



RESEARCH PAPER

**Comprehending the Restructuring of South Asian Power Politics
through the Prism of US-India Defense and Economic Cooperation
during Second Term of Narendra Modi as Prime Minister of India
(2019-2024)**

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ABSTRACT

Even a cursory glance at the modern day political arena along with the contemporary international relations reveals that the global economic and military powers neither believe in keeping permanent friends nor foes and are switching to one-another depending upon the very quickly changing global political dynamics. The ever-strengthening India-United States (US) economic and strategic cooperation developed particularly during the premier-ship of Mr. Narendra Modi serves a vital example in that regard since India, earlier, had remained a close ally of Russia but with the rise of Chinese economic expansionism in the 21st century and under the threat of a sustained Chinese economic supremacy both the US and India have been entered into a marriage of convenience. Moreover, Mr. Modi's foreign policy strategy predominated by initiatives like "Act East" and "Neighborhood First," created new possibilities for collaboration with the United States and as a consequence, the geopolitical dynamics of the Indo-Pacific region, which is connected to the biggest economies in the world including US, China, India and Japan, have been profoundly impacted. In that backdrop, the instant study, while qualitatively analyzing the relevant literature comprising official documents, policy decisions and debates pertaining to economic development and defense cooperation between US and India during Narendra Modi's term as the Prime Minister of India, investigates how U.S.-India relations have changed and expanded over this time period. It finds that massive investments have been made by both countries in various geopolitically and geo-strategically important fields and if this cooperation continued for a longer period of time than it will definitely turn the tables in Indian favor while determining the regional geopolitical and geostrategic dominance.

KEYWORDS India-US Relations, Defense Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI), Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET)

Introduction

The Indian Ambassador to the United States, Taranjit Singh Sandhu (January 2020-October 2022), believed that the United States and India developed a broader international strategic alliance during US President Donald Trump's first term which was especially prospered during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, as the two nations worked together on vaccine research and Indo-Pacific security which resulted strengthening their strategic relations. India and the US worked together on regional security, defense, and cooperation because they had similar goals for the Indo-Pacific region. In 2021, the

QUAD (Quadrilateral Security Dialogue is an alliance comprising United States, India, Australia and Japan) saw a comeback with digital and physical conferences, showing a common devotion to a stable Indo-Pacific region in accordance with international law. After the talks, a collective statement called "A Partnership for Global Good" was issued. In addition to taking part in the Malabar naval exercises, India as well as the US held *Yudh Abhyas*, their largest combined defense exercises, at Alaska in 2021. The next stage of the U.S.-India Major Defense Partnership was revealed by the Pentagon during the following year (Leonova & Khatri, 2023).

Literature Review

Shahbaz (2024) believes that in addition to concentrating on developing renewable energy solutions in India, the Narendra Modi administration has been active in signing clean energy agreements with the US. Narendra Modi's popular image has improved as a result of his clean energy push. India's economy has grown significantly under Narendra Modi, which has helped to build the friendly relations with the President of the United States, Donald Trump, in his first term. Their mutual ties were aimed at balancing trade relations as well as security concerns in Asia. Diplomatic ties between India and America have grown significantly under Modi through several collaborations and high-profile events. Modi and Trump's combined visit to India's Motera Stadium demonstrated their developing personal and diplomatic ties. They prioritized strengthening energy agreements, securing a safer 5G network, and combating terrorism. Notwithstanding their cooperation, commercial disputes and divergent priorities caused problems in their relationship (Shahbaz, 2024).

Amir (2024) examines that a significant change in the regional power dynamics was recorded through the emerging strategic engagement between the US and India in the 21st century which also has significant consequences for Pakistan. The alliance, which witnessed progress in defense, economic, and geopolitical cooperation, was based on common democratic ideals, worries about international terrorism, and fear about China's economic and strategic growth. The alliance seemed primarily to improve India's strategic capabilities and solidify its position as a regional power through measures like the US-India Nuclear Deal (2008), the Defense Technology and Trade Initiative, as well as increased military cooperation. This strategic cooperation supported India's ambitions to become a dominant regional and global power while it also helped the US to preserve its position as the world's most powerful nation. Given that India's increased military might and nuclear cooperation threatened to erode the preventive impact of Pakistan's own standard and atomic armaments, these developments presented serious security issues for Pakistan which responded by implementing a practical foreign strategy to increase its dependence on China to counteract this strategic imbalance while fortifying its conventional and nuclear repellent.

Kakar (2024) analyzed the nature of strategic alliance between the US and India and its impact over South Asia's regional security dynamics. He noted that, in an attempt to restrain China, the United States and India established a strategic alliance at the start of the twenty-first century. India has been receiving military assistance and capability enhancements from the United States ever since. India also became a member of the QUAD, and the US had inked significant bilateral agreements, civil nuclear accords, missile defense cooperation, and space collaboration deals. The study focuses over the factors and elements that helped the US and India's relationship develop into a complete strategic alliance. The study's conclusions demonstrate that the US sought this alliance mainly to offset China's rise and preserve its status as the world's leading power,

establishing India as a security supplier in the Indo-Pacific region. According to the study, the cooperation led to change in power dynamics that favored India over Pakistan, which had an effect on regional security as well. As a result, Pakistan had to confront with a number of issues, such as India's assertive policies in Kashmir and military buildups that were making the regional power dynamics even more complex.

From BECA to the iCET

An India-specific clearance under the CAATSA (Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act) rules was passed by the U.S. House of Representatives on July 14, 2022, enabling India to buy the Russian S-400 Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) system without being afraid of consequences from U.S. side. The Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA), signed in 2020 during the third 2+2 ministerial dialogue, permitted India to use U.S. geographical information that was essential for precise positioning and capabilities of enhanced military systems. The 2020 India-China conflict in Ladakh, where improved geographical data was required to combat Chinese military abilities, signified its importance. The Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET), signed in 2022, sought to enhance U.S.-India cooperation in important sectors like semiconductors, Artificial Intelligence (AI), quantum computing, and telecommunications, in order to increase India's scientific and military abilities (Abdullah, 2024).

During the June 2020 India-China border conflict, Indo-U.S. naval cooperation was underscored by a U.S. nuclear-powered aircraft carrier while performing joint exercises with India in the Bay of Bengal, which also showed U.S. support for India and dedication to a Free and Open Indo-Pacific (Hanif & Sharif, 2021). Furthermore, both nations talked on common issues like national security, climate change, and new innovations during Modi's June 2023 visit to the United States (Adhav, 2024).

From Indus-X to 2 + 2 Meetings

During 2021-2023, India and the United States further strengthened their defense cooperation. Important developments included the launch of the India-U.S. Defense Acceleration Ecosystem (INDUS-X) in 2022 which was intended to increase cooperation in advanced defense technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI) and cybersecurity. A 2023 agreement on Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missiles (JASSM) program, and a 2021 \$2.5 billion deal for Air-Launched Cruise Missiles (ALCMs) were also included in the list of the said cooperation (Amir, 2024). It is worth-noting that both countries had already conducted Tiger Triumph in November 2019 which initially was their tri-service military exercise. Furthermore, in March 2022, the Indian Navy held a multinational naval exercise in Milan in which the United States participated for the first time. According to the US Department of State, defense trade between the US and India had remarkably been increased from almost \$0 in 2008 to \$20 billion until 2020. Three 2+2 dialogues were held in 2019, 2020, and 2022, focusing on deepening strategic cooperation and strengthening people-to-people ties between the US and India. During the 4th U.S.-India '2+2' virtual summit on April 12, 2022, both countries executed a deal to expand their defense ties to involve new fields including artificial intelligence (AI) and cybersecurity, as well as to strengthen scientific and technical cooperation through the Joint Technical Group (JTG). (Mehreen & Abid, 2022). Up till 2020, Russia was the major arms supplier to India, with the United States remaining the second-largest. It is worth-mentioning here that the weapons almost \$16 billion of worth were imported by India from the United States between 2018 and 2020 (Rashid et al., 2023).

From Industrial Security to the White House Summit

On July 30, 2021, the U.S. and India signed a Project Agreement under the Defense Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI) to work together to create an Air-Launched Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (ALUAV), marking a significant step in enhancing their defense technology partnership. India and the United States signed the Industrial Security Agreement (ISA) in December 2019. Both states later decided to establish a standard mechanism for exchanging sensitive information between their military sectors during a summit held in New Delhi on October 1, 2021. Along with the United States, Japan, and Australia, India participated significantly in the QUAD. U.S. President Joe Biden held a meeting with the leaders of the QUAD nations at the White House on September 24, 2021, which was attended by the Japanese Prime Minister Suga Yoshihide, Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison, and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi (Bharti, 2022).

India had signed an agreement with the U.S. to buy 15 CH-47F(I) Chinook and 22 AH-64E Apache helicopters for the Indian Air Force in September 2015. The first four Chinook helicopters were delivered at Gujarat's Mundra port in February 2020. Furthermore, the same month saw the arrival of a cache of 17 Apache helicopters. The CH-47F(I) Chinook, was an advanced multi-mission helicopter, developed for strategic airlifts in both military and humanitarian operations particularly in mountainous regions whereas the AH-64E Apache was one of the deadliest arms systems in the world. It was a highly effective attacking helicopter packed with Hellfire missiles, 70 mm rockets, night-time vision capabilities, and a mechanical pistol. During U.S. President Donald Trump's visit to India on February 25–26, 2020, India decided to buy a number of advanced technological items from the United States. The Industrial Security Annex (ISA), which was agreed at the 2+2 Dialogue in December 2019 allowed for greater defense and industrial cooperation between India and the United States.

The yearly US-India joint military drill was a significant attempt to strengthen defense cooperation between the two countries. In September 2019, the 15th round of this collaborative activity took place. Moreover, a combined Special Forces training exercise called "*Vajra Prahar*" was annually held in the US and India. The 10th edition was held at Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM) in Seattle from October 13–28, 2019. By exchanging best practices and experiences in cooperative mission development and operational approaches, the exercise aimed to improve military collaboration. Furthermore, at the 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue held in Washington in December 2019, India and the United States focused on increasing collaboration in the defense sector. They talked about ways to improve cooperation in defense industry and military technology, determined priority projects to overcome barriers in cooperative research and development, and signed a number of agreements to support critical technology transfer and joint innovation. The discussions emphasized the expanding strategic alliance between the two nations (Hue, *et al.*, 2024).

Joint Naval Operations & Collaboration in Space Technology

Throughout 2023, security collaboration between United States and India achieved up to date levels with deepening military, technological, and geopolitical connections, particularly in the Indo-Pacific region. As mentioned earlier, key developments included the introduction of the US and India Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET) to foster advanced security tech cooperation, high-level strategic defense talks, and development in defense production, such as Boeing and Tata

providing the first Made-in-India Apache fuselage. Joint naval actions, such as those involving USS Anchorage (LPD-23) and INS Karmuk, further illustrated enhancing operational partnership. High-level talks between military and industrial executives were made possible by the US's largest involvement at Aero India 2023, which included selling of B-1B bombers and F-35 fighters. This increased defense technology cooperation and commerce between the US and India's National Security Guard demonstrated combined operational skills with the US army's 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne) participation in TARKASH-VI military exercise in Chennai in February 2023, and the installation of US Navy warship in the Indian Ocean in collaboration with the Indian Navy strengthened maritime security relations. In October 2023, United States and India further deepened defense and strategic cooperation through a number of significant steps. To improve special operations cooperation, Indian MARCOs and U.S. Navy SEALs participated in Exercise *Sangam* in Goa. High-level talks between India's Head of the Armed Forces as well as U.S. Unified Command Council Chairman strengthened strategic military connections. Moving further, a deal between Indian companies and the U.S. Space Force advanced space technology collaboration. Additionally, the Higher Command Course group from the Indian Army War College traveled to the United States to enhance military education exchange (Khan, 2024).

Trade Disputes

During Trump's February 2020 visit, the U.S. and India finalized a \$3 billion defense deal involving anti-submarine warfare technology and attacking helicopters. That deal, being part of over \$18 billion of U.S. defense sales to India since 2008, significantly boosted India's maritime capabilities. It enhanced military cooperation between the two nations and supported India's role as a regional security and power player amid China's growing presence in the Indian Ocean. The sale of advanced U.S. naval helicopters signaled deepening trust in the U.S.-India strategic partnership. Critics believed that there was still a long way to go, even if Trump and Modi were hopeful that a "phase 1" trade deal would soon be signed while indicating a more complete agreement by the end of 2020 (Ladwig III, 2020).

India and the U.S. signed key agreements during the third 2+2 Dialogue to enhance cooperation in earth sciences, customs data exchange. The fourth US-India 2+2 Dialogue took place in Washington, D.C., on April 11, 2022. At this Dialogue, the two countries signed an agreement to upgrade the 2+2 Dialogue and rename it as "Space Situational Awareness". That was an agreement within the framework of significant defense projects to open the doors for further strengthening collaboration between the two nations (Vietnam News Agency, 2022). During President Donald Trump's visit to India in February 2020, India and the United States agreed to enhance cooperation against global crimes including cybercrime and terrorism, as well as to continue working together to prevent and treat diseases. Security and military became a focal point of the relationship amongst the two countries during Indian Prime Minister's official visit to the US in June 2023. Powering a Next Generation Defense Partnership between India and the US was one of the topics included in the Joint Statement that the two leaders signed. It highlighted that the US-India Major Defense Partnership had emerged as a cornerstone of international peace and security (The White House, 2023). The United States expressed its support for India during the summer of 2020 when tensions along the India-China border resulted in the deaths of 20 Indian and 5 Chinese soldiers. The US also provided India technological assistance in monitoring its borders, intelligence sharing, and the facility of modern monitoring instruments like drones. In March 2021, the Indian and US Navies conducted the PASSEX naval exercise (Vietnam News Agency, 2022).

The 17th Meeting of Defense Policy Group (DPG)

The Defense Policy Group (DPG) held its 17th meeting on May 17, 2023, and concluded numerous agreements on enhancing defense industrial cooperation, information exchange cooperation agreement implementation, collaborative research and development, etc., with a focus on enhancing the combination of the military manufacturing environment as well naval safety collaboration in the Indian Ocean (U.S. Department of Defense, 2023; Indian Ministry of Defense, 2023). Additionally, discussions highlighted the importance of joint research and development. The Defense Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI) group's eleventh conference, which was held in November 2021, had already focused on enhancing military research and technological collaboration (Indian Ministry of Defense, 2021).

The United States had agreed to provide such technologies to India that might not even be accessed by any of its allies. As mentioned above, the United States and India developed the iCET in January 2023 to advance high-tech collaboration in artificial intelligence, quantum technologies, semiconductors, next generation telecommunications, defense and space. In May 2023, the United States and India held the first Advanced Domains Defense Dialogue (AD3), committing to strengthen cooperation on developing new defense areas with a focus on space and artificial intelligence. In order to make India more reliant on the United States in a longer industrial and innovative ecosystem, the United States intended to continually involve India into its defense industry chain, value chain, and innovation chain through technological and industrial cooperation. That occurred beyond the simple arms trade. The US could still influence the India's military sector growth in areas like core technology, Geographic Coordinate Systems (GCS), and so on, even if it permitted India to manufacture US-originated weapons domestically. The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2023 was approved by the U.S. Senate in December 2022 with the goal of enhancing security collaboration between both nations and lowering India's reliance on defense products of Russian origin (Economic Times, 2022; Joshi, 2024). In a joint letter to President Biden during Prime Minister Modi's June 2023 visit to the US, nearly 70 US Congressmen urged to personally convey to Mr. Modi the importance of maintaining democratic principles and human rights, stressing that the partnership must be based "not just on our several common objectives but also on discussed principles"(Lou, 2024).

In the new Indo-Pacific Strategy of the United States, approved on February 11, 2022, Washington referred to New Delhi as "a steadfast regional ally". The United States was India's top export market, its second-highest source of direct investment (more than \$13 billion in the 2020–2021 fiscal year only), and one of India's biggest markets for direct investments totaling \$22 billion. India and the United States had a lot of different views on climate policy during the Trump administration. The U.S. demonstrated disinterest by indicating its intention to withdraw from the Paris Agreement, while India used climate change as a strategic tool to develop new international projects and strengthen its position as a global leader. There were worries that the U.S. might delay talks even though it couldn't leave the Agreement until the 2020 US Presidential election. However, while restricted by the administration's overall political position and stance, the U.S. delegation continued to take part in climate negotiations, participating positively on technical issues like accountability (Jha, 2023).

Joe Biden's Strategic Vision

Mr. Joe Biden had focused on fostering strong U.S.-Indian ties in an attempt to win over Indo-American votes during his 2020 U.S. presidential campaign. Biden responded negatively to President Trump's disrespectful statement about air pollution in India, emphasizing the need of having respectful discussions with partners in order to address global challenges such as climate change. After his election, President Biden placed a strong emphasis on opposing autocracy and enhancing ties between the United States and India. Kurt Campbell, an experienced diplomat, was appointed as the Indo-Pacific administrator early in his term. During a February 8, 2021, telephonic conversation with Prime Minister Modi, Biden promised U.S. collaboration with India in the battle against COVID-19, climate change, terrorism, and the global economy. On February 9, 2021, a U.S. State Department official highlighted the importance of the India-U.S. partnership, stressing that India was a key partner in the Indo-Pacific region. The U.S. welcomed India's rise as a global power and acknowledged its role as a regional peace keeper (Kaura, 2022).

Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid six visits to the US between 2014 and 2020, and the U.S. presidents visited India twice during that period. During 2020-21, telephonic conversation between both leaders took place on three different occasions and they took part in coordinated online events. Since February 2020, when Biden's forerunner Donald Trump visited the Indian capital, the relations between the two countries began to be described as a "comprehensive global strategic partnership"; as a result, their official status, previously known as "partnership for prosperity," was enhanced. It was not by coincidence that after that visit, credible sources of the Foreign Affairs magazine claimed that Trump and Modi had managed to reconstruct their relationship seriously, which had continuously been improved (Menon, 2020). During the said visit, both sides discussed a number of security-related issues pertaining to the Indian Ocean, East Asia, Southeast Asia, and Europe during the said dialogue. The two parties agreed to continue their close communication over the Ukraine issue and attempts to provide humanitarian aid to the Ukrainian people. The two parties also decided to cooperate further in order to advance their common goal of an open and free Indo-Pacific region (Vietnam News Agency, 2022).

Scale of India-US Financial Involvement

In 2020, the US International Development Finance Corporation (DFC) allowed to finance two Indian renewable energy companies, ReNew Power and Sitara Solar Energy, in spite of the Trump administration's resistance to participate in international climate policy. In 2020, US investments totaled \$37 billion which constituted 7% of the whole foreign investment flown into India. An agreement, on which many rounds of talks had previously been taken place, was expected to be concluded quickly during the September 2019 meeting between US President Trump and Indian Prime Minister in New York, on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly, nevertheless, until January 2021, when the Trump Administration departed from office, it was still unresolved (Singh, 2021).

During his presidential term, Donald Trump's transactional approach pertaining to US foreign policy did not indicate a connection of human rights and liberal principles with geopolitical considerations. The strategic alliance with India expanded whereas Trump disregarded India's human rights and minority rights considerations. For example, Trump's February 2020 visit to India, which included defense deals and a grand

tour event (*Namaste Trump*), was paired with the Delhi Riots, in which Hindu crowds attacked Muslims after protests against disagreeable citizenship laws were held across the country. Instead of responding to the murder of fifty-three individuals, thirty-six of whom were Muslims, Trump referred to Modi as the "Father of the Nation". Trump's foreign policy team showed no reaction to human rights violations in India, giving Modi the freedom to alter the nature of Indian democracy (Javed & Khan, 2022).

The Indo-US strategic alliance aimed to enhance the security environment in South Asia, where the two major powers, India and Pakistan, had a long history of tense and hostile ties. These two nuclear-armed neighbors had fought three major wars and several smaller encounters, causing concern about the ongoing Indian arms buildup and the increasing inequality of conventional military strength between the two countries. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) data for 2022, India spent \$76.6 billion for defense in 2021, which spending made it the global largest importer of arms. Moreover, it contributed a massive 11% of worldwide arms imports during the previous five years (2017-2021) showing a rising trend in Indian military spending during the past so many years (Raj, 2023).

On May 24, 2022, President Joe Biden greeted Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the final day of the QUAD conference in Tokyo. The White House issued the statement that both leaders discussed the progress achieved through the US-India Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership. They agreed to strengthen the major defense partnership, develop mutually beneficial trade relations, and broaden collaboration in the spheres of global health, crisis preparation and advanced technology. Even while these statements were frequently idealist and slowly to come true, the first four months of 2023 demonstrated that the US-Indian relationship was truly strengthening. During the India-US Commercial Dialogue in Delhi in March 2023, Union Minister of Commerce & Industry Mr. Piyush Goyal and Secretary of Commerce Miss Gina M. Raimondo signed a Memorandum of Understanding for strengthening the semiconductor supply chain. In order to provide a "readiness assessment" of both the short-term opportunities and the long-term strategic growth, the US Semiconductor Industry Association and the India Electronics & Semiconductor Association agreed to establish a task group. Apple launched their first shop in India in April 2023. With its entrance into India, Apple showed its desire to counter the influence of China over supply chains as well as to increase its market share in the country with the highest population in the world as per the 2023 report of the United Nations Population Fund. Apple's approach had already been showing positive results and until the end of 2023, its share in India's smartphone industry had been increased five times which stood at a meager 1% in 2019. In February 2023, the Indian Geological Survey revealed a significant prospective lithium discovery in the Pir Panjal mountainous region of Jammu and Kashmir. If the initial estimates of the deposit's size i.e. 5.9 million tons of lithium were accurate, the discovery could allow India to become more self-sufficient and strengthen its strategic alliance with the US, particularly as the market for lithium batteries for electric vehicles and other devices were growing (Ramesh & Rubin, 2023).

India's Response to Biden's Victory

Despite the fact that India-US relations prospered during the term of Trump, the government of Modi was happy to see Biden's win. In his inaugural speech he delivered on the twentieth of January 2021, President Biden stated that "international relations is restored in the forefront" along with "The United States is returned." Since it detailed the Biden administration's diplomacy plan and referred towards its goals, the address was

worth paying close consideration to. Analysts believed that the address also signaled a significant departure from President Donald Trump's perspective of international relations (Padmapati, 2021). The Biden's address was noteworthy for emphasizing equality for all and constitutional principles as cornerstone of US policy. The President urged that they had to begin with diplomacy based on the USA's greatest parliamentary values of defending liberty, promoting chances, maintaining all rights, honoring the rule of law, and addressing everyone with integrity (Biden, 2021).

On February 24 and 25, 2020, India hosted the *Namaste Trump* Trip. The trip's finest moment was a rally event arranged under the *Namaste Trump* title in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, in reaction to the "Howdy Modi" gathering that took place in the Texas city of Houston in September 2019 (Mohsin & Mehmood, 2024). After that, the Trumps headed to the Taj Mahal, a limestone landmark constructed in honor of Mumtaz Mahal by Mughal ruler Shah Jahan in the seventeenth century. It had become probably a most well-known memorial in India, and any dignitary who travelled there generally made time to go there to see that (BBC News, 2020).

US-India Dialogue about 5G Technology

During his visit to India, President Trump spoke with Prime Minister Modi about the significance of a secure 5G internet connection. In an interview, he urged that 5G technology ought to be an instrument for growth, advancement, as well as for freedom. He further stressed that in order to boost wavelength use, they needed to collaborate actively. They also talked about LMLC (Low Mobility Large Cells), an approach they developed for 5G and the United States might utilize that as well because of its massive unit surface. The Indian representative Prakash stated that all of them had numerous of meaningful discussions, as well as they were going to maintain them. Furthermore, those who knew the situation said that throughout Trump's first trip to New Delhi that month, the India's biggest gas buyer, Perronet LNG (listed as PLNG.NS), and American LNG builder, Tellurian Inc. (TELL), were anticipated to conclude a \$2.5 billion agreement. Given that the two countries served as the third-biggest buyers of fuel worldwide, India and the US enjoyed close geopolitical and safety ties and wanted to expand their economic collaboration. Trump intended to increase energy exports from India. The informants claimed that Perronet would invest an anticipated \$27.5 billion funding in Tellurian's Seaside LNG exporting plant in Louisiana during the course of five years. Perronet would also have the option to buy a share in the plant under the said agreement. In an effort to appease Trump, Narendra Modi highlighted expanding commercial ties and a narrowing trade deficit between US and India. In addition to the attempts to prevent the inclusion of Chinese technology in India's 5G network, Indian CEOs highlighted their investments in American industry and skills development programs.

Opposition from the US & Indian Tech Sectors

The Donald Trump administration had complained about Indian's support for exports, which was part of Modi's "Make in India" initiative, to the World Trade Organization. Indian export assistance was intended to support particular industries. According to the United States Trade Representative (USTR), the arrangement, which blessed the Indian companies over \$7 billion in benefits a year, also harmed employment rate within the US. India was instructed to remove the support inside 180 days after the WTO conflict tribunal ruled in support of the United States in October 2019. At last, acting in contradiction to his campaign promises for taking action against immigrants as well as in response to rising joblessness and appeasing the electorate for the upcoming

presidential election, Trump instructed the freezing of multiple immigration classifications until the end of 2020. This decision sparked strikes within the United States as well as from US-based Indian tech businesses that depended on H1-B along with different entry permits to allow employees to enter to the United States to provide corporate assistance. In 2019, 75 per cent of qualified worker permits through the H1-B process went to Indians; they were the most affected people by the restriction. Additionally, it is worth noting that US and Indian tech firms strongly opposed Trump's immigration ban imposed in 2020, nevertheless, instead of taking retaliatory measures, the Indian government chose to engage in negotiations for resolving the immigration problem created by the steps taken by Donald Trump administration (Gupta, 2023).

President Joe Biden utterly ignored India, the Southeast Asian region, the South China Sea, and – above all – the QUAD in his initial foreign policy address delivered on the fourth of February 2021. As a result, Indian foreign policy experts were left to make predictions about the coming years of US-Indian relations and the US's involvement in Southeast Asia. It seemed to Indian policymakers that the Joe Biden administration did not prioritize the Asian region or India. There had been questions about if India will retain its status of a significant U.S. ally during Biden's presidency. However, in a bid to promote harmony and safety in the Indo-Pacific region as well as abroad, both the US President and Indian Prime Minister, during a formal conversation, anticipated to "integrating strategic alliance" and expressed a belief in a "rules based global structure." Additionally, they reaffirmed their dedication to an independent and open Indo-Pacific region. Both also recognized the significance of democratic-parliamentary norms and shared strategic objectives form the foundation of the India and US relationship. Yet the United States highlighted constitutional structures and customs, stating that the US-India relationship was based on an equal devotion to the values of democracy (Padmapati, 2021).

Boosting the Capabilities of Indian Air Force

In addition, the 2023 Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile (JASSM) deal represented deeper defense collaboration with the objective of increasing the reliability of strikes by the Indian Air Force. The creation of the India and United States Defense Acceleration Ecosystem (INDUS-X) in 2022 was also a noteworthy expansion that aimed to promote cooperation in exploration and advancement on defense with an emphasis on innovative technologies like developed internet safety and deep learning (Amir, 2024).

Conclusion

The administration of Prime Minister Modi has taken major steps to improve India's reputation abroad, especially in the fields of renewable energy and defense relations. Among the key components of India's external policy during President Trump's first term was Modi's attempts to build deeper ties with the US. They prioritized social interaction and economic cooperation. They similarly prioritized technology, military, and relationship building despite the obstacles presented by nationalism based religious and regional policy. Large-scale public gatherings such as "Namaste Trump" and "Howdy Modi" demonstrated their outstanding collaboration. Despite cooperation and alliances, issues like agreements on policies and disagreements over ideology influenced India and United States relationships.

Marine protection, military trade, armament manufacturing, training for soldiers, and power generation collaboration were few of the areas where both the countries had expanded their security as well as military partnership. The findings of the study demonstrated that the Modi administration enhanced the constitutional basis of India-US military and security partnership by executing a number collaboration deals. Additionally, a structure like the QUAD greatly boosted US-India security and military partnership. The strategic objectives of US as well as India in the Asia-Pacific region also aligned. Thus, collaboration in the fields of safety and military emerged as possible avenues for future India-US ties. Yet, there had been specific problems with the security and defense partnership between both countries, however, following a few setbacks, their close relationship had generally grown and strengthened during the era of Donald Trump. Both nations took action to strengthen their collaboration in fields like energy, trade, defense, and counter-terrorism measures. The United States changed its stance regarding India after observing its increasing strategic significance in the region. The execution of the significant agreements to strengthen military cooperation, deepen economic connections, and collaborate on local safety issues reflected that approach. Besides, both partners attempted to prevent China's expanding impact, and US had welcomed India like a vital strategic ally in Indo-Pacific region. Conflicts had also been existed, though, mainly on trade matters and the United States pushed to cut back on India's fuel purchases from Iran. The US move to revoke India's Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) trade advantages also strained ties between the two countries.

As time goes on, it will become critical for the two nations to keep collaborating on topics of shared interest and to resolve any obstacle that might come up. The strategic alliance will probably continue to be the top objective for the two nations in the times to come, even though President Trump's exit from office indicated a shift in tone or particular policy strategies with India. During Biden administration, the bilateral cooperation between India and the US evolved significantly, and the Modi administration was leading the charge to promote a fresh approach to diplomatic ties which differed from previous diplomatic efforts. The Indian foreign policy during the term of Modi adopted many creative measures and the frequency of reciprocal official trips had significantly been increased during the preceding years primarily due to the expansion of their spheres of collaboration. The United States business sector was particularly interested in investing in India because of the commitment of Modi government to ease commercial investment prospects in the country. This has made it possible for both countries to establish fresh business relationships. Furthermore, since both the countries have too many common objectives which are reflected in present stage of their Global Partnership hence an increasing communication and collaboration between the two nations had been observed which greatly improved their mutual ties. The two nations are also promoting interpersonal relationships and humanitarian initiatives; as a consequence, their mutual economic partnership developed quickly and is anticipated to grow significantly over the next several years albeit a recession that may occur due to the Trump 2.0 economic policies.

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