

INDIAN STRATEGIC THINKING & PARTNERSHIP WITH ISRAEL: IMPLICATIONS FOR PAKISTAN

*Attiqu ur Rehman & Dr. Zafar Nawaz Jaspal**

Abstract

Classical Kautilyan and modern Nehruvian wisdoms laid the foundation of Indian strategic thinking. While maintaining cooperative interaction with the outside world, New Delhi endeavours to establish its hegemony in South Asia. New Delhi's closeness with Tel Aviv is an appropriate example of Kautilyan realpolitik model of pleasantly managing of foreign relation beyond the neighbouring nations. In opposition to Pakistan's counter weighting behaviour, New Delhi preferred to uphold Israel in its mainstream Middle Eastern policy. The mutual geostrategic interests of both India and Israel in Middle East and South Asia forced them to develop multiple areas for strategic cooperation while fighting against their bordering Muslim states. Moreover, the persistently increasing regional hegemonic thrust of Tel Aviv and New Delhi jeopardized the security of both Western and Southern corners of larger Asian region. The anti-Islamic collaboration cemented in racially discriminatory patterns of Hindu-Zionist ideologies leaves serious repercussions for territorially adjoining Islamic states generally, and Pakistan specifically. Islamabad's counterbalancing role against New Delhi's offensive South Asian policy along with its non-recognition of Israel's as a de jure state let India to explicitly pursue Kautilyan model of diplomacy. Indeed, Indo-Israel strategic cooperation would be having impact on the South Asian strategic environment in general and Pakistan in particular.

Keywords: Kautilyan, Politics, South Asia, Security, Strategic Environment.

Introduction

India's aggressive approach towards its neighbours is a mirror image of Kautilyan Arthshastra, philosophy of governance. Indian foreign policy review reveals, the foreign policy makers in New Delhi are immensely influenced by Kautilyan pessimistic perceptions about its neighbours, which was a hallmark of Mauryan dynasty foreign policy. The classical wisdom of managing foreign relations by expanding territories can be termed today as expanding the sphere of influence for the achievement of geostrategic objective. In this way, the persuasion of Kautilyan maxims always remained an unavoidable component of Indian strategic thinking.

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New Delhi's approach of managing the territorial and oceanic matters pugnaciously on Kautilyan philosophy has resulted in a quarrelsome South Asian environment, in which the regional states facing Indian antagonism are trying to secure their sovereign positions. India's relations with bordering nation bases on unresolved territorial disputes cemented in incompatible national standings have caused an instable regional security environment of South Asia. The persistent increase in conventional and nonconventional military capabilities of New Delhi have further caused the insecurity of bordering nations. The bellicose behaviour of Indian leadership has entangled territorially adjoining states into an unending strategic competition. Perhaps, it is the cause of India and Pakistan arms race.

Israel has failed to resolve its disputes with its neighbours. Both Tel Aviv, like New Delhi successfully camouflage its warlike destabilizing regional policies and also represent itself as a victim of neighbours sponsored violence.

On July 2017, Prime Minister Modi made an historical visit to Israel. The agreement in various areas of mutual interests and supply of Israeli weapons to India were the main points of discussion during the Modi-Netanyahu meeting.¹ It was considerable to be unignorably an important shift in India's policy towards Zionism and Israel. The two-sided multiplying strategic bounds have significant implications for Pakistan.²

The increasing New Delhi-Tel Aviv multidimensional cooperation particularly in military and security fields is a serious concern for Islamabad, because the joint Israeli-Indian state capacities have explored every possible dimension of cooperation. The mutual efforts of both nations in the strategic domain witnessed a promising behaviour of authorities from two sides. Unlike the Indian model of violently managing external relation based on Kautilyan principles, the mainstream Pakistani leadership preferred to develop friendly ties with neighbouring nations and established cooperatively dynamic relations with China.

The critical examination of Indo-Israel strategic relations and their impact on Pakistan has become a question of great significance in the prevalent regional and global strategic environment. The purpose of this paper is to evaluate the Indian strategic thinking and its impact on neighbouring states generally, and Pakistan specifically. Indo-Israel strategic partnership and their various joint ventures for supporting each other against regional rivals is the central theme of this study.

Genesis of Indian Strategic Thinking

Chanakya (famously known as Kautilya or Vishnugupta), an advisor of Mauryan Empire, laid the foundations of Indian strategic thinking. Kautilya's vision for dealing with the economic affairs of state parallel to warfare strategies for decisively defeating the potential rivals, served the administrative and strategic objectives of ancient India, and helped Chandragupta in the establishment of the Maurya Empire after successfully overthrowing the Nanda Empire.³

The classical literature derived from the Mauryan dynasty was further advanced by initial Indian leadership in the post-independence era when the first Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, chalked out a plan of upholding his country as a sovereign entity in world politics.⁴ In order to acquire a hegemonic position in the larger South Asian region, Pandit Nehru persuaded both United States and Soviet Union in the strategic support of his country.⁵ In the last phase of US-USSR rivalry, New Delhi decided to stay in the Soviet camp against Beijing, Islamabad, and Washington. The demise of the Soviet Union showed a dramatic change in New Delhi's foreign policy and resulted in close Indo-US cooperative relations.

A critical analysis of New Delhi's external relations presents a shrewd pattern of varying foreign policy paradigms adopted by Indian leaders throughout the history. The aftermaths of Cold War competition convinced the Indian leadership to end its diplomatic reluctance for Israel and considered it a potential ally. In this way, Israel gradually emerged as one of the key states for supporting India in the larger South Asian region and became a gravitational point of Indian Middle East policy. In the absence of a diplomatically conflicted environment, the economic, strategic, cultural and social bounds rapidly bonded two states to supportably remain in closer relationship.

Nature of Indo-Israel Bilateralism

The nature of a well-established and well-structured bilateral collaboration between New Delhi and Tel Aviv contains several commonalities which placed both states into a closer diplomatic and strategic formats while locating in separate regions. The longstanding bilateral settings of both states on the basis of following similarities force them to assist each other in playing of principally key roles in their regional politics.⁶

- The national security professionals of both states perceive their neighbours as potential rivals and always prefer to undermine their sovereign existence. Such bilateral ventures consequently threatened the survival of their adjoining countries. Israel feels threatened by Arab states, whereas India perceives China and Pakistan as hostile states.
- Pakistan's refusal to recognize the Jewish occupation in Middle East parallel to its own creation against Hindu dominated nation provided initial basis for Indo-Israel friendship. Contrary to Pakistan's non-recognition of Jewish state of Israel, India preferred to accept formally the state of Israel and allowed the Jewish state to open a Consulate in Mumbai in 1953.⁷ The consular services of both states kept their diplomatic communities to closely work for the enhancement of bilateral ties of their states.
- Since Israel's birth and independence of India, both countries have started to look their regions negatively and adopted a militarized policy for managing of their external affairs. The inflexible positions of both Tel Aviv and New Delhi further ignored the role of international forums (United Nations) for maintaining of peace in their regions.
- The geostrategic thrust of both nations sparked an unending nuclear race in Middle East and South Asia. Israel clandestinely developed a nuclear weapons capability and forced the neighbouring states (mainly Iraq and Syria) to start their nuclear programs, whereas Indian self-proclaimed peaceful nuclear intentions in 1974, and inaugurated the South Asian nuclear arms race. Tel Aviv even restrained from condemning the New Delhi's proclamation of its nuclear armed capability in 1998.

In this way, mutually agreed context of Indo-Israel nexus has resulted in various joint ventures and considerably prevented the historical gaps between Jewish and Hindu communities.

New Delhi-Tel Aviv Strategic Cooperation

A thin layer of bilateral values were covertly constructed by the governments of both sides and a phase of reciprocal visits gradually became an undeniable fact of the partnership. In 1960s, the signs of military-to-military cooperation began to surface when Israel supported India initially against China and later against Pakistan (1962, 1965), and India reciprocated Israel against Arabs states in 1967.⁸ Later, the Moraji Desai administration attempted to

enhance the unuttered India-Israel diplomatic confidence and arranged a secret visit of Israeli officials in New Delhi in 1977.⁹ The option for adopting a more effective and cooperative Israeli policy was further explored by the sixth Indian Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi.¹⁰ He vigorously followed his predecessors and decided to foster the incremental measures toward Israel.¹¹ Rajiv Gandhi met with Shimon Peres during the UN General Assembly meeting in 1985 and attempted to strengthen the cooperative potential of the two states.¹²

After the launch of a surprise air strike on an Iraqi nuclear facility (*Osirak* reactor) in 1981, Israel expressed support for the Indian idea of destroying the embryonic growth of Islamabad's nuclear program.¹³ Mossad was exceedingly active in providing the intelligence services and sharing details with the Gandhi regime about Pakistani nuclear facilities.¹⁴ The IDF agreed in facilitating the Indian Air Force (IAF) for adopting Israeli plan which was applied on *Osirak*.¹⁵

The mainstream leadership from New Delhi and Tel Aviv decided to antagonistically polish their strategic muscles with the aim of compelling their territorially adjoining nations to accept their regional hegemonic schemes while offensively suppressing the role of counterbalancing forces.¹⁶

Israeli's Military Industrial Complex and India

The principle imperative of Indo-Israeli policy is chiefly inherited in a dramatic shift of New Delhi's foreign relations in the post-Cold War era when the disintegration of Soviet Union and emergence of American sole super power status altered global historical alliances of the Cold War era.¹⁷ The mutual cooperation in the technologically advanced field of defence coupled with crafting of various avenues for united research and development work were emphasized in the meeting.¹⁸ The fifth Prime Minister of Israel, Yitzhak Rabin, decided to connect New Delhi's Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) to Israel's main military-industrial complex.¹⁹

The last five years have witnessed annual defence trade between the two states upward of 1 billion dollars.²⁰ The genesis of strategic collaboration between both states tentatively initiated in 1962, but the decade of 1990 observed the rapid growth in military-to-military ties between the governments of the two states. The up-gradation of Soviet obtained ageing MiG-21 aircraft communicated Indian requests for getting Israeli assistance in 1995, and Indian government further hosted a visit of Israeli Air Force Major General Herzl Bodinger in New

Delhi.²¹ Moreover, New Delhi paid 14 million dollars to Israel against a major arms deal in addition to the purchase of an upgraded aircraft carrier, INS *Viraat*.²² The government owned IAI, recognized as Tel Aviv's main aerospace and aviation producer, agreed to serve Indian maritime interest in 1996 and agreed to provide two Super Dvora Mk-2 fast patrol boats.²³ The manufacturing of further Super Dvora boats were allowed by IAI to India and six additional boats were manufactured at Goa shipyard.²⁴ In 1998, Indian Navy received additional Israeli assistance in the form of patrol boats and electric warfare computers.²⁵ The acquisition of Barak-8 missile system is planned to enable Indian navy to increase its air-defence capabilities.²⁶ The cooperation of New Delhi-Tel Aviv naval forces expand Israel's sphere of influence from Mediterranean Sea to larger Indian Ocean, which will serve in Jewish greater security concerns in oceanic politics in the future.

The Israeli supplies ensured India the sale of ground-to-ground Barak missile system in addition to Green Pine Radar System as an anti-missile shield. A set of three Phalcon long-range radars, as a part of AWACS India has purchased from Israel in 2003.²⁷ The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) from New Delhi expressed its intentions of purchasing more Israeli-manufactured surveillance aircrafts.²⁸ Moreover, the renovation of Mikoyan-Gurevich (MiG 21) supersonic fighter jets, pilotless planes, Sakohi helicopters, and Russian-made T-72 tanks further materialised the defence promises of Israeli and Indian leaders.²⁹

In the field of space, Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) in collaboration of Israel Space Agency (ISA) finalized a deal for Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV C-10) in 2008 on the basis of historical ties between ISRO and IAI.³⁰ The recent visit of Modi has concluded three main space agreements for bilateral cooperation in the areas of small satellites, GEO-LEO optical links and atomic clock (satellite based equipment for getting precise locational data).³¹

The IAI, by maintaining its commercial interest, was agreed to enhance its working relations with Indian army and finalized a contract of 1.6 billion dollar. According to signed deal, the IAI will provide medium-to-air missile (MRSAM) along with long-range surface-to-air missile (LRSAM) to India.³² On December 29-30, 2015, Indian Naval Ship (INS) Kolkata tested the missile LRSAM into Arabian Sea.³³ The IAI and TATA signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in February 2008 and TAT's new wing TaTa Advanced Systems agreed to

work with IAI in aerospace industry.³⁴ IAI remained active in various projects while Indian government and DRDO proposed several programs with IAI for the advancement of Indian air and naval forces. On December 2012, the IAI and BEL signed another MoU for the development of LRSAM ship-defence system projects.³⁵ Elbit officials visited India and introduced the company's hi-tech inventions in Aero-India Air & Space exhibition.³⁶ Further Israeli defence pacts promised to provide India Thermal Imaging Stand Alone Systems (TISAS), Long Range Observation Systems (LOROS), Hand Held Thermal Imaging Systems (HHTI), Portable Laser Designing Systems (PLDS), and Thermal Imaging Fire Control Systems (TIFCS) in addition to different hi-tech sensors and advanced surveillance equipment.³⁷

India's agency for foreign intelligence Research & Analysis Wing (RAW) and Israel's similar intelligence services Mossad secretly established their connections and developed common areas for cooperation. The two-sided intelligence agencies gained substantial growth for bringing two states too closer and countering the common threats through clandestine operations.

As the biggest importer of Israeli military technology, India posed serious threats to its territorially adjoining countries especially Pakistan. The hostile ideological and racist attributes of Indo-Israeli regional policies directed the Jewish and Hindu leaders to carry offensive policies for their closest neighbours.

In theory, the Kautilyan model of pursuing national interest by increasing ties with powerful states, or especially the rivals of neighbouring countries permits India to apply a model of combined covert and overt values for keeping Israel in its close sphere of foreign policy. Without upsetting its relations with Muslim countries of Middle Eastern and Persian Gulf regions, New Delhi has chosen to associate the major domains of its strategic partnership with Israel which has become a highly secret feature of its foreign relations.

Implications for Pakistan

New Delhi's security demands to meet its offensive South Asian policies and aspiration for establishing its regional hegemony has provided an appropriate customer to Tel Aviv. The multifaceted weaponry supplies to New Delhi can give Indian both qualitative and quantitative superiority over other states in the larger South Asian region.

The more promisingly transfer of Israeli technology for mainly in convention dimension to India leave worse impact on Pakistan, because the conventional imbalance in Indo-Pak dispute will augment New Delhi's position by increasing the existing gap in conventional capabilities of both states.

Apart from the conventional dimension, the cooperation in the nuclear field between India and Israel will attempt to inflict a sense of strategic inferiority in Pakistan's mind-set, and significantly will demand Islamabad to design suitable measures against gradually rising a thin layer of New Delhi-Tel Aviv nuclear tie. The state authorities of both countries were agreed launching a preemptive strike in any attempt to demolish the nuclear program of Pakistan. The anti-Islamic sentiment inherited in ideological confrontation permits the Jewish-Hindu friendship to consider Pakistan's atomic bomb as Islamic bomb.

In this way, the fulfillment of Indian regional hegemonic ambitions will disturb the security environment of the Indian Ocean where Sino-Pak economic collaboration, under CPEC, will highly be pushed towards a quarrelsome atmosphere instead of discovering economic opportunities in oceanic waters.

A close association of both communities on foreign land observed to be unignorably a major factor, leaving a negative impact on Pakistani immigrants. Both countries always attempt to cultivate concrete diplomatic bounds with great powers while portraying themselves the victims of regional terrorism. In order to gain sympathetic promotion in the international system, the governments of both countries choose to join US-led war on terror. In this way, the American addition in Indo-Israel friendship resulted in a trilateral alliance of Washington-New Delhi-Tel Aviv. A close network of secret agencies of India, the United States and Israel has become a direct threat to Pakistan.

India, desires to suppress Pakistan's claims on the Kashmir issue is also another area of Islamabad's concern. Thus, the US is also becoming an unignorable an important factor in Israel-Indian alliance. Without achieving American confidence, the Indian-Israeli relations cannot maintain the concrete bilateral bounds. Now, it is essential for the United States to review its ongoing strategic imbalances between India and Pakistan before designing any action for India and Israel.³⁸

A close bilateral framework for upholding each other against common threats posed serious challenges to Pakistan's position in the region. Moreover,

the partnership in the military domain between New Delhi and Tel Aviv profoundly upset the regional nuclearized order of South Asia. Furthermore, Indian bellicose South Asian policy upsetting the regional atmosphere of South Asia in which the Kautilyan maxims allow India to turn its closest neighbouring states as potential enemies and launch offensive wars against them. Therefore, the emerging Beijing-Islamabad economic ties have become an unacceptable reality for New Delhi and convinced Modi government to increase its strategic partnership with Tel Aviv. The emerging antipathy of Modi and Netanyahu towards Pakistan contain enough potential to cause unpredictably an insecure South Asian atmosphere, because the Israeli transfer of technologically advanced military arsenal to India through multiple channels generates worrisome future of Islamabad.

Conclusion

The Kautilyan driven foreign policy model of India preferred Israel in opposition of Pakistan as a potential ally and started a multi-dynamic strategic collaboration with it. The persuasion of national interest mainly inherited in the New Delhi's geostrategic objective of acquiring the regional hegemonic position in South Asia by diminishing the role of emerging counterbalancing forces, India has to acquire Israel's support. The inevitable role of Indian strategic thinking greatly derived from the maxims of Kautilya determine the logic of varying formats rooted in Indian relations with other states including Israel. The major shift, from divergence to convergence, after the vanishing of bipolar division of the international system, occurred in New Delhi's foreign relations and the main architectures of national security from New Delhi attempted to place the militarily advanced and technologically upgraded nations close to India by revising its relations with them.

The belligerent Indian strategic behaviour in the larger South Asian region generally, and against Pakistan specifically portrays a worrisome picture in which the scope of peace and stability has been diminished. The strategic balance of the region will be fractured further as the result of increasing strategic joint ventures of New Delhi and Tel Aviv which ultimately can jeopardize the security of the entire South Asian region. The regional implication of Indo-Israeli nexus cannot simply be ignored, because the power balance of a nuclearized subcontinent needs a cautious examination of New Delhi's strategic connections with extra-regional powers. Contemporary Modi regime is obsessed with anti-neighbourhood policy and ambitious for achieving the dream of 'Make in India'

aggressive pursuing the offensive models of its South Asian policy.³⁹ Such behaviour of New Delhi will cause disastrous impact on nuclearized subcontinent. The people from world's capitals are exhibiting high concerns about the subcontinent's nuclear order without analytically inspecting the growing strategic relationship between New Delhi and Tel Aviv.

Moreover, Indo-Israeli collaboration is actively lobbying in the international community to push the sole nuclear power in the Muslim World, in which Pakistan into critical circumstances. The global efforts of Hindu-Zionist collaboration has already pushed the people from world's capitals towards a critical examination of Islamabad's nuclear armed status instead of impartially examining the clandestine nuclear activities of Israel. An impartial investigation of international community, in addition to Israel, can reveal the unsafeguarded nature of the Indian nuclear program.

The nature of mutual interest has resulted in a close strategic partnership which has become a genuine area of concern for Pakistan. The mainstream policymakers from Islamabad, in the presence of a growing strong Indo-Israeli connection, need to seriously emphasize the Hindu-Jewish strategic cooperation which are not only a threat for Pakistan, but contains sufficient potential to effect the entire South Asian region. The main architectures of national security strategy from Pakistan needs not to leave it an unnoticed political development, and attempt to review or reconsider their policy response for Indo-Israel coalition.

NOTES

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