

# CIVIL MILITARY FUSION IN DIPLOMACY

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## Abstract

Defence Diplomacy is fundamental in developing a sturdy foreign and security policy. The role of a civil military fusion is immense in enhancing the defence diplomacy of a country. Although India's global position is rising with an enhanced outreach but a strong civil military fusion in defence diplomacy is still at an optimal level. There are various integral aspects in defence diplomacy which requires significant focus. In his Arthashastra, Chanakya has highlighted the value of defence diplomacy in order to increase a nation's might. This paper defines those areas in defence diplomacy which needs reviewing and structural shifts to enable India hold a strong and stable international position.

## Introduction

Chanakya's most well-known text Arthashastra is the basis of defence diplomacy and is considered as one of the most powerful texts in Asia. It has composed a significant number of strategies and defence concepts. Realists like Chanakya believed that diplomacy is just one tool in the long-term conflict that was constantly raging or being prepared for. He believes that in the world of international relations there are two options: "conquering or being conquered". He no longer believed in the phrase "get ready to fight but still hope for peace", rather advised "prepare for war and plan to conquer". Chanakya contends that diplomacy is a covert act of war, a series of measures made to weaken the opponent and benefit the country itself. "Arthashastra" also demonstrates how the ancient Indian literature flaunts about a strong civil military fusion<sup>1</sup>.

In the twenty first century, Civil Military Fusion has a crucial role to play in conducting and managing interactions between states in all of their forms, which is the essence of diplomacy. The military or the defence component of diplomacy is continuing to have a salient impact in advancing a country's national interests, particularly when considering its foreign policy. Through influence operations that foster long-lasting cooperative relationships and trust, the military's responsibility extends beyond national security and defence against external threats to include conflict avoidance and promotion. However, it is important to note that although there exists a slight difference between the terms "military diplomacy" and defence diplomacy but they can be used interchangeably. The whole set of activities commenced by the entire defence establishment, including its civilian administration, research and development, could be referred to as defence diplomacy whereas the term "military" emphasises exchanges and interactions between uniformed forces.<sup>2</sup>

Defence diplomacy is a word that was only used to describe new activities and international roles carried out mostly during the post-Cold War era by the armed forces and "Ministry of National Defence" leadership. There shouldn't be any interpretation which infers it as a classic form of "military plus diplomacy," though. Since there is no agreed-upon definition of "defence diplomacy," states attempt to tailor its substance to the requirements of their respective security policies. Strategies related to state security and its execution, co-development and promoting stronger international relations remain integral part of defence diplomacy.<sup>3</sup>

The term defence diplomacy has its roots in the post-Cold War when there was a shift in thought that national security and the foreign policy are analogous to each other. Going beyond the conventional roles of the armed forces such as offensive or deterrent roles is a salient feature of it. The term "defence diplomacy," which is still relatively new, has its roots in the need for a new political vocabulary to describe the collaboration of governments and other international institutions following the post-Cold War era. It doesn't have a commonly accepted definition, while being used relatively frequently in political and scientific discourse.<sup>4</sup>

The military or armed forces of a nation, however, have played and will continue to play an important part in both traditional and contemporary methods of conducting diplomacy. It has previously been used for coercive diplomacy, such as the gun-boat diplomacy of the USA against Japan in the latter half of the nineteenth century, as well as for external defence.

India too conducts such similar diplomatic procedures. Traditionally, diplomacy has always been carried out by ministers and diplomats who primarily belong to the old school. The new diplomatic strategies were Track II and III.<sup>i</sup> At most cases, the military has shied away from the topic of advancing the nation's national interests in international fora.<sup>5</sup>

Yet there are number of factors which exhibit the active role played by Indian military in the foreign policy framework of the nation. These include: geopolitical and security concerns, apart from the evolution of the global political landscape since the end of the Cold War and Pakistan's promotion of the ethno-religious insurgency in Kashmir since the 1990s.<sup>6</sup>

### **Evolution of India's Defence Diplomacy**

When India attained independence in 1947, Cold War divisions began to solidify in Europe and spread into Asia as well. Meanwhile, Delhi was focused to maintain its position of "military isolationism" as it wished to stay away from the impacts of the Cold War. Nehru vehemently opposed using the Indian army for expeditionary operations. Nehru proclaimed that India would not ally with either the East or the West and would pursue an independent foreign policy while Cold War armed blocs approached India. In 1961, the Non-aligned Movement (NAM) was formed and India was very particular with the NAM membership. Only those countries

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i Track 2 Diplomacy: Unofficial dialogue and problem-solving activities aimed at building relationships and encouraging new thinking that can inform the official process. Since it is unofficial – you can expect to see influential academic, religious, and NGO leaders and other civil society actors who can interact more freely than high-ranking officials.

Track 3 Diplomacy: People-to-people diplomacy undertaken by individuals and private groups.

Source: Different Levels of Diplomacy Track 1, Track 2, Track 3, Civils Daily, [Online: web], Accessed 13 February 2023, URL: <https://www.civildaily.com/different-levels-of-diplomacy-track-1-track-2-track-3/>

who had no foreign military bases could become a member of NAM. In 1971, India signed the treaty of friendship with Soviet Union but despite that India refrained from initiating joint exercises with Soviet Union. Apart from that, India avoided to offer any sort of military support or cooperation to its friendly countries.<sup>7</sup>

However, one exception which could be highlighted during its phase of military isolationism was Delhi's active engagement in the international peace-keeping operations sanctioned by the "United Nations Security Council" during the Cold War<sup>8</sup>. Despite this extraordinary role, India was set aside in international discussions of peacekeeping and China has been appreciated more for its recent contribution. Another significant contribution New Delhi made despite its isolationist position was to act as a security supplier to the smaller governments of the Subcontinent after independence throughout the Cold War. India's relationship with Nepal and Bhutan included a significant amount of military diplomacy, but Delhi also employed coercive diplomacy and military action in its immediate neighbourhood. Meanwhile, independent India also wanted to make an influence in South Asia which would include an Indian version of Monroe Doctrine for the Subcontinent. India's foreign policies focused on preventing the major powers making any significant influence and intervening in the region, although it wasn't a complete success. Additionally, New Delhi aimed to stop its neighbours from granting military bases and other infrastructure to powerful nations.

With the Soviet disintegration, India emphasised on economic liberalisation and reconfigured its foreign policies. It was then followed by a military engagement with the United States (US). The Kicklighter proposals<sup>ii</sup> from the early 1990s served as a platform of collaboration between the US and Indian military services. They offered a foundation for service to service contact between the armed forces and were named after the then-US commander of the Pacific Armies. Since 2005, India has acquired a variety of systems, such as the LPD ship Trenton, C-130

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ii The 1991 Kicklighter proposals (Lt. Gen. Claude Kicklighter was the Army commander at the U.S. Pacific Command) suggested establishing contacts between the three Services to promote exchanges and explore areas of cooperation. **Source:** Rakesh Sood (2020), "The India-US partnership is deepening", Observer Research Foundation,[Online Web] <https://www.orfonline.org/research/the-india-us-defence-partnership-is-deepening/>

and C-17 military transport aircraft, and has recently placed an order for P-8 maritime surveillance aircraft. India never bought a single weapon platform from the US throughout the Cold War. At the end of 2011, India's FMS purchases from the US had increased to about \$6 billion from a zero base at the turn of the millennium.<sup>9</sup>

Furthermore, India has extended its defence cooperation with countries ranging from Mozambique in Africa to Mongolia in Inner Asia and from Brazil in Latin America to Australia in the Pacific. Considering the geo-strategic and geo-economic significance of the Indian Ocean littoral states, India's focus has been to enhance defence ties with those states. In precise, those countries could be grouped into three categories: major powers, immediate neighbours, and other actors of interest to India in the Indian Ocean littoral and beyond.

Another development observed in India's defence diplomacy was when the "Look East Policy (LEP)" was commenced in 1992 and defence diplomacy remained an integral part of it. India's defence diplomacy mostly emphasised on forging amicable ties with its neighbours in Southeast Asia. Nonetheless, one of its main worries was China's expansionist behaviour in the region. Prime Minister Narendra Modi brought an evolution to LEP by forming the "Act East Policy (AEP)" in 2014. AEP became a significant platform to enhance India's defence networks. Indian Navy initiated various joint naval exercises with the Southeast Asian countries including the ones with Australia known as "AUSINDEX" which is a salient biannual naval exchange between the two countries.<sup>10</sup> Apart from this India has initiated world class naval exercises such as Milan, Indian Ocean Naval Symposium and Malabar.

Apart from these, India is also part of security forums such as ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), East Asian Summit (EAS), ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting etc. Despite India having bilateral relationship with many countries, it is shifting towards multilateralism. However, this transition has been mostly based on circumstances. Prof. GVC Naidu, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi stated:

"India participates actively in the Quad and BRICS since it serves a vital purpose. However, neither of these are initiatives taken by India.

India never took an initiative on regional multilateralism, economic or security, including SAARC and BIMSTEC. Even now, there is confusion over a number of issues, including the Indo-Pacific, the Quad, and the BRICS.”<sup>11</sup>

However, India has been looked up to as a proactive security provider in the region. Especially considering its geo-strategic location and China’s increasing influence in the Indian Ocean.

### **Existing Models of Civil Military Fusion in Diplomacy**

- **The US Model.** The US has the largest military budget in the world which is larger than the combined budget of the next seven countries. This has enabled US to enhance its defence diplomacy by intervening on several continents. The US offers the most instructive example of how to use military as a potent tool of foreign policy. This has been made possible through the use of alliance organisations like NATO, which has allowed it to control Europe, and alliances with specific nations, which offer the stronger partner significant influence over the foreign policies of the weaker partner. The US gives the military a lot of room in its external relations through arms sales and military aid, training of foreign military officers, joint exercises, military-to-military contacts, exchange of top-level visits, periodic publication of strategic and defence reviews, and reports created by think tanks affiliated with the Pentagon.<sup>12</sup>
- **The China Model.** With its expanding military strength, China is expanding its diplomatic influence throughout the world. Examples include its demonstration of ability to maintain naval forces far from its shores, appearance of its submarines in the Indian Ocean, particularly in Colombo port, growth of its arms exports, participation in UN peacekeeping operations, financial support of Organization of African Unity (OAU) peacekeeping missions, and supply of arms to our neighbour.<sup>13</sup>

### **India’s Pillars of CMF in Diplomacy**

To achieve civil military fusion in diplomacy India’s focus has been to

emphasis on several aspects. They have been discussed elaborately in the following paragraphs:

### **Atmanirbharta and Make In India Initiative**

Under the Modi administration, the Indian Defence industry is witnessing a large wave of indigenization as a result of Atmanirbharta and Make In India Initiative. To undergo defence manufacturing and technical self-reliance, a series of measures have been promoted by the Indian government. The most salient motive is to shift India's position from an importer of defence products to an exporter. India's defence exports reached a record high of Rs 14,000 crores, and the government now aims to reach Rs 25,000 crores in exports by 2025<sup>14</sup>.

- **India's journey towards achieving Atmanirbharta.** For arms import, India mostly has been dependent on the US, Russia and Israel. Then India came up with its "Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)" which has achieved many successes in developing major systems and critical technologies. The private companies such as the Adanis, Ambanis, L&T, Tata soon got involved with arms production. However, the process of acquisition and production have never been an unchallenging task. To make the process smoother and easier, the Modi administration has commenced some remarkable initiatives to enhance the production of indigenously built ammunitions. The "Ministry of Defence" came up with significant documents such as the "Defence Procurement Manual (DPM)", Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP), etc. which focuses on simplifying the defence acquisition procedure.<sup>15</sup>

### **Military Hardware as a tool of Defence Diplomacy**

- **Foreign nation's dependency on Indian Navy hardware in the Indian Ocean.** Over the recent years, China's imprint in the Indian Ocean is significantly increasing. It has made investments in at least seventeen ports which worries not only India but also other nations like France, which has a significant stake in the water. According to experts, China may use some of the infrastructure it has built for military purposes in the future, allowing the People's Liberation Army Navy to keep naval deployments in the region.

On the other hand, French interests in the Indian Ocean are not solely commercial in nature. Over a million people reside on the islands of Réunion and Mayotte which are overseas departments of metropolitan France.<sup>16</sup> Thus, regional stability remains a major focus for France. But to provide the necessary security to the islands in the Indian Ocean which are so far from mainland France, it is heavily dependent on the Indian Navy. Indian Navy has been dispatching its warships and deploying the P-8I aircraft to the island for the third time in four years. In 2020, an Indian Navy P-8I aircraft took part in a combined patrol with France from Réunion Island. The P-8I aircraft landed on Réunion Island in May 2022 to conduct coordinated surveillance with French Navy warships stationed nearby. In the above backdrop, the role played by Indian Navy here can be seen as a significant tool of defence diplomacy.<sup>17</sup>

- **Arms Exports.** The Philippines Defence Ministry signed an order of \$374-million contract for BrahMos missiles from India. The supersonic cruise missile BrahMos is made by the BrahMos Aerospace Private Limited (BAPL), a joint venture between Russia and India. It can be launched from land, sea, or air platforms.<sup>18</sup>

The Ministry of Defence of India also authorised the export of indigenous Pinaka multi-barrel rocket launchers to Armenia. Although the deals value hasn't been disclosed but reports claim that it is worth \$250 million.<sup>19</sup>

### **Joint Military Exercises and Training**

Joint military exercises are an integral part of India's defence diplomacy. Some of the significant joint exercises and trainings initiated by India are discussed in the following paragraphs:-

- **Malabar Exercise.** India's Malabar is a world class naval exercise initiated by the Indian Navy where navies across the globe participate. It began as a yearly bilateral naval drill between the US and India in 1992. and later Japan became a permanent member. Since its inception as, the Malabar series of exercises has grown in size and complexity.<sup>20</sup>



- **Yudh Abhyas.** The Indian Army is undergoing some significant joint exercises such as “Yudh Abhyas” between US and India close to the Line of Actual Control (LAC), the de facto border between India and China. Indian Army is also undergoing joint exercises with Singapore with the most recent one being 12th edition of “Exercise Agni Warrior” at Devlali, in the Indian state of Maharashtra. India held “Exercise Garuda Shakti ” with its Southeast Asian neighbor Indonesia intended to improve “understanding, cooperation, and interoperability” between the two parties by “gaining an insight into the lifestyle and culture of both countries to enhance military cooperation.”<sup>21</sup>
- **IND-INDO CORPAT.** The Andaman & Nicobar Command (ANC) of the Indian Navy and the Indonesian Navy also participated in the 38th Coordinated Patrol (IND-INDO CORPAT) which took place earlier in June 2022 and lasted for more than 10 days in the Andaman Sea and Straits of Malacca. This manifests the level of mutual trust and confidence both the countries hold for each other.<sup>22</sup>
- **Surya Kiran.** Indian Army is initiating joint training exercise with Nepal known as the “Surya Kiran” to share theoretical and practical knowledge of jungle warfare in relation to military counterterrorism capabilities as well as disaster management.<sup>23</sup>
- **Veer Guardian-2023.** Veer Guardian-2023 is a joint training where the air forces of both Japan and India will promote air cooperation in January 2023 at Hyakuri Air Base, Japan. Four Su-30 MKI, two C-17, and one IL-78 aircraft from the Indian contingent will take part in the air exercise. The JASDF, meanwhile, will take part with four F-2 and four F-15 planes.<sup>24</sup>
- **Indian Navy signs MoUs to Initiate Hydrographic Cooperation.** Hydrographic applications are expanding all over the world in marine coastal development and environmental preservation. About 50% of coastal states lack hydrographic capabilities, according to a UN study. India is among the remaining 25% of countries with sufficient hydrographic capability. The Indian Naval Hydrographic Department

(INHD) already provided assistance and signed MoUs with Mauritius, Tanzania and Seychelles.<sup>25</sup>

- **Indian Army Offers Training to the Afghan National Army.** The majority of the Afghan military personnel were being trained at the National Defense Academy (NDA) in Pune, the Officers' Training Academy (OTA) in Chennai, and the Indian Military Academy (IMA) in Dehradun. The Government of India was bearing with the training expenses of the Afghan cadets as apart of nation-building efforts in Afghanistan after 2001.<sup>26</sup>

### **Offering Courses to Foreign Practitioners**

Lt Gen Vinod G. Khandare, a former officer of the Indian Army and currently serving as the Principal Adviser in the Ministry of Defence stated the significance of offering courses to foreign practitioners in the Indian defence institutes. This includes various course vacancies and sometimes offering free courses to the cadets coming from poor neighbouring countries.<sup>27</sup> Historically, right from independence India has been getting officers from the friendly nations. In fact, it is a matter of pride for India that a large number of the alumni are heading some of the most significant government positions in their respective countries. For example, the President of Nigeria is a product of the Defence Services Staff College.

### **Visits by the Defence Minister, Service Chief and Research by Defence Linked Think Tanks**

Apart from the visits by the Defence Minister and Service Chiefs, the involvement of retired military officers in Track 2 and Track 1.5 discussions are remarkable. India has few renowned think tanks such as Manohar Parikkar Institute of Defence Studies and Analysis (IDSA), United Service Institution (USI), Centre for Joint Warfare Studies (CENJOWS) etc. which have been intensely promoting defence related research and holding seminars and webinars.<sup>28</sup>

### **India Initiates Joint Secretary-Level Talks for Disengagement in LAC**

India initiated joint secretary level-talks with China to resolve the Ladakh

row. Involvement of a civil diplomat to resolve the border issue between the two countries is something India is doing for the first time. India has said that it expects that China will sincerely work with it for complete disengagement of troops along LAC in Eastern Ladakh. This can be stated as a classic illustration of civil military fusion to resolve dispute.<sup>29</sup>

### **The Significant Role of a Defence Attache in Defence Diplomacy**

The former Defence Attache to France, Maj Gen Sudhir Sharma said that a Defence Attache (DA) is a person with efficiency and well preparedness. His contacts in relation to social and professional is appreciating. He has access to polity, bureaucracy, military, corporate and the overseas diaspora. The DA stands next to an ambassador holding a significant position. Apart from holding formal connection, he has the ability to create an informal rapport with the military fraternity of other countries. This in a way could help push agendas of which are of India's national interest.<sup>30</sup>

Lt Gen Khandare also elaborately discussed on the role of a Defence Attache in context of Atmanirbharta or Make in India. He stated that it is a very recent phenomenon and arms sales being a significant element of this initiative, it has been noted that expectations exist for the DA to play a substantial role in the selling of these indigenously built weapons.<sup>31</sup>

In addition, the DA gets a chance to have a direct access to the Department of Defence Production (DDP). A very good relationship is maintained between the DA and DDP which otherwise is not possible for an officer in the armed forces. The role of a DA is significant while discussing about military hardware and defence technology. A DA would certainly have more first-hand experiences in dealing with different defence technologies than an IFS officer.

In terms of defence acquisition, the DA makes a list of niche technologies which would involve a proposal with a proper action plan. He works in collaboration with the ambassador. Apart from these, the DA's role is immense as a middle man. Anybody can reach out to the DA from his home country. For instance, if a group of MSMEs have any interest in a particular country then the DA there can act as the middleman to partner

them with that particular country. This could be in terms of guidance, consultancy or a meeting. It could also be the vice-versa. If a foreign country has interest in India and has a proposal but doesn't have any base in India or being a foreigner, there is a gap created in terms of security issues. Under such circumstances the role of the DA is immense and makes him a very influential person standing next in the line to the ambassador.<sup>32</sup>

### **The Gap**

Countries like France and US have one agency which deals with the weapon system without the interference or involvement of any other agencies. The Direction générale de l'armement (DGA), is the French Government Defense procurement and technology agency which is in charge of managing programmes, developing, and acquiring weapon systems for the French military.<sup>33</sup> The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) of US facilitates in the development of technology having possible military uses. Although India has DDP but its main task is only in terms of production.<sup>34</sup> The main power rests with the Ministry of Defence, the finance is dealt by the Ministry of Finance and at the topmost is the Prime Minister's Office. India lacks a single agency like DGA and DARPA to which would deal solely with the weapons system.

The process of acquisition in India has been too long. There are different stages such as: a detailed qualitative requirement (QR), request for information which might go on for more than a month, request for proposal, receiving a sealed code, opening of the bid, cost negotiation, trial, fabrication, delivery etc.

### **The Means**

In 2020, the Government of India declared the raise in "Foreign Direct Investment" (FDI) in the defence sector. This implies an increase from 49% to 74% under the automatic route and up to 100% via the government route. According to the Minister of State for Defence, Ajay Bhatt, following the notification of the amended policy's issuance, there has been a total FDI inflow of about Rs 494 crore into the defence sector.<sup>35</sup>

The role of DefExpo and Aero India is immense in this aspect. Since India is already driving with its “Make in India, Make for the World”, DefExpo and Aero India have the ability to demonstrate the strength of the indigenous defence sector to the world. The DefExpo 2022 themed “Path to Pride” has been the 12<sup>th</sup> and the largest defence exhibition. This is an indicator of developments happening in India’s defence industry and can attract investment on a worldwide scale.<sup>36</sup>

Meanwhile, Aero India is India’s major aerospace and defence exhibition. It enables India to highlight its expanding aerospace and defence capabilities. The five-day Aero India 2023, with the theme “The runway to a billion opportunities,” was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on February 13 at the India Air Force base in Yelahanka, Bengaluru. Argentina and Egypt have expressed great interest in procuring them while the defence PSU is trying to sell HAL’s Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas to Royal Malaysia.<sup>37</sup>

To deal with the above mentioned issues and to make Atmanirbharta a success, the government has initiated few measures:

- **Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX).** The government established the Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) framework with the intention of promoting innovation and technological advancement in the defence and aerospace sector by enlisting the aid of businesses like MSMEs, start-ups, lone inventors, R&D institutions, and academia as well as promoting independence. The government has authorised a central sector scheme for iDEX with financial support of Rs 498.78 crore for the ensuing five years, from 2021-2022 to 2025-2026. The program’s objective is to provide financial support to 300 startups, MSMEs, and independent innovators through Defense Innovation Organization (DIO).<sup>38</sup>
- **SRIJAN.** Defense Minister Rajnath Singh introduced the SRIJAN Portal of the Department of Defense Production in 2020. The portal is an all-in-one online store that gives vendors access to products that can be used for indigenization.

The site displays data that includes the item's name, a picture and description, import values, a NATO Classification (indicative), etc. in a systematic manner. Additionally, there is a search feature.

- **Defence Industrial Corridors (DICs).** The Center has created two Defense Industrial Corridors (DICs), one in Uttar Pradesh and the other in Tamil Nadu, to attain self-reliance in the defence sector in accordance with the Make In India strategy. The government seeks to establish a defence manufacturing ecosystem that is advantageous through these DICs. To promote economies of scale and the development of internationally competitive firms in the country, it is intended to create a robust supply chain for increasing production, testing, and certification.

According to data from the MoD, the Uttar Pradesh Expressways Industrial Development Authority (UPEIDA), the nodal organisation for the Uttar Pradesh Defence Industrial Corridor (UPDIC), signed 69 Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with industries, with a potential investment of Rs 10,545 crore.<sup>39</sup>

- **Special Purpose Vehicle.** In accordance with the SPV model, the private sector will be encouraged to design and build military platforms and equipment alongside the Defense Research and Development Organization (DRDO) and other institutions.

The following two platforms fall under this category:

- Long Range Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) [High Altitude Long Endurance (HALE)]
- Indian Multi Role Helicopter (IMRH)<sup>40</sup>
- **Defence Production and Export Promotion Policy (DPEPP 2022).** The Ministry of Defence (MoD) has developed DPEPP 2020 as a guiding document to give the nation's defence production capabilities a focused, structured, and major push for exports and self-reliance.<sup>41</sup>
- **Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP).** A system of policies and processes known as the Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP) 2020

governs how the Indian government purchases military hardware. By giving home manufacturers the upper hand, attracting foreign direct investment in the defence sector, and defending the native Indian industry's interests, it aims to further the Make in India project. The DAP 2020 also seeks to make the defence procurement process more effective and transparent.

- **Strategic Partnership Model (SPM).** At its meeting on May 20, 2017, the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) approved the SPM's general framework. The goal of the policy is to work with the Indian private sector to produce cutting-edge defence equipment there. Through an open and competitive procedure, it is the creation of long-term strategic alliances with competent Indian industry leaders.<sup>42</sup>

### **Recommendations and the Way Ahead**

- The major munition suppliers of the world such as Russia faces a critical shortage of artillery munitions, most of the weapons US and France sell are expensive. For arms import, the countries might look for a market beyond Russia, US or France. Although China and Pakistan (most of its arms are copied from China) offer a market for arms, India has the leverage to expand its arms export trade considering them to be of better quality and cheaper in price.
- Most of the arms sold by Pakistan are the ones received from China. For example, the JF-17 fighter jets exported to India's neighbor Myanmar and its oldest defence partner in Africa, Nigeria are created in joint collaboration with China.<sup>43</sup> Moreover, Pakistan's sales procedure is quite faster than India. Although it is a concern for India but under Prime Minister Modi, it has been expected that India's military capabilities are strengthening and gradually transforming the country from the largest arms importer to a heavyweight maker. Initiatives such as DefExpo are promoted by the Ministry of Defence to display the land, naval, air as well as homeland security systems of India. The objective is to demonstrate the strength of the indigenous defence sector, which is currently driving the government's and the country's will to "Make in India, Make for the World." It is the first edition made just for Indian businesses.<sup>44</sup>

- The US sells defence systems to other countries which is a part of its defence diplomacy and creates a situation of dependency for those countries. It has been able to offer a level of security assurances such as military protection for Taiwan and the Baltic and Scandinavian states through NATO. On the other China's strategy is quite opposite to that of US. China focuses on making a country economically dependent and then makes it militarily dependent. In this context, India so far has no interest to offer such military assurance or make any country militarily dependent on it. However, India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is growing and is soon going to be one of the topmost economies of the world in few years. Considering its growing economy and the conflict and confrontation between the two super powers US and China, India should grab the opportunity to enlarge its influence across the globe especially in the defence and strategic aspect.
- The civil diplomacy of India is led by an officer from the Indian Foreign Service and the defence diplomacy is led by an officer from the Indian Armed Forces. There exists a gap between the two fraternities. According to Maj Gen Sharma, the personality of the Ambassador plays a salient role in this context. Some share a good rapport with the Defence attache while some might not share the same. A cordial relationship between the Ambassador and the Defence Attache plays a salient role in achieving a particular agenda of national interest. He has also additionally noted that there should be more officers from the armed forces in the Indian embassies across the globe. He illustrated that during the pandemic, a military person could have been more resourceful and efficient to deal with the chaotic situation than anyone else.<sup>45</sup>
- To deal with this gap, there should be a common directive under which both the fraternities can work in coordination. There should be an indicator to check the level of achievement made by the two fraternities which could be monitored by an IAS officer.<sup>46</sup>



### Conclusion

Compared to US and China, India's defence diplomacy is still at a budding state. Despite the gaps, the Modi administration has made major shifts in the defence sector. From Atmanirbharta to arms exports India's moves are commendable. Although the results of these missions and initiatives might require some time however, in the long run it will make India hold a significant strategic position in the world. For example, the indigenously produced arms might not meet the standard of those India imported in the last few decades and there persists calculated risks but if seen in the long run then it's a great move for India. India has all the capabilities to enlarge its ammunition manufacturing base. An enhanced fusion between the civil and military is of utmost salience. With a stronger civil military fusion in diplomacy New Delhi can reach out to various countries of the globe and extend defence cooperation and partnership which would eventually help India achieve its interests in the defence sector.

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