

Daring Foreign Policy Initiatives of Narendra Modi and the China Factor

Humera Iqbal

Research Analyst,

Institute of Regional Studies, Islamabad.

Email: hum.iqbal@gmail.com.

Abstract

Since Narendra Modi became prime minister, India's foreign policy has undergone drastic changes from the traditionally run Nehruvian style. Modi's foreign policy is aptly described as active and pragmatic, with a clear manifestation to achieve goals of making India greatest power by elevating its global stature and to have influential voice on global matters of concerns. Modi established his own foreign policy rules and opted for multi-alignment by joining various multilateral and minilateral alliances. Modi's initiatives are focused on competing and countering China for which it has divided its foreign policy into different forms of partnerships, like with the US, to acquire strategic strength. The paper looks into different initiatives Modi government took to counterbalance China, and how successful his policies have been for India.

Keyword: Fast-track diplomacy, Indo-Pacific Strategy, Make in India, Partnership, Para diplomacy, Multilateralism, Minilateralism

Introduction

Narendra Modi, a Hindu nationalist, came into power on May 26th 2014, with a strong narrative of making One India, which will be a leading power. In the words of Ram Mahdavi, "Our national ambition is Bharat's rise as a strong and respected world power" (Mahdavi, 2015).

Modi during his campaign, gave message of hope and renaissance to people across the country. Modi's One India raised hopes of establishing an inclusive government which would bring society under one flag raising people above caste and religious differences (Mehta, 2020). Indians while voting, were aware of Modi's astuteness as a politician and a nationalist. Cognizant to his Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) association, the proclamation of making One India was foreseeable and secular credentials under risk. Moreover, fears of polarization loomed over many Indian Muslims and Hindus because of the Gujarat massacre, happened under his watch as Chief Minister, in 2002 (Mahr, 2014).

Daring Foreign Policy Initiatives of Narendra Modi and the China Factor

Furthermore, the idea was to laid foundations to make 21st century “India’s century”. Modi, while from a humble background, stood as a strong leader of democratic India, with a combination of economic reformer (Ashok Mehta, 2020). Modi gained attention on the basis of economic reputation that he carried. While state of Gujarat has always been a trading hub of India, but under Modi the state attained international repute of excelling in business for investors. Therefore, corruption scandals, mounting inflation and weakening economy pushed young first-time voters to prefer performance over dynastic political system of Congress and take risk with BJP (Mahr, 2014). His ‘Achhe din aane waale hein’ (good days are coming) economic campaign prioritized growth and development of India. Modi’s foreign policy also showed wider concerns regarding balancing economic representation of Asia which was of China’s economic rise (Mehta, 2020). Therefore, the hopes of jobs via economic revival among the youth turned the streets festive over his win while segments fearing his autocratic polarity agenda had a somber mood (Lakshmi, 2014).

Once in power, the concentrated approach of Modi in reinventing foreign policy through his signature personal touch as a statesman took everyone by surprise. Foreign policy under Modi turned out to be described as active and pragmatic. It took a contrasting approach from its predecessor’s elitist beliefs besides accommodating electoral calculations. Modi is seen as an architect of New India with a foreign policy driven by his personal diplomatic energy and vision that he has for elevating India’s supremacy in the world entwined with a trusted pledge to the world.

As the Modi government completed its nine years, the daring diplomatic initiatives undertaken by Modi in his foreign policy realm have a larger meaningful context. The primary goal behind this is to make India a great and influential power with an effective voice and geopolitical perspective of its own, on matters of international importance. Indian diplomacy under Modi’s watch, piloted its own rise and place on its own defined terms for the world to adjust to. With Modi Indian foreign relations became more interactive and diplomacy more active with different parts of the world. The initiatives taken by the Modi administration also undertakes considerations regarding the ongoing systemic and domestic changes around India i.e. the rising China factor. Modi’s ambitious strategic and economic groupings through partnerships and alliances against countering and competing China’s stature in Asia and globally, has brought their bilateral engagement to a point of complex balance of contestation, competition and cooperation. India has vigorously concentrated on building alliances and friendly relations with countries sharing mutual concerns related to expanding rise of China.

The paper therefore, focuses on the shift foreign policy took under Modi administration; the foreign policy initiatives by Modi which shaped out India’s foreign relations with countries to build up economic and military power of India. The paper will also look into how successful his foreign policy initiatives had been. The second part of paper will highlight Modi government’s attempt to extend Indian footprints at every place of interest to counter China’s influence. The last part would provide conclusion of the study undertaken.

Methodology

The paper under study is qualitative in nature. The essential data has been composed through content analysis which is both descriptive and analytical. The nature of study mainly relates to analytical process comprising of data content, evaluation, and critical assessment anticipated by different researchers, experts and authors. In this regard, both the

Daring Foreign Policy Initiatives of Narendra Modi and the China Factor

primary and secondary sources have been used with references and information necessarily required to support the discussion. For research purposes, primary sources of interviews, expert's discussion and observations are used. In secondary sources research papers, books, articles and news published in newspapers have been used to authorize arguments under study and discussed. The paper meticulously analyses the foreign policy vision and initiatives taken by Narendra Modi. It also deliberates upon the driving factors and the China-centric approach been considered in the pursuance of those policies.

Vision & New Panchsheel

The driving factors behind Narendra Modi's foreign policy are the twin visions, to make India third largest economy in the world; and to raise India's global status as a key player in the multipolar world order. For this purpose, Modi administration had two important steps looked upon, first, to make sure no war situation occurs in India's neighborhood to keep it attractive for the foreign investment; and second to make India self-sufficient by developing its own capacities to play influential role in international institutions (Godbole, 2015). The vision to see India at high global status is not new as Nehru in the past had shared similar visions and the foundational bases laid by Manmohan Singh, a distinguished economist, for Indian economy have made India fanciful for the foreign investors. Under Manmohan Singh's economic policies, growth rate and foreign investment did well. The introduction of welfare governance to establish inclusive growth also laid right approach (Palshikar, 2014). What has changed is the pace and implementation strategy under Modi to bring it among the major powers. In the past 9 years under Modi, India became fifth largest economy in the world, with aspiring to reach third in coming five years (Pathi, 2023). While preserving the essential foreign policy beliefs Modi's pragmatic vision has brought India away from Nehruvian policy of non-alignment to multi-alignment. While Nehru remained strategically autonomous under nonalignment to avert bloc politics between the two superpowers during the Cold wars, Modi maintaining the strategic autonomy policy has skillfully become part of complex geopolitics in a multipolar global scenario. Modi has boldly embraced closer partnership with the US, shown daringness by joining US-led Quad to counter China's rise, while joining Russia and China dominated BRICS and the SCO as well to extract maximum benefits through multi-alignment (Sharma, The Week, 2022). In this regard, the new foreign policy pillars, also known as New Panchsheel or Panchamrit by Modi administration, comprises of "Samman – dignity and honour; Samvad – greater engagement and dialogue; Samridhi – shared prosperity; Suraksha – regional and global security; Sanskriti evam Sabhyata – cultural and civilizational linkages". The primary emphasis behind these principles are to restore glorious position of India and elevate its stature in international politics by forming partnerships across the world and to avoid entangled in power bloc politics (Madhav, 2015).

Foreign Policy Strategy of Inexorable Trips

To keep up with pledges of elevating India globally, Modi himself became India's foreign policy ambassador. His persona and inexorable political trips made more popular news splashes on national and international medium than his economic endeavor. Like Nehru who used his charismatic personality, Modi also presented a softer image of himself to promote India's image by personally outreaching and establishing diplomatic friendships with the world leaders. He conveyed a powerful message at home and abroad that he was raising India's stature internationally. The personal branding of foreign policy, by pursuing a personality-driven diplomacy approach, made him popular prime minister and leader, which he benefited for domestic electoral consumption as well. He successfully made Indian diaspora a part of

Daring Foreign Policy Initiatives of Narendra Modi and the China Factor

his foreign policy as cultural ambassadors by energetically engaging with them. Modi actively participated in high-profile events like 'Howdy Modi' in Houston, the New York rally at Madison Square, and Wembley stadium reception in UK (Sharma, The Week, 2014). These trips gave him the opportunity to build a narrative about rising of strong India to the world. Modi's idiosyncratic traits to build personal chemistry, like hug diplomacy and popular social media tweets, made him an easy leader for foreign powers to talk to, mingled with his energetic economic outreach, showed his boldness and creativity that very few leaders express especially with little foreign affairs background that he had.

Foreign Policy Put on 'Fast-track Diplomacy' Button

Late Sushma Swaraj, first woman heading the Ministry of External Affairs, on completion of initial 100 days presented a booklet entitled 'Fast Track Diplomacy' at press briefing. The booklet exhibited foreign policy achievements of Modi government. She named her tenure as fast-track diplomacy on the basis of three foreign policy aspects of the government, i.e. proactive; strong; and sensitive. Ms. Swaraj clearly expressed no conciliatory tough tone policy with neighboring Pakistan and China. Whereas a message of stronger India to deal with for US (Times, 2014). In this regard, she proactively engaged with SAARC, ASEAN, and Middle East regions individually to accelerate strengthening of relations with India. Prime Minister Modi extensively made high-profile visits to these regions as part of his Neighborhood First, Look/Act East Policy and Act West Policies. these fast-track diplomatic policy initiatives were also undertaken with China-centric approach. The purpose behind had been to create economic and strategic depth for securing India's interests in these regions and outweigh China's influence. Modi has moved India towards varying degrees of partnerships with US and other regional states against China.

FOREIGN POLICY INITIATIVES & OUTCOMES

The foreign policy initiatives undertaken by Modi government over the course of 9 years which made him and his country exclusively highlighted in the world are discussed as below.

Neighborhood First Policy

The strategic geographic location puts India at the heart of Asia and Indian Ocean in its backyard. Rising China in India's neighborhood puts India under challenging position to balance and create strategic depth among its neighbors. Therefore, Modi's foremost initiative had been Neighborhood First policy. All the South Asian premiers were invited at his oath taking ceremony to revitalize India's regional relations. In 2014 SAARC summit held in Nepal, Modi urged for collective efforts to overcome shared challenges in South Asia for developing and establishing peace. Modi's vision, Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikaas i.e. South Asian states should develop together in partnership, as progress of India's neighbors essentially helps Indian development. However, other than measures like Covid vaccine diplomacy and information sectors with few states, the vision lacked motivational efforts and strategy for regional integration overall (Kumar, South Asian Voices, 2020).

On the contrary, Modi boycotted 19th SAARC Summit hosted by Pakistan, accusing Islamabad of sponsoring cross-border terrorism. Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Bhutan teaming with India also pulled out of the summit, leaving no choice for Pakistan but to cancel it altogether (News, 2016). To further cause regional divisions, India established a

Daring Foreign Policy Initiatives of Narendra Modi and the China Factor

multilateral venture BIMSTEC comprising of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Myanmar. Even with BIMSTEC, India lacked commitment as after 2018, it held summit in 2022 in Colombo (Kumar, 2020). In comparison to openness of first term, Modi's second term in office was highly divisive and muscular. It began with hostile masculinity show of surgical strikes. Once reelected in 2019, Modi government imposed unilateral constitutional changes on Jammu & Kashmir state. It was followed by introduction of another divisive policy of Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) resulting in feelings of resentment within region, mainly in Pakistan and Bangladesh. People protested violently against his anti-Muslim controversial policies of CAA, National Register of Citizens (NRC), and Ghar Wapsi campaign of targeting Muslims mainly to leave India, during his visit to Bangladesh, as a chief guest at 50th Independence day celebration (Mahmud, 2021).

Modi's policies also enraged Pakistan and Nepal over cartographic malice. An Akhand Bharat, politico-ideologically, motivated map was issued by Modi administration, which showed Pakistan's Gilgit-Baltistan, Indian-held Kashmir, and Nepal's Kalapani region a part of Indian territory. Both Pakistan and Nepal strongly protested and rejected India's unilateral undiplomatic act of border changes on map (Space, 2019). The malicious expansionist intentions of Modi government towards its neighbors became exposed, raises questions about India's responsible regional leader. By claiming regional leadership status, Modi should have offered economic and human development through integrational ventures within region rather than a problem originator. Therefore, apart from some socio-economic measures, no major breakthrough was made due to Modi's discriminatory policies imposed without calculating regional outcomes. Hence, the space created due to hawkish policies and Indian negligence towards its neighbors, China filled in easily. The socio-economic projects China offered left India competing for its lost strategic place in its own region. So far, the neighborhood first policy, excluding Pakistan is viewed as a letdown than success.

Look East to Act East Policy

At the East Asia summit, held in Myanmar 2014, Modi undertook reformation of India's Look East policy into Act East policy. The emphasis was put on adjusting with the changing strategic and economic demands. Modi broadened the policy from economic integration to adding in security and cultural integration with East Asia, South East Asia and key partners like Japan, Australia and South Korea. The purpose behind was deeper engagements with Asia-Pacific countries to counter economic and military extend of China in the region. In this regard, India focuses on 3C's i.e. Culture; Connectivity; and Commerce. India attempted at achieving speedy connectivity between its Northeast states with ASEAN region via cultural interactions; people-to-people contacts; trade and infrastructure building through roads, telecommunications etc. Some of the projects undertaken included Kaladan Multi-Model Transit Transport Project, India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway Project, Border Haats and Rhi-Tiddin Road project. Moreover, Japan has been assisting India in infrastructure development like Delhi Metro Corporation and India's first fast-speed rail line Ahmedabad-Mumbai bullet train project etc. (Singh H. , 2022)

Modi's official expedition to P5 countries was held strategically significant, which included visits to China, Russia, France, UK, and US. As a first Indian leader, Modi debuted successful presidency of BRICS summit (Diplomacy, 2014). Modi went to great lengths to counter President Xi's footmarks during his Southeast Asian tour, to assure them of India's commitment and allegiance as trusted partner in securing future economic and maritime interests. India further ensured Counter-China strategy by amalgamating AEP with Indo-Pacific strategy. India signed free trade agreement

Daring Foreign Policy Initiatives of Narendra Modi and the China Factor

with South Korea and Japan; conducted joint naval exercises with Japanese, Australian and US navies. First official visit of Modi, outside South Asia was to Japan, signifying bilateral importance. While India has shown no interest in participating China's One Belt One Road Initiative (BRI), it has participated in BRI-initiated Banks. India is second largest investor and largest loan-taker from Asian Infrastructure Bank (AIIB), taking almost one-third of the \$20 billion approved projects in AIIB (R., 2021).

A closer look suggested despite Indian assurances, BRICS summit was held after three years gap in 2022, and then in 2023. Instead of Modi, self-presumptive of leading Global South, it was President Xi who dominated the BRICS summit. Xi was received with exceptional welcome by South African President Ramaphosa himself while Modi was by Ramaphosa's deputy. BRICS expansion recently was seen as China's aim at heading developing world against US supremacy (Cotterill, 2023). This creates challenges for India to balance western and non-western interests. On ground, India lagged behind in regional connectivity as infrastructural development remained slow and projects committed were delayed, except for AEP maritime sector that saw progress. Another vital reason for slow progress has been ASEAN states' lack of confidence towards India as an effective substitute to China. India still has many years to acquire the economic and military strength to match China. While smaller ASEAN states find China's rising influence and foreign powers competition in their backyard challenging. Hence, the energetic start of Act East Policy lacked progress at expected pace and border connectivity remains slow. Extensive focus of Modi on global outreach has also impacted connectivity (R., 2021).

Act West Policy

In the realm of pursuing strategic alliances, Modi's Act West policy has become another of his foreign policy achievement. To overcome prolonged Indian negligence, Modi paid high-level visits to Gulf states. India became new alliance partners with Saudi Arabia (KSA) and United Arab Emirates (UAE). A change of leaderships in these states, were eager to acquire their own strategic and economic share under the new multilateral world order. As an emergent economic power, India attracted the Gulf region to share in resources and engagement with India. Similarly, for India the socio-political transformation in the Gulf states, with weakening support for traditional ally Pakistan, encouraged Modi to form beneficial engagements. An already major energy recipient for India, Gulf region hosts around 9 million Indian diasporas who sends about \$50 billion remittances annually back home (Agency, 2022).

Modi government very carefully pursue its eco-strategic interests with the Gulf region. The rising effects of Hindu nationalism against Indian Muslims were felt when Arabs unexpectedly strongly criticized over the blasphemous comment made by BJP spokeswoman on television show. It became a sensitive issue for Modi administration and they immediately responded by removing her to settle down critical voices. Therefore, Modi cautiously have been keeping the party's ideology distant from its foreign relations so that political interests don't get affected (Mohan, 2022). Furthermore, Modi articulately balanced its ties with Iran and Gulf states of KSA and UAE by staying away from their rivalries. UAE endorsed Modi's proposition of developing post-2019 J&K, by agreeing to invest in the infrastructural development including building of industrial parks, IT towers, logistics centers, medical college and specialized hospitals etc. The investments under plan would be part of Modi's 'Make in India' initiative (Krishnan, 2021).

Daring Foreign Policy Initiatives of Narendra Modi and the China Factor

To undergo modernization, Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman's vision 2030, actively endorsed economic and security partnership with India. KSA being a second largest oil supplier to India has engaged with India's Reliance Industries for energy business. Moreover, India's largest expatriate community of three million work force has huge influence in the country (Essa, 2019). The G20 summit of 2023, hosted by India, Modi announced a multinational rail and shipping project, India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor. Both Saudi Arabia and UAE are key members of this new energy and economic corridor. The corridor aims at countering China's ambitious BRI by integrating India closely with West Asia and Europe (Jazeera, 2023).

MULTILATERAL & MINILATERAL INITIATIVES

This section of paper will look into Modi's multi-alignment policy. As part of multi-alignment, Indian foreign policy explores regional and global networks via multilateral and minilateral initiatives to serve their national interests. India is engaging with both the developed and developing worlds. Two important such initiatives, India became part of beneficial partnerships are, Quad and I2U2. These are discussed in details below.

QUAD: The Squad & its Powerful Purpose

The internationalist foreign policy of India has been exhibited in its participation of Quad. A significant global forum, Quad was initiated among four maritime democracies, comprising of Japan, India, US and Australia with an anti-China determination. Members met virtually on March 12, 2021, to discuss pertinent global issues like Covid-vaccines, Indo-pacific cooperation, climate change etc. The leaders released joint statement, became known as 'The Spirit of the Quad', which refrained from mentioning China and a military coalition but focused on cooperation against China's activities in the Indo-Pacific and to uphold rule of law in the region. In September 2021, Modi at Quad summit emphasized on enhancing military cooperation to establish peace and rules-based order to address China's contests. The Doklam incident of 2017 and Galwan Valley of 2020, pushed Modi for pro-active involvement in Quad (Pant, 2022).

In this regard, steps taken were India launched the Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR) concept and Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI) for maritime security. In 2018, India attempted to align Quad objectives with SAGAR and IPOI to contain Chinese influence in the oceans. India uplifted the cooperation by accommodating global issues when hosted Quad CT-TTX (Counter-terrorism table-top exercise) in Delhi. Some senior military leaders also took part in Quad-plus panels during India's geopolitical conference, the Raisina Dialogue organized annually (Pant, 2022). Furthermore, India and Australia signed information sharing agreement and mutual logistics support agreement. Both the countries participated in military exercises of AUSINDEX and AUSTRALIA HIND. India participated with Japan in military exercises such as JIMEX (Japan-India Maritime Exercise) and Dharma Guardian (Pant, 2022).

According to Britain's Financial Times newspaper, Quad leaders launched maritime surveillance plan to fund commercial satellite-tracking services which would provide cost free maritime intelligence to the Indo-Pacific states. This is a very serious step on part of Quad against China as it will have security implications. The Quad also formed Indo-Pacific Partnership for Maritime Domain Awareness (IPMDA) to assist pacific islands and countries of Southeast Asia and the Indian Ocean to track illegal fishing and other illicit activities by Chinese boats and maritime militia

Daring Foreign Policy Initiatives of Narendra Modi and the China Factor

vessels in their waters (Rasheed, 2022). Moreover, Quad nations explored means of vaccine research, its development and distribution domains by offering fellowships in science and technology, engineering and mathematics to compete China's growth in Research and development initiatives (Upadhyay, 2022).

Advantages for India

India has advantages by joining Quad to counterbalance China's presence in the region and its BRI initiative. These are;

1. Quad enables strengthening of India's security architecture;
2. India got an opportunity to supply pharmaceuticals and Covid-vaccines. Under Quad, India delivered Covovax doses and version of Novavax vaccine made by the Serum Institute of India (SII) to Thailand (Upadhyay, 2022).
3. India's desired global stature gets elevated from middle-power status to elite one with an extended influence in Indo-Pacific;
4. It gets leverage of defence ties, arms and information exchange agreements, and preferred investment hub especially in the post-Covid situation (Pant, 2022).

Challenges for India

Joining Quad, besides advantages, poses vital challenges to India as well. These are;

1. Pursuance of multilateral allegiances will eventually put India under spot to make high choice of siding with either developed or developing;
2. India is placed under tough situation where it doesn't want full alliance with the US nor does it wants to abandon the benefits coming out of its partnership with US;
3. India's neutral stance over western interests would not be forgiven for too long just because it matters to US interests of countering China;
4. There would be continuity in bilateral strains between India and China;
5. India, only member of Quad, shares border with China and anti-China military grouping surely poses risks of aggressive response to India more than other members;
6. India's interests get affected in other international organizations like BRICS, SCO, G7, G20;
7. India's relations and energy interests with Iran and Central Asian states also gets effected as China has been actively engaged with these countries;
8. India's engagement abroad has suffered its developmental commitment with neighbors where China is winning influence due to lack of delivery on part of India (Pant, 2022).

Since the focus of security architecture has shifted to Indo-Pacific, the Indian ocean as strategic trading corridor, carrying two-thirds of global oil shipments and a third of bulk cargo has grown high. Quad is seen as a new type of 21st century security alliance acting against the elephant in the room, China. Interestingly, the bilateral relations of Quad states with China have also started to decline since its formation. Beijing has been investing in its naval security which has created unrest among the Quad nations. The security pact signed between China and Solomon Islands, allowing

Daring Foreign Policy Initiatives of Narendra Modi and the China Factor

Chinese warships to dock on the islands and permitting China to send security forces to assist in maintenance of social order has raised fears in Australia. For the US, the emphasis is to protect its interests in the region (Pandey, 2022). Japan has become cautious of Chinese naval presence as intrusions in the sea. Consequently, both Modi and Shinzo Abe signed the new Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA), a military logistics agreement which India has with all the Quad member countries. The pact will allow closer military cooperation between the two countries (Wire, 2020). As a result, China's maritime disputes with many countries and border dispute with India has been intensified. The biggest challenge for Quad countries is to make the alliance powerful enough for ASEAN nations to trust it as a major counterbalance to China. So far, the ASEAN and Quad nations have their own substantial volumes of trade with China and to secure the trade flow they are hesitant to confront China directly, at least not until they can emerge as a net security provider in the region.

I2U2: Cross-Bracing Partnership

An interesting minilateral collaboration occurred, I2U2, named after partnering countries' first initials i.e. India, Israel, US, and UAE, in the eastern Indian Ocean. The purpose behind is to challenge marching westward policy of China as propounded by eminent scholar Wang Jisi, (Singh M. , 2022) but tactfully so that each country doesn't impede their trade and commercial engagements with China. Therefore, with this crucial engagement, US aims at securing Middle East from China's expanding strategic footprint. Similarly, for India also China's expansion into Middle Eastern markets hampers Indian massive capital and goods. In the realm of security competition, while US cannot be replaced, the security diversification by the Gulf states has led India's strategic interest open up by engaging in security politics of the region. Indian ships are deployed regularly in the Arabian sea, in the Gulf of Aden. India also has a presence at Duqm Port (Mohan, 2022). Through this unique partnership with Israel and UAE under one roof, India secures benefits from Abraham Accord. A comprehensive economic partnership agreement (CEPA) and Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with UAE already been signed which will reduce tariffs to 80 percent on goods and will boost their bilateral trade to \$100 billion within five years (Express, 2022). For Modi, this minilateral partnership in I2U2 opens up economic integration, cheap energy supplies, agri-tech partnership and defence opportunities for India (Singh M. , 2022). So far, the covert strategic aim of reducing Chinese thump remains desirable in this minilateral partnership.

Para-diplomacy

Realizing the potential of para-diplomacy in strengthening the federal structure of Indian government, central priority was given to this concept in foreign policy. The concept introduced in 1990 by renowned American scholar John Kincaid, as a result of globalization, sketched out a foreign policy role of state or local governments within a democratic federal system to carryout cross-border agreements based on their potentials (Ratna, 2013). This 'city diplomacy' or 'Town Twinning' between cities, provinces, or states can brace up cultural and economic exchanges, altering the Indian foreign policy trajectory through cross-border interactions (Tewari, 2017). Since Modi has not only amalgamated cultural attributes in India's foreign policy, he has outlined it as a business-oriented foreign policy. Para-diplomacy introduced by his administration enables its highly diverse and potentially resourceful states to reach out regionally and globally according to their own strategic advantages and opportunities for enhancing economic benefits of India. The innovative policy encourages each state and cities to play greater role towards Indian economic diplomacy by pursuing

Daring Foreign Policy Initiatives of Narendra Modi and the China Factor

special relations with foreign countries, their cities and federal states to their interest. To further benefit from this policy, Modi administration restructured Indian Missions abroad by turning them into business and investment friendly centers (Lakshmanan, 2019).

Para-diplomacy has been practiced internationally for quite some time now, bearing successful economic fruits in major countries like Canada, US, Brazil and closer to home China. Para-diplomacy has given added autonomy to the states to follow their potential interests across borders. In this regard, Invest India initiative is closely working with state governments and has resulted in rise of investments in Punjab, Manipur and Himachal Pradesh. Series of major investment summits have also been organized by various states such as Vibrant Gujarat, Vibrant Goa and Progressive Punjab (Lakshmanan, 2019). During Chinese President Xi Jinping visit, Town Twinning agreements were signed between Mumbai and Shanghai, Ahmedabad and Guangzhou and between Gujarat and Guangdong of China (Standard, 2014). Varanasi state also signed partnership deal with Kyoto, Japan (Standard, 2014). Border states interested in cross-border trade like Punjab, for instance, has pushed for additional trade routes at the Wagah border (Tribune, 2022) and Tripura demands opening of border markets along the India-Bangladesh border (Express, 2016).

From Natural Allies & Partnerships to Non-Alliances

Since Modi-led BJP government came in power, a tough alliance system has emerged. Deeper engagements of different levels have surfaced signaling future aligning of partnerships. A nexus between India and US against between China and Pakistan has openly been observed. Interestingly, on January 26, 2015 alliance politics in Asia was meaningfully on display, when President Obama beside Modi attended India's Republic Day parade as chief guest. Whereas on the other hand Chinese political and defence leadership hosted Pakistan's ex-Army Chief General Raheel Sharif in Beijing for talks. China called their friendship with Pakistan as "iron brothers" and "all-weather friends" (Diplomat, 2015). Washington has actively supported and engaged with India, similarly, China has been supportive and investing in Pakistan to develop China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) as part of its grand One Belt and One Road Initiative (BRI). Therefore, unlike Nehru, Modi's India has come boldly embraced world stage to play a leading role with world powers like the US while still hesitating on formally endorsing alliance ship. This emergence of informal yet bonded alliance setup between India and US against China speaks a lot about on-off historical complexities which finally have reached its destination.

- **India-US Partnership**

From Re-setting bilateral relations to deeper partnership

Blacklisted under the US immigrations rules, Narendra Modi was not permitted visitor's visa for almost a decade (Paranjape, 2020). However, the biggest beneficial accomplishment of Modi's foreign policy and for his leadership has been establishing relationship with America. As a result of diplomatic exchange over a call between Obama and Modi, prior to his elections, helped in setting the relationship tone. Both the leaders invited each other for a visit to home country. As a result, Obama accepting the invitation attended India's Republic Day parade as a chief guest. Washington and New Delhi, expressed commitment towards stronger strategic partnership between the two countries. They both

Daring Foreign Policy Initiatives of Narendra Modi and the China Factor

signed an agreement for Joint Strategic Vision for the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean, in East and South Asia, never envisioned by US with ally Pakistan. Indian lobbies in US no doubt are active and influential. Obama administration rebranded their Asia-Pacific policy by merging with Indo-Pacific of India's. This step further ensured India's security and interests in Indian Ocean (Wacker, 2020).

The signature economic ventures for Washington and New Delhi hold different meanings. For Modi growing Indian economy means global stature and nationalism. US businesses collaborating in Modi's schemes like Make in India and Smart cities to enhance India's capacity building of manufacturing have become an energizing source of his foreign policy's economic dimension. India's strong tilt towards America is clear and both share mutual interest in long term partnership as natural allies.

Fear of China, Deepening Relations

The shared fear of global influence and takeover of China has been a key element of Indo-US partnership. Whether its economic, military or Indo-Pacific, countering China's rise and expansion has enabled their strategic convergence. India is wary of direct China's presence in Indian ocean and in its regional states, while for US the global outreach China's economic growth has created, threatens hegemonic status of US, its economic and defense interests, and established world order. Therefore, increasing Indo-US defense and economic trade is significantly to counter China for which both governments have tried overcoming their differences over national interest issues. In 2016, US recognized India as a 'Major Defense Partner', followed by defense cooperation agreements allowing India US military equipment and support and also private international investments (Hindustan Times, 2016).

To further Indo-US strategic partnership, Modi's June 2023 visit to US became a successful story for India and Modi's foreign policy. A red carpet was rolled out for Modi with highest diplomatic protocol by President Biden. Carefully planned meetings and discussions to strengthen their partnership were organized. Washington eagerly wants India to become equivalent to China as its ally in the region. For this even the decaying democracy and failing humanitarian situation in India while constantly criticized in US and West are being ignored. The visit announced massive economic, diplomatic, technological and private sector investment gains. The notable agreements included US memory chip firm Micron Technology's investment up to \$825 million in India and assembling of chip and test plant in Gujarat with total \$2.75 billion investment. While US semiconductor toolmaker Applied Materials announced to invest \$400 million in new engineering centre in India. On bilateral trade agreements they agreed to remove retaliatory tariffs imposed in the past. US General Electric signed an agreement with India's state-owned Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. to build fighter jet engines for Indian Air Force. Moreover, Indian defense ministry would receive drones and establish facility in India, joint mission with NASA and assistance in its space exploration was also agreed upon (Renshaw, 2023). Recently, during G20 Summit hosted by India, both Modi and Biden pledged closer partnership while Xi chose not to attend G20 leader's summit. Moreover, both leaders using the platform, highlighted significance of Quad and cooperation in Indo-Pacific signaling anti-China message and affirming partnership against Chinese influence (Tan, 2023).

While India very shrewdly has been benefitting from the US fears of China, Modi's foreign policy desires India to be looked upon in its own uniqueness. The counterbalance tag doesn't go well in New Delhi. For India, to be pitched against China to counter its power is one dimension but containment of China has military dimensions and only serves

Daring Foreign Policy Initiatives of Narendra Modi and the China Factor

US interests. Still, India is cautiously benefitting from US-Sino competition and rivalry by becoming US chosen partner. Therefore, emphasis is more on partnerships and no military alliances which would compromise India its autonomous interests. which is why, US media and experts have questioned reliability of Modi's India as long-term reliable partner and whether they deserve immense US support or not due to lack of clarity on Modi's future policy intentions to stand with US (Tellis, 2023).

India-Pakistan – No Alliance

Since Modi came into power, his foreign policy approach towards Pakistan became talk of the town among political watchers of both region and abroad. Under Modi administration bilateral relations reached from higher level of complexities to strikes and then silence. Similarly, the policy stance variedly shifted from normal, to anger, to no alliance and then firmly harder. For both India and Pakistan's leadership, bilateral engagement and normalization of ties at the behest of their strategic interests is a huge challenge. Policymakers in India are aware of weak policies and political positions of Islamabad which has given New Delhi a leverage to treat Pakistan under No Alliance policy. The Modi government very conveniently has ignored the critics views of Modi's on-and-off talks Pakistan policy, as flawed, visionless and inconsistent (Mazumdar, 2017).

Modi's policy initiatives while appearing as a counterweight to China, has continued bilateral trade and welcomed investments from China. Restrictions were eased up for Chinese businessmen to visit and participate in the infrastructural developments of India. Post-Indo-Sino entanglement into military skirmishes, both decided to act maturely in easing up tensions at the border through diplomatic negotiations. Hence, the questions come up from policy makers are why Modi has willingly overlooked border tensions with China by offering peace and dialogue along with economic continuity, has not shown pragmatism towards Pakistan. there are four conceivable reasons consistently appear. These are;

1. Weak vs Strong Economy

Modi administration monitoring Pakistan's declining economy, are not interested in making efforts at resting diplomatic engagement with the country. New Delhi do not see lucrative economic worth for India in such engagement. Unlike Pakistan, China has been a very strong potential source of trade and investment for Indian markets and in its future growth. Hence, Pakistan remains at the brims of economic interests.

2. Political Uncertainty

Continuous political instability and uncertainties for the past many decades, the influence Pakistan military in both national security and foreign policy interests carries, vis-à-vis India is no secret. The inability of civilian government to fulfill mutual economic and diplomatic agreements without military's blessings impacts future ties. During the Modi's term in office since 2014, Islamabad underwent four governments, resulting in huge political instability. While prime minister Nawaz Sharif was invited by Modi at his swearing-in-ceremony in 2014, he chose not to engage with Imran Khan government in 2018, as it was considered undemocratic and having military support. Even when at the Islamabad Security Dialogue held in 2021, former Chief of Army Staff General Bajwa called upon burying the past and moving forward, India showed no interest (Dawn , 2021).

Likewise, at the second Security Dialogue held in 2022, General Bajwa again showed readiness to resume talks on Kashmir with India on the basis of General Musharraf's devised four-point formula (Sawhney, 2021). Both the civil and military institutions expressed consensus on peaceful relations revival of commercial ties with India. The dominating role of military in foreign relations were considered as stumbling block in India. Taking pride in heading the largest democracy, Modi chose to disregard engagement with Pakistan. While it's the state to state relations that matters, Modi government repeatedly ignored olive branch offerings to India for holding dialogue over Kashmir and neighborly relations by pursuing strict non-engagement (Dawn, 2021).

3. **Contention over Kashmir**

Unresolved issue of Kashmir has heavily influenced India-Pakistan's bilateral relations since independence. Islamabad's decision to meet with the All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) in 2016 aroused aggressive reaction from the Modi government. It led to deterioration of any possibilities of talks between the two. Similarly, under BJP government, Indian security forces killing of Burhan Wani, commander of Kashmiri movement group Hizbul Mujahideen in the same year 2016, resulted in strong reaction from Pakistan. The 5th August, 2019 revocation of Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) status by Modi government has increased dilemma of Pakistan, to either accept new engaging terms or remain disconnected diplomatically with India in future. On India's part, intention is to keep Pakistan trapped in a cross-border terrorism and insurgency promoter loop to block hopes of negotiations. Furthermore, BJP's intentions of putting pressures on Pakistan had been there since Modi came in power. BJP's Defense Minister Rajnath Singh pledged to complete full integration mission of J&K by reuniting Pakistan's Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) and Azad Kashmir (AJK) in Indian-held Kashmir (The Hindu, 2022). Likewise, in September 2019 Jaishankar at a press conference stated, "Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) is part of India, and we expect one day that we will have physical jurisdiction over it" (Parashar, 2019). Similarly, former Indian Army chiefs, General Bipin Rawat and General V.K. Singh (Retd), talked about carrying out operation to retrieve Kashmir from Pakistan (Kulkarni, 2020). Hence, to deliberately extract concessions from Pakistan on Kashmir have been new pattern of engagement of Modi government.

4. **Hindutva-led Electoral Base**

The hawkish policies of right-wing BJP have once again been set for 2024 general elections mood. The hardline anti-Muslim and anti-Pakistan policy narrative has so far benefited Modi and his BJP in elections. Throughout his electoral campaigns of 2014 and 2019 Modi has repeatedly used anti-Pakistan rhetoric to sensationalize Hindu voters to vote for him. During 2014 electoral campaign, Modi accused Manmohan Singh to be a weak premier for maintaining relations with Pakistan instead of raising issues of terrorism and cross-border fighting (The Express Tribune, 2013). During 2019 general elections, aware of the poor economic performance, Modi raised Chowkidar slogan to manipulate defence national security and foreign policy to his advantage. At the behest of Pakistan card, faking surgical strikes in Pakistan's Balakot area by claims of hitting terrorist training camps, Modi secured landslide victory. This action exposed Modi's intentions of considering domestic electoral backing superior than talking with Pakistan (Al Jazeera, 2021).

Daring Foreign Policy Initiatives of Narendra Modi and the China Factor

Modi has successfully changed threat perceptions and challenges with regard to Pakistan to his benefit both at home and abroad. Pakistan and China's friendship has been highlighted in a suspicious manner at home to sabotage CPEC to hurt their economic ventures. With Pakistan, whether its economic engagement, Kashmir, terrorism, political instability, SCO, CPEC, Modi government has huge advantage to put Pakistan at the back seat of his foreign policy as it doesn't impact India's future growth and global status.

Make In India

Everything taken up by Modi was turned into a campaign. 'Make in India' programme, is among many prominent policy campaigns. The programme urges both the local and foreign companies to invest in India. The purpose behind is domestic development and elevated Indian stature abroad, by getting foreign investment. In 2015 a foreign diplomat in Delhi stated that, "Whatever we want from India, we just have to find a way of fitting it into one of the Modi government's campaigns. Put this in Digital India, put that in Startup India. And Indian diplomats and bureaucrats lap it up" (The Print, 2020).

The red-carpet rollup for investors seeks transformation of India into a manufacturing power hub for all. The programme was launched ahead of Modi's maiden visit to the US with an emphasis on employment creation to skill enhancement, including automobiles, IT, pharmaceuticals, renewable energy, bio-technology etc. (Hindustan Times, 2015). During his US visit at the invitation of President Trump for improving strategic ties, Modi met with CEO's of companies. Modi promoted India as a 'business friendly destination' and asked US company heads to capitalize under his Make in India programme. Similarly, during his high level four-day visit to US in June 2023, Modi met leading US tech CEO's and Indian executives to increase cooperation in artificial intelligence, semiconductor production and space mission (The Indian Express, 2017). Modi asked the global companies to invest in "Make in India" (Steve Holland, 2023).

Mindful of the competing atmosphere, Modi aims at opening up manufacturing ventures in India for the global investors as an alternative to China. The objective therefore, remains ensuring of continuous growth and employment security of its people. The project signed between Tata and Airbus will be creating a new ecosystem. Modi received credit for designing a skill based development policies as part of his 'Aatmanirbhar' vision bringing India among the top three countries globally in air traffic. (The Indian Express, 2022)

However, the study finds out that the programme falls short on certain factors. It lacks productivity due to insufficient skills of workers in comparison to ones in China. The industrial units smaller in size produces less result; power outages are higher than China. Moreover, the transportation issues related to railways and ports are outperforming; and the bureaucratic hurdles and corruption cases have made it less attractive. Hence, conducive business environment for investors is still striving to match global standards for desired results (Drishiti, 2022).

Conclusion

The findings of the paper highlights that since assuming office in 2014, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has become a stirring personality to be attracted by the world leaders. India since 2014 has made noteworthy policy shifts from the old

Daring Foreign Policy Initiatives of Narendra Modi and the China Factor

traditional set of foreign policy strategies like the strict nonalignment; keeping itself at distance from the West; and focusing on building stronger ties with middle sized nations. Today, India's foreign policy has a clarity based on BJP-led Narendra Modi's vision for India. The vision foresees a broader sphere of influence; benefits from multi-alignment; enhancement of India's role around the world; and to make country's presence recognized as an emerging new power.

An important question had been raised from time and again whether there is a change or continuity in foreign policy under Modi. The primary references in this regard has been towards India's traditional stance on maintaining its strategic autonomy without making compromises on its national interests. Moreover, the Nehruvian vision of forecasting India's global rise as inevitable due to its geography and history, which has become a reality under Modi. Similarly, BJP had always spoken and taken pride in India's great historical civilizational legacy and rich culture and perceived themselves as a nation of philosophy and religious advent. Therefore, a closer look at Modi's foreign policy, highlights a continuity of core fundamentals with a shift from non-alignment to multi-alignment. The new outlook which is defined as pragmatic; daring, ambitious; and futuristic with a solution based approach contrast itself from once reluctant and wary of participating in leading role with the US against global power like China.

India under Modi's craftsmanship has embraced strategic partnership with the US and Indo-Pacific strategy with an understanding to emerge as a counter balancer to China in the region. While Modi's daring foreign policy strategy has put India on the map of rising power, the strategy has its own challenges and problems. India's geographical proximity with China puts it under direct threat of China if New Delhi ever disregarded Beijing's stature. The border military skirmishes shook up Modi administration to an extent to avoid messing up with China. Initially, India responded with strong nationalist anti-Chinese campaign. It exposed mainly India's inner fears of being a weaker country facing stronger one. The realization of China's advantage over India in its political, economic and military might made BJP-led government in New Delhi apprehensive. Hence, India had to not only morally comprise its aggressive stance towards China but also significance of future economic ties hit harder. Modi's aligning with the Western agenda of countering China, has also brought its strong neighbors Pakistan and Russia closer to China. Although, for India to achieve global leadership stature, continuous efforts in isolating Pakistan would not be beneficial in future for long. While it has become convenient to target Pakistan by blaming terrorism sponsorship for electoral gains, it is not considered as a responsible act on part of BJP leadership.

An urgent desire emerged to achieve self-sufficiency through cooperating and engaging with the major powers willing to assist India in its economic and military developments. A way out sorted so far has been to develop deeper partnerships with like-minded democratic nations, by joining multilateral partnerships to deter and counter China. In this regard, the stronger ties with these countries has been beneficial for India's future growth and global stature to establish equal foothold on competing with China. India very cunningly has placed itself at an attractive position to assist the West and has been exploiting the US fears of China's rise to their advantage. Modi's foreign relations are broadening with countries cautious of China's rise especially US and Japan. The out of box approach centered on from East and West policies, from extending Neighborhood First diplomacy to transforming its relations with Gulf states has been great achievements of Modi. Though, too much focus on western and global outreach has put the region on hold. According to Jaishankar, in his landmark speech on the evolution of Indian foreign policy, "In India's case, nationalism has in fact led to greater internationalism" (The Indian Express, 2019). Although, India has been unable to fulfill its

Daring Foreign Policy Initiatives of Narendra Modi and the China Factor

commitments timely and is seen as an unreliable partner in foreign policy area by some of the critics. Even though, his daring policy initiatives are carefully planned on the basis of China factor to accomplish convergence of interests with the US and China wary nations.

References

- Alterman, Jon B., & Mohan, C. Raja. (2022). India's Middle East Strategy. Centre for Strategic & International Studies. <https://www.csis.org/analysis/indias-middle-east-strategy>
- Cotterill, Joseph. (2023). Xi Jinping dominates Brics summit as leaders endorse Beijing-led expansion. Financial Times. <https://www.ft.com/content/e2b79e25-3f60-4b26-8727-ec4bo94ae97>
- Essa, Azad. (2019). Narendra Modi in Saudi Arabia: Everything you need to know. Middle East Eye. <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/everything-you-need-know-about-modis-visit-saudi-arabia>
- Gowen, Annie. & Lakshmi, Rama. (2014). Modi promises a 'shinning India' in victory speech. The Washington Post. https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/hindu-nationalist-narendra-modis-party-heads-to-victory-in-indian-polls/2014/05/16/c6eccaea-4b20-46db-8ca9-af4ddb286ce7_story.html
- Heiduk, Felix & Wacker, Gudrun. (2020) From Asia-Pacific to Indo-Pacific: Significance, Implementation and Challenges. Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, Research Paper 2020/RP 09. <https://www.swp-berlin.org/10.18449/2020RP09/>
- Holland, Steve., Lewis, Simon., & Mason, Jeff. (2023). Indian PM Modi wraps up Washington trip with appeal to tech CEOs. Reuters. <https://www.reuters.com/world/indian-pm-modi-meet-ceos-washington-visit-concludes-2023-06-23/>
- Krishnan, Murali. (2021). Why Dubai plans to build infrastructure in Kashmir. Deutsche Welle. <https://www.dw.com/en/why-dubai-plans-to-build-infrastructure-in-kashmir/a-59620265>
- Kulkarni, Sudheendra. (2020). Ladakh LAC on the Boil, India Must Avoid Stirring Gilgit Baltistan Cauldron with Pakistan. The Wire. <https://thewire.in/diplomacy/ladakh-lac-on-the-boil-india-must-avoid-stirring-gilgit-baltistan-cauldron-with-pakistan>
- Kumar, Manali. (2020). Modi's Neighborhood First Promise Fails to Materialize. South Asian Voices. <https://southasianvoices.org/modis-neighborhood-first-promise-fails-to-materialize/>
- Lakshmanan, Remya. (2019). Paradiplomacy: Globalization of Localism. Invest India. <https://www.investindia.gov.in/team-india-blogs/paradiplomacy-globalization-localism>
- Madhav, Ram. (2015). BJP National Executive Meeting: Foreign Policy Resolution. <https://www.rammadhav.in/articles/bjp-national-executive-meeting-foreign-policy-resolution/>

Daring Foreign Policy Initiatives of Narendra Modi and the China Factor

- Mahmud, Faisal. (2021). Why did Bangladesh witness anti-Modi protests? TRT World. <https://www.trtworld.com/magazine/why-did-bangladesh-witness-anti-modi-protests-45426>
- Mahr, Krista. (2014). Narendra Modi: The New Face of India. Time Magazine. <https://time.com/magazine/south-pacific/108674/june-2nd-2014-vol-183-no-21-asia-europe-middle-east-and-africa-south-pacific/>
- Mazumdar, Arijit. (2017). Narendra Modi's Pakistan Policy: A Case of Old Wine in Old Bottles. The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs, Volume 106, 2017 (Issue 1).
- Mehta, Ashok. (2020). The India that made Modi. European Council on Foreign Relations. <https://ecfr.eu/special/what-does-india-think/analysis/the-india-that-made-modi>
- Palshikar, Suhas. (2014). The Unintended Legacy of Manmohan Singh. East Asia Forum. <https://www.eastasiaforum.org/2014/07/03/the-unintended-legacy-of-manmohan-singh/>
- Pandey, Vikas. (2022). Quad: The China factor at the heart of the summit. BBC News. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-61547082>
- Pant, Harsh V. (2022). India and the Quad: Chinese belligerence and Indian resilience. Observer Research Foundation. <https://www.orfonline.org/research/india-and-the-quad/>
- Pant, Harsh V., & Tewari, Falguni. (2017). Paradiplomacy and India: The growing role of states in foreign policy. LSE. <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/southasia/2017/01/12/paradiplomacy-and-india-the-growing-role-of-states-in-foreign-policy/>
- Paranjape, Makarand R. (2020). Modi is the only Indian mass leader after Gandhi who has used religious symbolism so well. The Print. <https://theprint.in/opinion/being-indian/modi-is-the-only-indian-mass-leader-after-gandhi-who-has-used-religious-symbolism-so-well/529263/>
- Parashar, Sachin. (2019). We'll have physical jurisdiction over PoK one day: S Jaishankar. The Times of India. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/well-have-physical-jurisdiction-over-pok-one-day-s-aishankar/articleshow/71175845.cms>
- Pathi, Krutika. (2023). Modi Says India's Economy Will be Among Top 3 in the World in 5 Years. The Diplomat. <https://thediplomat.com/2023/08/modi-says-indias-economy-will-be-among-top-3-in-the-world-in-5-years/>
- R., Augustine. (2021). India's Act East Policy: Warning to China or Flawed Strategy?. Geopolitical Monitor. Situation Report. 13 October 2021. <https://www.geopoliticalmonitor.com/indias-act-east-policy-warning-to-china-or-flawed-strategy/>

Daring Foreign Policy Initiatives of Narendra Modi and the China Factor

- Ratna, Tanvi. (2013). Paradiplomacy: A New Way for Indian Foreign Policy? The Diplomat. <https://thediplomat.com/2013/11/paradiplomacy-a-new-way-for-indian-foreign-policy/>
- Rasheed, Zaheena. (2022). Quad launches 'anti-China' maritime surveillance plan. Al-Jazeera. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/5/28/why-has-the-quad-launched-an-anti-china-surveillance-plan>
- Renshaw, Jarrett. (2023). Flurry of US-India deals on AI, defense as Biden, Modi meet. Reuters. <https://www.reuters.com/world/biden-modi-meet-flurry-new-us-india-deals-2023-06-22/>
- Sawhney, Pravin. (2022). For Growth, Pakistan Needs Peace Talks with India. But What Will India Get In Return?. The Wire. <https://thewire.in/south-asia/pakistan-india-peace-talks-general-bajwa>
- Sharma, Pratul. (2022). From Nehru to Modi, PMs have always taken independent foreign policy decisions. The Week. <https://www.theweek.in/theweek/cover/2022/12/17/independent-foreign-policy-decisions-of-indian-prime-ministers.html>
- Sidhu, W.P.S., & Godbole, Shruti. (2015). Bold Initiatives Stymied by Systemic Weakness. Brookings India. <https://www.brookings.edu/opinions/bold-initiatives-stymied-by-systemic-weakness/>
- Singh, Hemant. (2022). Act East Policy of India: Meaning and Objectives. Jagran Josh. <https://www.jagranjosh.com/general-knowledge/meaning-and-objectives-of-the-act-east-policy-of-india-1527251668-1>
- Singh, Manjari. (2022). I2U2: A Strategic Bloc or a Minilateral Partnership? The Defense Horizon. <https://www.thedefencehorizon.org/post/i2u2-a-strategic-bloc-or-a-minilateral-partnership>
- Tan, Clement. (2023). Modi, Biden pledge to deepen India-U.S. partnership as world leaders meet in Delhi for G20 summit. CNBC. <https://www.cnbc.com/2023/09/08/modi-biden-india-us-g20.html>
- Tellis, Ashley J.. (2023). America's Bad Bet on India. Foreign Affairs. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/india/americas-bad-bet-india-modi>
- Tiezzi, Shannon. (2015). With Obama in India, China Hosts Pakistan's Army Chief. The Diplomat. <https://thediplomat.com/2015/01/with-obama-in-india-china-hosts-pakistans-army-chief/>
- Upadhyay, Shreya. (2022). BRICS, Quad, and India's Multi-Alignment Strategy. Stimson Centre. <https://www.stimson.org/2022/brics-quad-and-indias-multi-alignment-strategy/>