as non-aligned to the super powers need to see that no super power establishes its hegemony over the entire world.
2. To see that the advanced and developed nations do not take arbitrary decisions in any matter.
3. Fourth, Sixth point of the NAM Objectives etc, are as much important today then ever before
4. The imperative to established a New International Economic Order.
5. International Terrorism
6. NAM needs all the more new lease of life as it has grown considerably weaker and India with

major and other countries

Post Cold War Indo (South Asia)-US Relations *vis-à-vis* China there was a significant change in Indo-US relations after the end of Cold War in 1990s. All the more so after 9/11 (2001). Earlier US supported Pakistan, even in 1971 war against Indian liberation of East Pakistan (Bangladesh). The present development in Pakistan is roughly because of US support. However, now China replaces US in supporting Pakistan. In this changed scenario, US has come closer to India, particularly post Cold War and post 9/11(2001). As there is uni-polar world with US as hegemon, Taliban forces, despite its war with United States, when at the brink of withdrawal of the later has been as per media sources, CIA Director was in talk with the Taliban (White House has not clarified as yet) and Afghanistan Al Queda terrorists had been attacked by US at the same time they are in support of the Taliban forces. When former USSR was made to withdraw in 1979, from Afghanistan under pressure from NAM, notably through Indian leadership. This time round the corner, US unilaterally withdraw its troops from Afghanistan in 2019/2020/21. Globalisation has shrunk/integrated the world. In Indo-US relations the flow of US financially and technologically increased. US intelligence reported that Pakistan is funding terrorist network in its soil, which had been hidden. Finally, Musharraf also revealed this as....'safe haven for Al Queda terrorist.' Nepal situation again of being aided by China on Maoists matter is of concern. Recently Nepal has started talking about border issue with India on the instigation of China. India is concerned about China and Pakistan growing relationship as nuclear powers in the region. US and EU appeared to be genuinely interested in South Asia's progress. Whereas terrorism is global concern as all developed countries and developing world are affected by international terrorism. The US appeared eager to help India to check China. But this does not mean that US -China relations has been bad except in recent years under Trump administration in which China was imposed a sanction. Covid-19 pandemic issue is blamed by US and EU to be China, for its virus spread and its origin. China is a growing giant, US does not want to be surpassed by China. Indo-China relations have been also good and fixed trade target of 40 billion dollars by 2010.

NATO was formed in 1949. It is interesting to note that one of the key articles was accorded with the principle of collective self-defense enshrined in Article

51 of the UN Charter. The world witnessed ideological divide of US and Soviet Union after the Second World War that ended in 1945. Thereafter in the following years US determined to defend Western Europe with the aim to use nuclear weapons to deter Soviet ideological aggression. This formation of military alliance led by US was followed suit by Soviet Union led Warsaw Pact to counter NATO. Cold War originated in Europe and the Western power but events and conflicts elsewhere in other parts were also crucial. In internal conflicts the thirty-year-long Chinese Civil war ended in victory of communist leader under Mao Zedong. In June 1950, the Korean peninsular conflict was interpreted as US test and UN to withstand aggression.

The paper tries to look into the emerging power of the Indian Diaspora in US that plays a vital role in bridging the country of origin and the adopted home country. This section also focuses on the contributions made by the diaspora of Indian origin in various sectors of the Indian economy and in polity. Above all, it analyzes the brain-drain daulat-drain-in for the country of origin that could safely made arrived at the conclusion that in national balance sheet the credit side is heavier in the process of assessments of the values of the contributions made thus far by the Indian Diaspora. Straight on the onset, the record of brain drain is set right with the commonly assumed theory that quite contrary to the idea of brain drain that dominated the development debate in the 60s and 70s among the scholars and the policy makers of developing countries, diasporas in the age of internet are seen as resources who accumulate human, financial, and social capital for the development of their home communities. That is what I called daulat-drain-in by the brain drain for the country of origin. The Government of India has taken initiatives at the top level to provide institutionalized platform to facilitate the Diasporas to play development role back home. Thus, the need arose to develop a conceptual understanding of the terms diaspora, soft diplomacy and development itself which is linked to the onslaught of globalization and its impact in India. India's case of diasporic contributions to country of origin can be assessed and evaluated with due development reflections in their country/state. For instance the state of Punjab, despite distinguishing marked differences with the mainland Hindu belief system in many ways, the diaspora of Indian origin in Canada accounted for one third(But it is sad to learn the friction between India and Canada in the G-20 Indian

leadership because of Khalistan issue in Canada). Many old people of Punjab have come back to India and send again young people to settle abroad. In this way Indian diaspora contributed to enhancing economy in their country of origin, at the same time they are an asset to the receiving country.

This is reflected in the speeches and initiatives of the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs along with Ministry of Doner and CII. Mr. Vayalar Ravi, then Minister of Overseas Affairs said about the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas and their role that certainly could be in education which is the centre stage of development and more interaction with the international community will lead to faster development (Dunn, 1993). Mr. Kapil Sibal, then Minister of Human Resource Development emphasized that a critical mass of skilled workforce was required for India to achieve its growth potential and for which colleges, universities, vocational colleges will be required spread all over the country and the Indian Diaspora could make a big contribution by engaging actively with initiatives in this field. He said that time that within a span of four weeks recently, four heads of state—American President Barrack Obama, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, French President Nicholas Sarkozy and Chinese premier Wen Jabao had visited India—a testimony to the place India had come to occupy in the new world order( In Modi's leadership G-20 heads excepting China witness the growing India with their presence in attendance). Mr. Sam Pitroda, then Advisor to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said that mentoring by the diaspora of small groups and institutions on policy matters could be another area where they could make an active contribution.

Lord Bhikhu Parekh, member of PM's Global Advisory Council said that the diaspora could help in policy change as they had a rich global experience and could learn from good governance in other parts of the world.

In understanding the regional context of development, Diaspora Role Models from the North East and its Success Stories had interesting experiences of people who had moved from the North East and they had been successful. Though they all came from similar background-small place, simple circumstances-they seized the opportunities and overcame obstacles and were now keen to give back so that others could benefit. In 2011, North East is projected as a hub of an area of focus of interaction for development. It is hoped that there is

diaspora's shift for development in a regional wise. In this case, it is interesting to note of destination of the remittances which has shifted significantly from Kerala and Gujarat to Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.

Today, the 'burnt bridge' has become an important bridge to access knowledge, expertise, resources and markets for the country of origin (Rogaly, 1997). They spread along with them their culture and bridge the country of origin. People of Indian origin migrated from India during the colonial era. Indian Diaspora, initially, was literally pushed with their backs against the wall in order to survive. Still they decided to give the best of their abilities to their new, adopted home countries. For them, that time, the bridge to come back to India was burnt. So they willy-nilly struggled, grew in stature, and move up to socio-economic ladder in most of the countries they were in. There was mixture of people, some 'free passengers' from India, who went as traders, merchants, small businessmen and construction workers. They took Indian entrepreneurship and traditional business skill with them. In the last three decades of the 20th century the character of migration has begun to change and a 'new Diaspora' led by high skilled professionals moving to the western world and semi-skilled contract workers moving to the Gulf, West and South East Asia emerged (Singh, 1995). India now has become not job seekers but demand driven supplier of these professionals. While Indians were taken over as indentured labours to far-flung parts of the British Empire in the nineteenth-century, professional elite from this expatriate community has found its way to the United States (US), Canada, Australia, and other nations of the West in the twentieth century (Bremar, 2003; Deshpande and Deshpande, 1998; Kalpagam, 1994; Toye, 2003).

In turn, these professionals gain new expertise in various fields also. It is also observed that the Indo-American community in the US has been found to be the most educated immigrant community in the US. It is seen in the recent upturn that they have a lot to do with the lobbying, influence and reputation of the Indo-American community. This section of my paper looks into the emerging power of the Indian Diaspora in US that play a vital role on mutually benefiting engagement. During post independence phase a large number of Indians went to the West and North America as high skilled top notch professionals. The emergence of significant Diasporas has in recent years brought into sharp focus two key facts. First, there is a large expatriate

population of skilled people from emerging economies in the developed world. Second, overseas communities can constitute a significant resource for the development of the countries of origin. The movement of high skilled and low skilled workers from less to more developed economies and back opens several new opportunities for development. The overseas Indian community estimated at over 25 million is spread across every major region in the world. Yet, it is difficult to speak of one great Indian Diaspora.

The overseas Indian community thus constitutes a diverse, heterogeneous and eclectic global community representing different regions, languages, culture and faiths. The common thread that binds them together is the ideas of India and its intrinsic values. Overseas Indian comprises people of Indian origin and Non Resident Indians and today are amongst the best educated and successful communities in the world. In every part of the world the overseas Indian community is recognized and respected for its hard work, discipline, non-interference and for successful integration with the local community. Overseas Indians have made significant contributions to the economy of the country of residence and have added in considerable measure to knowledge and innovation.

India wish to engage, pursue and promote the dynamic Indian Diaspora in a strong and sustained way to develop and project a coherent, intrinsically motivated and progressive identity and our capacity to showcase in the sphere of tourism richness of Indian ethos, customs, traditions, culture and heritage for a rewarding mutual engagement.

Indian diaspora is the largest category of South Asians both in the USA and the UK. And, next only to Chinese Diaspora in the world. Indian Diaspora has roots in every country in the globe. India has presently a 25 million strong Diaspora in 130 countries. The pertinent question is: can the Indian Diaspora play the same role in the economic transformation of India that the Chinese Diaspora has played in the People's Republic of China (PRC)? The answer is "yes".

In Gujarat earthquake phenomenon, the Indian Diaspora greatly mobilised relief fund resources collaborating with other private relief agencies. It was observed that Bill Clinton was able to raise with the strength of Indian Diaspora in US tens of millions of dollars for the earthquake victims.

There are two poles apart attached to each other.

One, the United States of America's demand for skilled immigration to cater the needs of the proportion of the elderly in the rich countries like US. Two, the India immigrants are skilled ones, and apparently the demand will be met from India. Thus, giving rise dramatically the immigration to meet this challenges their original home country, India. This process will perhaps give a boost to the both economies and polity of interacting nations. Further, as the reforms are still in full swing with the expectation running high for the bureaucratic hassles to scale down in India, at least to the Indian Diaspora they will be wooed and given some amount of investment opportunities, their original home country, India.

The rise of Indian multinationals, capable of wooing Indian professionals abroad back to their country, will only add to this process. The hiring of 20 out of the 85 members of its drug-discovery team from U.S. and European companies by Ranbaxy Laboratories two years ago then was just the beginning of that process (Hart, 1986).

What can the government do to tap the Indian Diaspora more effectively? The steps necessary to achieve this objective are not dramatically different from the reforms needed to improve the country's investment climate in general.

We must also revamp our higher education system and policy. Given the expected demographic changes in industrial countries, their demand for skilled workers is likely to rise substantially in the forthcoming years. If we do not prepare ourselves for it today, we stand to lose our edge in this field to People's Republic of China (PRC). Indian Diaspora is keen to bring its human and financial capital as also the connections to the U.S. academic world to India in this important field. But it finds itself seriously constrained by the current policies and procedures.

By early 1980s, when PRC began to open its economy to foreign investors, the Chinese Diaspora in Hong Kong and Taipei, China was already among the most successful exporters of labour-intensive manufactures in the world. Does the India diaspora have this expertise? The answer is Indian diaspora lacks this Chinese experience (Kingdon, 1999; Papola and Sharma, 1999).

Nevertheless, it is easy to underestimate the potential of the Indian Diaspora. Thus, focusing exclusively on the Indians living in the United States,

consider a few salient facts.

Based on median income, Indian-born residents in the United States comprise the highest-paid group in the country. They are represented in virtually all professions including agriculture, biotechnology, business, economics, finance, information technology, journalism, management, medicine and various sciences (Ramachandran, 1990; Ellis, 1993; Ott, 1995).

The initiative is undertaken by the Government of India, when in 2003 the first Pravasi Bharatiya Divas was celebrated and thus, marked the beginning of a new chapter between India and the Indians abroad. Through such creation, it was further realized that despite global success story of the Indians abroad, it was also felt that there exist a gap between the Global Indian Society and India (Skoufias, 1993).

The report on the gap between the Global Indian Society and India suggests that with appropriate conditions, can the Indian Diaspora provide India the necessary capital flows for sustained and rapid economic development to overtake China? (Dreze and Sen, 1995). The answer is yes! The success of Indian companies like Infosys Technologies and Wipro Technologies in the Information Technology (IT) sector; success of other multinational companies like the Tata Group and Reliance Group; and the worldwide recognition of the academic excellence of the Indian Institute of Management (IIMs) and Indian Institute of Technology (IITs)—the centres of excellence for higher training, research and development in science, engineering and technology in India—have contributed to the new image of India as a country with English educated, enterprising people. In the US, for example, the stereotypical Indian is no longer a starving peasant, but a highly professional IT specialist who tells helpless Americans how to work with their computers.

In religious front, India's tolerance for different religions and cultures is legendary. India's spirituality is much needed in these days of conflict and strife. This is the land which has preached 'Vasudhaiva Kudumbakam' (the world is my family) and Loka Samastha Sukhino Bhavanthu (let there be peace in the whole world) after all. India's message of secularism which actually means different religions co-existing in harmony with each other, rather than the Western concept of separation of religion and the State is a valuable lesson in these days when there is so much strife nations for services and migrant workers from developing countries.

The constitution of India not only guarantees a person's freedom of religion and conscience, but also ensures freedom for one who has no religion, and it scrupulously restrains the State from making any discrimination on grounds of religion (Articles 25 to 28). A single citizenship is assured to all persons irrespective of their religion. But indigenous tribes/Adivasis are treated as second-class citizens. Not that they are granted dual citizenship. Is this what we called India a Secular Republic?

Secularism implicitly and explicitly implies that the State has no official religion. Secularism pervades its provisions that give full opportunity to all persons to profess, practice, and propagate religion of their choice (Article 25). The expression 'secular' in Indian sense also means there is equal respect for all religions.

In this secular vein, Revd. Valson Thampu, Principal of the St. Stephen College, University of Delhi, remarks on the Christian atrocity in India with particular reference to Kandhamal, "...it is an issue of disrespect to the members of the particular community; it has nothing to do with Christianity. Such acts need to be dealt with the application of the law of the land".

Pope Benedict XVI condemned the attacks on the Indian Christians as attack on 'human lives', and added 'whose sacred character must be respected by all....'

Former Home Minister, Shivraj Patil had visited the riot-affected areas and confirmed that the situation in the Kandhamal district of Orissa was not normal, contrary to BJD-BJP government administration claims. Even the Supreme Court issued directives to secure right to life and property. It is observed that a situation like this is an attack on the secular democratic principles. What is the use of Secular ideals enshrined in the constitution of India, when situation like this, is misused by political parties for their own benefits?

In regards to migrant workers in home front, their plight is pathetic. There is no proper care of the domestic workers, which form huge chunk rendering service to the elites in the cities in India, particularly the capital city of Delhi. A proposed bill for unorganized sectors is still pending, keeping aside later delay implementation. This also is a worry as a country known for its equity and tolerance, justice, freedom and liberty.

Against this backdrop, the writer of this paper assumes that all this development is at the cost of the poor. Above that while India has a proud record of functioning democracy as it has not always empowered

people at the grassroots level. For democracy is much more than regular elections. Political exclusion can include denial of citizenship rights to organize, and also of personal security, the rule of law, freedom of expression and equality of opportunity. As political exclusion also involves the notion that the state, which grants basic rights and civil liberties, is not a neutral agency but a vehicle of a society's dominant classes, and thus may discriminate between social groups. This somehow is related to the social exclusion leading to economic exclusion.

In India, sharp income inequalities between rural and urban areas, and concentration of power and resources at the national level, has meant that tens of thousands of Indians are denied full participation in the decisions that affect their lives. In India's rural areas, where hunger and poverty are rampant, local people have often remained powerless (Bujra, 1992). They are often locked in an oppressive system of economic exploitation, class division, caste prejudice, and pervasive corruption. While the economy of modern India grows, they lack access to the education, nutrition and health-care, sanitation, land and other assets that could enable them to escape the trap of hunger and poverty (Olsen, 2006). There is a hollow growth in the Indian economy, as rightly pointed out by the Nobel laureate, Amartya Sen and who conveyed the same to the Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh. He is talking about access to the benefits of the economic growth of the country, India. If the rural poor are not benefited, which accounted 75 per cent of the over 1 billion population of the world's largest democracy do not benefit, there is indeed, is not only hollow growth but also hallowed growth targeting the access by depriving them (the poor and marginalized) the benefits by few bureaucrats belonging to upper caste/class in Indian society. There is wider disparity of the rich and the poor in India. In this context, what does participatory democracy hold for the rural poor in India in the globalised world?.

Now given that India's poor are poor because they are poorly given access to educational facilities, perhaps owing to the flawed educational policies of the colonial India, where they thought that educating the Brahmins would trickle down the education to the lower strata of the society. Whereas it never does, rather widens the gap between these groups of the caste ridden Indian society. The growing inequalities between the rich and the poor are the evidence of various policies, including education

which is still of the middle and upper middle oriented and the poor are discriminated, excluded and marginalized.

In India, every vote since 1991 has been a vote against globalization and trade liberalization which is creating 10 million new unemployed people every year, is pauperizing the peasantry and disenfranchising the marginalized. This changed in 2002 with the Gujarat elections which followed the massacre of 2000 Muslims and the violent engineering of the electoral agenda away from basic needs to a majority-minority conflict and contest. The arithmetic guaranteed victory to the party which had created a divide between the majority and minority communities and sown mutual fear and hatred through rapes and killings. This violent and exclusivist agenda is now being developed for all forthcoming elections. The market fundamentalism of globalization and the economic exclusion inherent to it is giving rise to, and being reinforced and supported by politics of exclusion emerging in the form of political parties based on "religious fundamentalism"/xenophobia/ethnic cleansing and reinforcement of patriarchies and castism. The culture of commodification has increased violence against women, whether it is in the form of rising domestic violence, increasing cases of rape, an epidemic of female foeticide, and increased trafficking in women (Poitevin and Rairkar, 1993; Rao and T. Institute of Social Studies, 1994).

It is to be noted that Democracy without people is meaningless. Participation implies, when they participate then, they also have a share in the planning and the profit, whether it is governance, economy, or development.

The derivatives of the words from the Greek word meaning *demos* and *kratos* combine to suggest that "the people rule. But then, who are "the people?"

"We, the people of India" mean all citizens as mentioned in Part II (Citizenship) as enshrined in the constitution. But in the sense of participatory democracy in India, all these citizens do not participate. Except citizens attaining 21 years of age irrespective of sex who are given the right to vote. Later this was reduced to 18 years of age by the then Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi. What does 'citizenship' mean for excluded groups around the world? What do these meanings tell us about the goal of building inclusive societies?

What are the advantages of adopting a social exclusion approach to issues of citizenship rights? Citizenship rights appear to be severely limited in many

low-income countries, with civil and political rights often as reduced as social rights. Human rights conditionality prods governments to provide certain rights to their citizens, but macro-economic conditionality undermines countries' actual capacity to do so.

This section of the paper focuses specifically on the shifting perceptions of power in India's foreign policy. Apart from analyzing the dynamics of hard and soft power in India's foreign policy, the paper also attempts to identify the role of soft power and its impact and influence on the foreign policy decision-making of India.

India has pursued both hard and soft power to deal both foreign and domestic problems (Liberation of Hyderabad, accession of Jammu and Kashmir, accession of Manipur under duress, Mizoram high handedness of bombing in 1966). There are innumerable instances in which the Government of India employed hard power on one hand and soft power diplomacy on the other (as to soft power popular culture politics have been into play in Northeast India, the promotion of ethnic culture, food, music both in the form of traditional and Western music, besides sporting culture etc are part of soft power diplomacy).

The term 'soft power' was first coined by the Harvard University Professor, Joseph Nye (1990). The term 'soft power' has become an issue of agenda in international relations in the post cold war era. The propounder of the term 'soft power' in his two books—"Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power" (1990) and "Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics" (2004) discuss in detail about the term 'soft power' besides "hard power". The two terms are explained in the succeeding discussion of this paper. There are various factors that give rise to soft power. In a more broadened definition of the same, Nye specifies that soft power lies primarily on three resources—culture, political values, and public diplomacy (through foreign policy). Thus, Soft power grows out of the 'cultural milieu of society' and can only be created by the people. The State can accentuate its soft power through various means like public diplomacy (foreign policy). Public diplomacy (foreign policy) is the process by which 'direct relations are pursued with a country's people to promote the interest and values of those being represented.' The soft power of a country lies, then mainly on three resources: 'its culture (in places where it is attractive to others), its political values (when it lives

up to them at home and abroad) and its foreign policies (when they are seen as legitimate and having moral authority)'

Soft power is the ability to obtain what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments. It arises due to the attractiveness of a country's culture, political ideals, and policies, that is, through elements which are 'real but intangible.'

Soft power is often linked to the rise of globalization and neoliberal theory. Popular culture and media is often identified as a source of soft power, as is the spread of a national language, or a particular set of normative structures.

### **Cultural attractiveness**

In this regard, India continues to have tremendous potential for soft power because of its culture and civilizational links—its large diaspora, popular films, music, art and historical and cultural links with several countries around the world all contribute to its soft power.

For this, culture is the most important source of soft power. India is at a very advantageous position as far as culture is concerned and has historically enjoyed much soft power.

Indian food has also gained popularity in other Western countries and there are many Indian restaurants in the larger cities of the US and Canada. The overwhelming Oscar success of 'Slumdog Millionaire', where three Indian artists/technicians won individual Oscars, shows the potential for Indian films and artists to contribute to India's soft power (this year again is India's, though from South Indian films, as Yaya Bachchan echoed saying, it is Indian film winning 'Oscar' North or South Indian... Natu, Natu). But, where are the 'Slumdog Millionaire' heroes? Have they gone back to slums and remain again as underdogs? 'Mother India' heroes have become auto-drivers for great Mother India? When Indian writers win international awards like the Man-Booker prize, when India becomes the guest of honour at international book fairs like the Frankfurt Book Fair, when Indian movies are screened at International Film Festivals like Cannes and when Indians win awards like the Nobel and Magsasay awards, India's soft power is built.

In the US, for example, the stereotypical Indian is no longer a starving peasant, but a highly professional IT specialist who tells helpless Americans how to work with their computers.

India's diaspora is a huge soft power asset and they have contributed immensely to the countries they have settled in and command influence and respect in these countries.

### **Sporting Culture**

The lack of success in sports and a non-existent sporting culture are also impediments in the growth of India's soft power. No other aspect of culture has the capacity to bring together powerful tool for international engagement as sports does. For instance, China, having held an extremely successful Olympics and having topped the medals tally, has gained new-found respect from countries across the world. The importance of soft power in the contemporary world can be seen if we look at why China pulled out all stops to hold a successful Olympics. The success of the Beijing Olympics has helped increase China's soft power around the world with the associated benefits.

In India, when the first Asian Games was held in New Delhi in 1952. Whether such acclamation was received in world community is a big question. Again in 1982, a little bit of world recognition may have been seen in holding the Asian Games in India. The host country also received some kind of benefits in the form of infrastructural development and tourism promotion. But the recent Common Wealth Games was a success to the extent of revealing all corrupted babus and siphonation or diversion of funds earmarked for development of the marginalized section of the Indian society.

### **Political Values**

The improvement in Indo-US strategic relations at a time when US soft power is at its lowest in most countries also erodes India's soft power in countries that are not part of the Western bloc. India may well have paid an economic price for democracy and may do so for some time, but that is the only political system that can define this Republic and our nation. India is India because it is a pluralistic, secular democracy.

India is the world's largest democracy. India's biggest asset in terms of soft power is its successfully-functioning democracy which has survived despite many challenges. One of these many challenges includes America's reservation of successful democracy in India. It was doubted that democracy would never be a success in such a large population in India. A country, where

poverty is rampant. India has proved that democracy can work even in a poor, illiterate country and is not the exclusive preserve of the rich Western countries. India has had free and fair elections since independence. India's democracy has allowed traditionally marginalized sections of society like Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and women to participate in governance. In fact, Bhutan's and Nepal's recent shift towards democracy was encouraged by its neighbour India's example of a thriving democracy. India's commitment to democracy builds India's moral power as well as soft power. India's support for democracy and freedom are other values which enhance its soft power.

The presence of a free press in which all shades of opinion are allowed to be expressed also contributes to India's soft power. India has a thriving civil society which has never shied away from trying to solve social ills. It works in areas ranging from poverty alleviation to environmental issues often challenging -government decisions by taking recourse to the courts.

India, at various points in its history, has used both hard power and soft power. However, a reliance on one or the other exclusively would not help in achieving foreign policy objectives. Soft power cannot be used in all situations just as hard power cannot be used in all circumstances. But if used effectively in conjugation with hard power, it can yield better results than if only hard power is used. This use of a judicious combination of soft and hard power has been termed as 'smart power' by some scholars like Suzanne Nossel. India has a lot of potential for this 'smart power', blessed as it is with abundant soft power as well as hard power elements. The Indian State needs to wake up to this potential and tap into it to achieve its global ambitions and foreign policy objectives.

### **Unsettled problems**

Election, election, election and elected, elected, elected is not what you only need to know on this earth. India claims to be a successful democratic country for reasons like regular periodical elections, independent judiciary, executive and legislative and fourth pillar of democracy—free press or the role of media both electronics and print ones. However, unresolved disputes within India, like the ones in Kashmir and the North-East also affect India's soft power (recent abrogation of Article 370 and 35 A of the Constitution of India is being seen as a challenge by erstwhile Jammu and Kashmir

state leaders questioning the democratic integrity of Indian mainland State in contrast to Nagalim demand for separate state with flag and Constitution of their own as has been claimed). The very fact that these disputes continue despite years of democracy are proof that the benefits of democracy and development have not reached people in these regions.

The success of soft power heavily depends on the State's reputation within the international community, as well as the flow of information between States. Soft power cannot produce results as fast as hard power, its effects are more long-lasting and it is less expensive than hard power. The importance of soft power is due to its ability to influence others unintrusively and unconsciously. It is thus an indirect way to get what you want and hence has been termed the 'second face of power'.

Power is becoming less fungible, less coercive and less concrete today. Co-operative behavioural power and soft power resources are not new. However, recent trends and changes in political issues have made them more significant. Today's major powers are not as able to use their traditional power resources to achieve their purposes as in the past. Private actors and small states have become more powerful on many issues. At least five trends have contributed to this diffusion of power: economic interdependence, transnational actors, rise of nationalism in weak states, the spread of technology and changing political issues.

Soft power is the ability to obtain what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments. It arises due to the attractiveness of a country's culture, political ideals, and policies, that is, through elements which are 'real but intangible.'

### **Foreign Policy**

A country is defined and known by the foreign policy it adopts as the basis and framework of its relations with other countries. Joseph Nye says that a country's foreign policy can increase its soft power if its foreign policy is perceived by other countries and people to be 'legitimate and having moral authority'.

India's foreign policy has been based on moral values from the time of Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, who remains a tremendous influence on Indian foreign policy even today. India's soft power, in any case, got a major boost with the way it achieved independence. The legacy of the Indian freedom movement and that of its

leader, Mahatma Gandhi, certainly built India's soft power from the very beginning as a country which had achieved independence with non-violent methods. This soft power was consolidated by the foreign policy agenda set by Nehru.

Moreover, even before independence, leaders of the Indian National Congress supported the freedom struggles of people under colonial rule in Asia and Africa. This support, both political and material, continued even after independence. Many thousands of Indian soldiers also lost their lives in the fight against Nazism and Fascism in World War II. India also strongly decried Apartheid and racial discrimination at international fora. Its refusal to join either bloc during the Cold War and sending a medical contingent rather than armed combatants to the United Nations (UN) force in Korea in 1950 also enhanced its standing in the world community, particularly the countries of the Third World. This is proved by India's getting the chairmanship of the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission (NNRC) set up in 1953 after the Korean War and India's mediatory role in bringing about the Indo-China Peace Agreement after the French were defeated by the Vietnamese. India even supported China's claim for a permanent seat on the United Nations (UN) Security Council. Thus, till the 1962 Sino-Indian war at least, India's soft power especially among Third World countries was tremendous and India was the rallying point for many of these countries.

The 1962 Sino-India war marked a turning point in Indian foreign policy to one shorn of most of the idealist rhetoric and moral grandstanding of the Nehruvian era. This shift was also in part due to the realization among Indian policy makers that all the trust (soft power) that India enjoyed in the Third World was of little use as few of these countries came out in support of India. The Sino-India war, the Indo-Pak wars of 1965 and 1971 and the integration of Goa, Daman and Diu in 1961 into the Indian State were instances where India used hard power to achieve its objectives, though these two wars were admittedly forced on India. Indira Gandhi's strong personality was reflected in her foreign policy making. Unlike her father, she was practitioner of real politics. She believed that India's foreign policy should be tied to the country's economic, political and security interests and that these interests primarily depended on India becoming strong and self-reliant though she continued to support the NAM. Subsequently, she established a

strategic partnership with the Soviet Union, upgraded India's defence capabilities, won a war against Pakistan in 1971. Despite having more sources of hard power, India was not able to transform the military victory of 1971 over Pakistan into a long-lasting solution of the Kashmir issue. Added to this even tested a nuclear device in 1974. However, the 1971 Bangladesh war was also framed as 'humanitarian intervention' to maintain India's standing in world politics and to ensure that there was minimal effect on its soft power.

Both of Indira Gandhi's tenures as Prime Minister saw a return to traditional concepts of International Relations like realism and balance of power and the dominance of strategies identified with hard power. All this certainly did nothing to add to India's soft power. The Morarji Desai government took several initiatives to improve relations with China, the US and Pakistan.

India was seen as a hegemon through much of the 1970s and 1980s, particularly by its neighbours. Deployment of the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) to Sri Lanka paid the cost of Rajiv Gandhi's life. So was Indira Gandhi's life in 'Blue Star operation' episode in 1985.

India has moved closer to the US than ever before in history while maintaining robust relations with Russia and China. After the 1990s, India has tried to play down its 'big brother' image in South Asia by taking initiatives to resolve disputes with its neighbours and scrupulously avoiding interference in the internal affairs of its neighbours. Wagner argues that India's regional policy after the 1990s has been characterized by greater emphasis on soft power strategies. One example of this is the 'Gujral doctrine' which introduced the principle of non-reciprocity, emphasizing that India not only had a bigger responsibility, but should give more to the smaller neighbours than she would receive. This doctrine echoed domestic changes in India, especially the economic liberalisation post-1991. This shift towards soft power was not caused due to altruistic reasons, but due the fact that India's hard power approach of the 1970s and 1980s was not very effective in achieving its goals.

The limitations of the hard power strategy also became evident in the 1990s when the conflict over Kashmir continued and sparked off bilateral crises. Moreover, with globalization and liberalization of the economy, as countries became more interdependent, India could not afford to antagonise other countries by stressing on its hard power capabilities. Even the recent

abrogation of Article 370 and 35 A was dealt with in such a way that the citizens of the three or rather two Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Union Territory of Ladakh are contained. Though the former is unhappy at the cost of happiness of the later? Pakistan too is helpless as Baluchistan etc within the country are crying foul in its dissatisfaction over underdevelopment and discrimination. In this context both the countries are remarked as intolerant towards other faiths. India on Muslims, Christians etc. and Pakistan on Hindus, Christians, Sikhs etc. Despite these entire conflictual situations, both countries are falling short of real war over infiltration of militants from across the border. It is in this context that India has strengthened its soft power strategies like moving towards closer economic cooperation through initiatives like the South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and proposals for confidence building measures (CBMs) with other countries.

Even after the tests in 1998, India adopted the policy of unilateral self restraint and imposed a unilateral moratorium on further tests to assuage worldwide condemnation of the tests and salvage some soft power. The NDA's initiatives to increase people-to-people interaction between India and Pakistan and other CBMs that it initiated with Pakistan were also attempts to improve India's image in Pakistan and increase its soft power. India has also shown interest and taken the initiative in solving long-standing border disputes with its neighbours like China and Bangladesh in recent times.

The Kargil war between India and Pakistan of 1999 was important in terms of soft power due to two factors: it won over world support for India as most countries accepted India's contention that Pakistan was at fault for initiating the intrusion and India won global respect for its restraint in not crossing the border; second, it proved the limitations of hard power as being nuclear powers, neither of the two countries could attack each other for fear of a full-fledged nuclear war. India's support for the Palestinians at the UN has also ensured that its soft power is intact in the Arab countries even while its relations with Israel are growing. In an ironic situation, even the Indian Army has shown that it is not averse to using soft power. India's participation in UN peacekeeping operations can be interpreted as an attempt to increase its soft power in countries around the world. The Indian Army has also attempted to use soft power in militancy-affected states like Jammu & Kashmir to win

the 'hearts and minds' of people in places where there is insurgency. 'Operation Sadhbhavana' in Jammu and Kashmir and other operations in which the Indian army has built infrastructure, refugee camps and given medical aid to people in militancy-infested regions are good examples for this.

The best example of India's successful use of soft power can be seen in its relations with Afghanistan helping it steal a march over its traditional rival, Pakistan in the hearts of the common Afghans. Since the fall of the Taliban, India has focussed on the reconstruction of Afghanistan through aid for building infrastructure like dams and roads and providing scholarships for Afghan students. Indian television operas and Hindi movies have become the primary source of entertainment for Afghans, particularly those in cities and towns. Another recent instance was India's restrained response to the 26/11 terror attacks in Mumbai. Despite much jingoism among the general public as well as the media, India chose not to go in for military mobilisation or air strikes, but instead chose to focus on terror cells in Pakistan. The sole surviving terrorist who was captured has also been given legal rights and a lawyer to argue his case. Compare this with what happened in Guantanamo Bay with prisoners who have not even been proved guilty in a court of law in the world's oldest democracy, the US!

India's high economic growth after the Cold War has also contributed to a positive image about India globally. India has been one of the best performers in the world economy in recent times with an average growth rate of around 7 per cent annually. India is seen as a best foreign direct investment (FDI) and joint ventures destination and its achievements in some sectors of the economy have propelled it to the status of an economic power to be reckoned with. At the institutional level, India quite a bit of institutional power due to its leadership of the G-77, G-22 and NAM.<sup>36</sup> However, a permanent seat in the UN Security Council, which continues to remain on India's wish-list, will add significantly to its soft power.

## Conclusion

India, in the context of development vis-à-vis diaspora, there is every reason to appreciate the work initiated by the Government of India as there has been clear recognition of the contribution on the Indian diaspora in strengthening the fabric of Indian democracy and its principles where in such a country of diversity

and poverty, democracy functions till today since the inception which was doubted even by the US as of that time. This of course does not assure the full pride India can relish on. There are areas where India needs improvement and transformation. Particularly in solving the distributive equity and justice in the context of India. The disparity in sharing the developmental benefits is alarming. In addressing these issues, the diaspora can be of great help as it can invest its reserves, as rightly called as National Indian Reserves that rescued the economy when it sunk. India if rightly managed in the investment and the expertise of the diaspora can sooner or later can overtake China, always staring the statistics of economic indicators since the economic liberalization in 1990s as compared to China which liberalized in 1970s.

## Recommendations

1. Funding may be augmented for cultural activities in embassies, promoting India aggressively and starting India study centres all over the world on the lines of British Council, American Information Resource Centers, Alliance Francaise and the Confucius Institutes started by China. This will increase the country's soft power by projecting a favourable image of the India's image to the outside world through public relations exercises.

2. The Indian Foreign Service (IFS) should give more emphasis to public diplomacy and more initiatives like friendship years with different countries should be started. More funding should be given for public diplomacy.

3. India should also hold more cultural festivals abroad showcasing different aspects of its culture.

4. The doors of Indian universities should be opened to foreign students through scholarships and student exchange programmes so that they understand Indian culture, interests and values by the time they go home and propagate a favourable image about India. For this, more funds should be allotted to the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR).

5. Tourists must be welcomed to India so that more people see the beauty and varied culture of India. Indian tourists abroad also convey the image of a new, rich and confident India. They must also be advised to be polite and to respect the traditions of the countries they visit. There should be more focus on sports infrastructure development in schools so that the world gets to know India as a sporting nation.

6. The Pravasi Bharatiya Divas initiative by the Indian government is a laudable attempt to tap into the economic and political resources of the Indian diaspora all over the world. But India needs to do more so that the diaspora feels welcomed and wanted by India.

7. Foreign aid is another factor which can enhance a country's soft power. With India projected to be one of the largest economies of the world by 2025, it will certainly have enough economic power to help other poorer countries. So, India must put in place a well-coordinated foreign aid policy and needs to increase its aid to poor countries, particularly African countries. This aid must be well targeted and must be purely humanitarian in character so as to increase India's soft power. Towards this end, an agency on the lines of the US Agency for International Development (USAID) must be established. India needs to ensure that the benefits of democracy and economic reforms reach the needy. This would help bring those fighting the Indian State into the mainstream. It has certainly taken some steps towards this by encouraging those fighting against it in Kashmir and the North East to engage in the political process. This effort seems to be working and must be encouraged.

8. India has a huge population, vast territory, has high military expenditure, has the third largest number of armed personnel in the world and has well-equipped army, navy and air force and is a de facto nuclear power as well as a space power thus establishing its hard power. India is also rapidly emerging as an economic power house in terms of growth rates and gross domestic product (GDP) and is projected to be the third largest economy by 2025 after China and the US by the World Bank. India's huge middle class and their purchasing power, its huge pool of skilled workers and the fact that it has one of the largest pools of scientists in the world add significantly to its economic potential and hard power capabilities. Thus, India has both the elements needed for hard power—military strength and economic power. As seen above, India also has a substantial amount of soft power and has the potential to augment it.

9. India needs to give more emphasis to soft power and rein it to achieve foreign policy objectives as soft power resources like state capacity, diplomatic or strategic strength and quality of the national leadership are very important to a country's "latent capabilities into actualized power".

10. Many Indians give up their citizenship at considerable emotional cost while many others keep it

at substantial pecuniary cost. This can be remedied to the mutual benefit of India and the Diaspora by genuinely instituting the right to dual citizenship. Such a move will make the Diaspora feel welcome in their country of birth and induce them to expand their links to it. It will give India a legitimate claim to the successes of its own: Nobel Prizes won by Indians abroad will genuinely come to belong to India.

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