



India –U.S. Relations in 21st Century

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Abstract: The disintegration of Soviet Union had positively impacted indo-US relations in post Cold –War era. The post Cold-War strategic scenario provided a chance to both countries to redefine their bilateral priorities. The US was always keen to improve bilateral relationship with India and therefore India initiated Defense cooperation with the US in changing strategic environment. India’s nuclear explosion had poses some divergences in Indo-US set-aside its sanctions against India. India signed ‘Next Steps in Strategic Partnership with the US in 2004 and both countries strategic dialogue in 2009. The new US President Trump also showed its softness towards India and called Indian Prime Minister Modi as a ‘True Friend of US’. The decline of US-Pakistan strategic relations had positively affected Indo-US relations. The Pakistan factor has always affected Indo-US relations. The US administration considers that India would play a meaningful role in counter China planning. The study explores the raison d’etre of Indo-US strategic partnership. The present paper intends to look into the Indo-US strategic cooperation and points out the improvement in Indo-US strategic relations in 21st century.

Keywords: strategic relations, strategic dialogue, good governance, chalein saath saath.

Introduction: India – U.s bilateral relation have developed into a global strategic partnership Based on shared democratic values and increasing convergence of interests on Bilateral , on development and good governance has created new opportunity to reinvigorate Bilateral ties and enhance cooperation under the new motto chalein saath saath Forward Together We Go which was adopted following Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s first summit with President Barack Obama on 30 September 2014 in Washington DC. Regular exchange of high level political visits has provided sustained momentum to bilateral cooperation while the wide ranging and ever expanding dialogue Architecture has established a long term framework for India U.S engagement Vibrant people to people interaction and Support across the political spectrum in both countries nurture our bilateral relationship.



Indo-US Strategic Relations in 21st Century:

The Indo-US bilateral relations can be expressed into the broad era. The War era, can be divided into the era before and after post Cold September 11, 2001. We will be discussing Indo-US bilateral strategic relations in 21st century. We will focus on Indo-US defense and strategic relationship especially in 21st century. In the early phase of 21st century, a major shift in the US policy towards India. The dissolution of USSR brought about many changes in the global security area. It opened new doors of cooperation for India and the United States. The US President Clinton visited India in 2000, which was a new beginning for two countries in the early phase of 21st century. The terrorist attack on US on 11 September 2001 promoted India to make the outstanding offer of bases to US for cooperation in defense and strategic field. However, due to changing US perception towards India, the military exercises were further initiated and became regular event in the Indo-US bilateral relations. But the US President W. Bush waived the sanctions against India in 2001. It was the high time to settle disputed and improve bilateral relations. That fact cannot be denied that the main strategic challenge to the US foreign policy was the rise of China. In the view of the above, In the 21st century India and US were coming closer due to mutual strategic interests. In 2000, the Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee visited the United States; both leaders signed a strategic partnership. These efforts included bilateral collaboration in civilian nuclear technology and military to military cooperation.

India-U.S. Dialogue Architecture:

There are more nearly 40 bilateral dialogue mechanisms between the two governments. The annual Strategic at EAM level focuses on bilateral relations along five pillars of mutual interest, namely Strategic Cooperation, Energy and Climates Change, Education and Development, Economy, Trade and Agriculture; Science and Technology; and health and Innovation . In addition, there are Ministerial- level dialogues involving home finance (Financial and Economic Partnership), commerce (Trade Policy Forum) HRD (Higher Education Dialogue), Science & Technology (Joint Commission Meeting on S&T) and energy (Energy Dialogue).

Strategic Relations:

External Affairs Minister Smt. Sushma Swaraj co-chaired the fifth India-US Strategic Dialogue on 31 July 2014 in New Delhi with visiting U. S. Secretary of State John Kerry, and



comprehensively reviewed the state of bilateral relations. The high-powered U. S. delegation included Secretary of Homeland Security Francis X. Taylor and Special Envoy for Climate Change in the Department of State Todd Stern.

Civil Nuclear Cooperation:

The bilateral civil nuclear cooperation agreement was finalized in July 2007 and signed in October 2008. During the visit of President Obama to India in November 2010, the two Governments announced completion of all steps to begin implementation of the Civil Nuclear Agreement. U.S. nuclear companies (Westinghouse and GE Hitachi) are in consultations with NPCIL to commence commercial cooperation in this area. NPCIL and Westinghouse signed a preliminary contract in September 2013 for a nuclear power project in Gujarat. During Prime Minister Modi's visit to the US in September 2014, the two sides set up a Contact Group for advancing the full and timely implementation of the India-US Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement, and to resolve pending issues. The Group had its first two meetings in December 2014 and January 2015 respectively.

Counter Terrorism and Internal Security:

Cooperation in counter-terrorism has seen considerable progress with intelligence sharing, information exchange, operational cooperation, counter-terrorism technology and equipment. A new India-US Counter Terrorism Cooperation Initiative was signed in 2010 to expand collaboration on counter terrorism, information sharing and capacity building. Functional on counter-terrorism is being pursued through a Joint Working Group (JWG) on Counter Terrorism that was established in January 2000. A Homeland Security Dialogue was announced during President Obama's visit to India in November 2010 to further deepen operational cooperation, counter-terrorism technology transfers and capacity building. Two rounds of this Dialogue have been held, in May 2011 and May 2013, with six Sub-Groups steering cooperation in specific areas. In December 2013, India-U.S Police Chief Conference on homeland security was organized in New Delhi.

Energy and Climate Change:

The U.S.- India Energy Dialogue was launched in May 2005 to promote trade and investment in the energy sector, and held its last meeting in March 2014 in New Delhi. Besides five existing



working groups in oil & gas, coal, power and energy efficiency, new technologies & renewable energy and civil nuclear co-operation, another working group on 'sustainable development' was added recently to the Energy Dialogue.

Investment by Indian companies like Reliance, Essar and GAIL in the U.S. natural gas market is ushering in a new era of India-U.S. energy partnership. The US Department of Energy has so far given its approval for export of LNG from seven liquefaction terminals in the US, to countries with which the US does not have a free trade agreement (FTA) – with two of these five terminals, the Indian public sector entity, Gas Authority of India Limited (GAIL) has off-take agreements, totaling nearly 6 million metric tones per annum (MTPA). These terminals are expected to be complete and in a position to export cargoes by late 2016/early 2017.

As a priority initiative under the PACE (partnership to Advance Clean Energy), the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and the Government of India have established the Joint Clean Energy Research and Development Center (JCERDC) designed to promote clean energy innovation by teams of scientists from India and the United States, with a total joint committed funding from both Governments of US\$ 50 million. The Center has funded three research projects, in the areas of solar energy, second generation bio-fuels and energy efficiency of buildings. India and the US are advancing cooperation and dialogue on climate change through a high-level Climate Change Working Group, which had its first meeting in July 2014. In November 2014, MoU between US EXIM Bank and Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA) has been concluded to provide US\$ 1 billion in financing for India's transition to a low-carbon economy. A new U.S.-India Partnership for climate Resilience has been agreed to, in order to advance capacity for climate adaptation planning, as also a new U.S.- India Climate Fellowship Program to build long- term capacity to address climate change-related issues.

Education:

Under the Singh-Obama Knowledge Initiative launched in 2009, cooperation in education sector has been made an integral part of the strategic partnership between the two countries. The Fulbright program was renewed in 2008 as the Nehru Fulbright Program, exchange grants . About 100,000 Indian students are pursuing advanced degrees in the US. The Higher Education Dialogue, which has had four meetings since 2011 (last in November 2014 in New Delhi), laid out the road map for promoting strategic institutional partnerships, deepening collaboration in research and development, fostering partnerships in vocational education and focusing on junior faculty development.



India is learning from the U.S. experience in community colleges in order to meet our demands for skill-development. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between All India Council for Technical Education and the American Association of Community Colleges in June 2013 for co-operation in setting up community colleges in India. It has been agreed to collaborate with U.S. institutions in the area of Technology Enabled Learning and Massive Open On-line Courses (MOOCs) to extend the reach of education in India. During Prime Minister Modi's visit in September 2014, the two countries decided to establish the Global Initiative of Academic Networks (GIAN) under which India will invite and host up to 1000 American Academics each year to teach in Indian universities at their convenience, and to collaborate in establishing an Indian Institute of Technology in India.

Conclusion:

The starting point of Indo-US relationship is to go back deep in the annals of the past which has evolved and taken shape through various up and down. The dissolution of the erstwhile Soviet Union has been an impetus for Indo-US relations. Since the early phase of 21st century, the Indo-US strategic relationship is evolving at greater pace. At the bilateral level, both sides have identified key areas of cooperation in the fields of defense, technology and maritime and space etc. There is a good opportunity of security cooperation between Indo-US through strategic partnership which will also bolster their bilateral relations. Besides, the emerging Indian market is important for the US trade interests. India can use the US expertise to meet its energy demands and arms manufacturing. At the multilateral level, The US has been supportive of India's permanent membership in the United Nations Security Council and four export control regime. Therefore, we can say that Modi-Trump will work continually for the interests of Indo-US relations.

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