



Vishal Bharat's Global Vision: Indo-US Strategic Partnership in the Indo-Pacific Region during the Modi Era

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Abstract:

The Indo-Pacific now forms the centre of the twenty first century geopolitical where strategic competition, new types of interdependence and regional architectures exist. The article is based on the strategic alliance of Indo-US and how it can be applied in the case of Vishal Bharat and the Indian civilization and how its role as a global player is evolving. It looks at the change that occurred in the relationship between the Indians and the US to become less convergent and multidimensional relationship in the Indo-Pacific during the Modi era. Through the qualitative and analytical approach, the paper will be based on policy texts, academic materials, and strategic argument to evaluate the nature of this partnership. The article opines that, despite the enhancement of its defence, economic and technological relationships; India wants to be autonomous of strategies; the manner in which it goes about it lies within the veil of inclusiveness, rule-based order and global responsibility. The Indo-US affair is then the expression of a complex conjunction of the geopolitical expediency and the civilizational aspiration, which contributes to the establishment of the shifting order of the Indo-Pacific.

Keywords: Vishal Bharat, Indo-US Strategic Partnership, Indo-Pacific, Modi Era, Civilizational Diplomacy, Global Dialogues, Strategic Convergence.

1. Introduction:

Indo-Pacific has developed in the last two decades to be the major geostrategic arena of the twenty first century due to convergence of both economic dynamism, maritime connectivity and increased great power rivalry. This is the area between the eastern coast of Africa and the western Pacific that has been at the center stage of international trade, energy movement, and stability in the area. In this dynamic geopolitical environment, the Indo-US strategic collaboration has taken on a new, unmatched importance, and is an important focus in the restructuring of regional and world order (Pant, 2019; Tellis, 2016).

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Traditionally, the relationship between India and the US was characterized by the periods of alienation because of the confrontations between the Cold War and ideological conflicts. Non-alignment and strategic autonomy turned out to be quite opposite to the United States allelopathy-market system (Malone, 2011). But the post-Cold War era and opening up the Indian economy began a slow reconciliation. The 9/11 events provided a turning point, which brought convergence in counter-terrorism and security relations (Ganguly, 2002; Mohan, 2003). This relationship over time has developed into a holistic strategic alliance in the area of defence, economy, and technology (Kapur, 2019).

The Modi era is the major turning point in the operationalization of this vision, with its aggressive diplomatic stance, tactical clarity, and never-before-seen level of international involvement. India under Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been an extremely aggressive in pursuing a policy of multi-alignment, enhancing its relationship with the United States but at the same time has maintained strong relationships with other powers, ensuring its strategic independence (Mukherjee, 2019). This technique is an indication of an advanced balancing policy which tries to make the most of strategic payoffs without falling into the hardships of alliance politics. The deepening of the level of high politics, institutionalization of the cooperation in the field of defence on the basis of fundamental agreements and the strengthening of collaboration in new technologies all highlight the consolidation of the Indo-US partnership as one of the foundations of Indo-Pacific strategy of India (Pant, 2019).

It is against this backdrop that the current research aims at interrogating the Indo-US strategic relationship using two theoretical perspectives of geopolitical realism and civilizational imagination with Vishal Bharat acting as the conceptual conduit between the two. As the paper combines the theoretical learning of realism, liberal institutionalism, and strategic autonomy with the analysis of policy changes on the ground, it seeks to provide a subtle experience of how India is going through the complications of partnership in a systemic transition. By doing this, it proceeds to argue that the Indo-US relationship should be interpreted not as linear event towards alliance but as a negotiated relationship that is dynamic and reflects the limitation of power politics and possibilities of normative agency.

However, in the end, the importance of the Indo-US partnership is far much more than bilateral relations themselves and traces the overall lines of Indo-Pacific order and, therefore, the future of global governance. With the region still in its development, the capacity of India and United States to balance strategic interests against normative commitments will not only define how sustainable the partnership could be, but also the form that the new international system will assume.



Objectives:

- Indo-Pacific region Study Indo-US strategic partnership evolution.
- Speculate on influence of Modi era on Indian-US bilateral strategic relations.
- Assess the role of Indo-Pacific in the relationship of frameworks on regional security and cooperation.
- Evaluate the significance of 2008 civil nuclear Agreement in redefining bilateral strategic alignment .
- Review the strategic independence of India in the context of intensifying Indo-US relationship.
- Interpret Indo-US partnership through Vishal Bharat's civilizational and global vision framework .

Research Methodology:

The Method of research is qualitative and analytical with the use of Primary and secondary sources such as academic literature, policy reports, and government documents. It uses the historical and document analysis to trace the Indo-US relations since 9/11 to the Indo-Pacific period with the help of the discourse analysis and theoretical viewpoints of realism, liberalism and strategic autonomy.

2. Transforming post-9/11 Convergence to Indo-Pacific Centrality.

The change in the nature of Indo-US relations towards a cautious involvement into a systematic strategic alliance should be perceived as a gradual but decisive transformation of the systemic changes in the global politics. The post 9/ 11 environment can be seen as a stimulating factor that redirected the strategic focus of the two countries to allow them to become less episodic in their cooperation and start being more long term. Nonetheless, such a shift was not only reactive but it had gone through several stages of trust-forming, institutionalizing and re-calibration of strategies, which eventually resulted in the Indo-Pacific construct as the parallel axis of bilateral collaboration.

Counter-terrorism has become the pillar of Indo-US relations in the aftermath of 9/11. The common perceptions about the threats helped in the coordination of intelligence, diplomacy and security dialogue. However, as the relationship evolved, it was clear that a long-term strategic alignment would need a wider agenda that would include economic involvement, technological cooperation, and regional security structure. This shift was represented by the civil nuclear agreement of 2008 as one of the signs of the move in a new direction of non-proliferation tensions into strategic accommodation and mutual understanding.



The latest embodiment of this change is the Indo-Pacific construct that has become prominent after 2017. It restructures the bilateral relationship in a broader geopolitical context where the major issues of concern are maritime security, freedom of navigation, and stability in the region. To India, the Indo-Pacific is not only a strategic space but is also a civilizational extension between the Indian ocean and the Pacific world and this is what resonates with the concept of Vishal Bharat. In the case of the United States, it is a construct on which to keep the balance of power and overcome emergent threats in the region. Therefore, the convergence of the interests and the divergence of the strategic narratives are expressed in the Indo-Pacific centrality.

3. Vision Indo-Pacific: Geopolitics, Norms, and Civilizational Narratives.

The Indo-Pacific has become a concept that defines the contemporary international relations, but its meaning is much deeper than geography into the aspect of strategy, economics, and normative order. The Indo-Pacific is used in the context of Indo-US relations as a common strategic platform that unites the national interests and allows taking differences into account and coverage of approaches and focus.

Geopolitically, the Indo-Pacific is the meeting point of two sensitive maritime areas which are both crucial to world trade, energy transactions, and security politics. The growing aggressive character of China, especially in the South Chinese Sea and Indian Ocean has increased the issue of the stability in the region and maintenance of a system of rules. In this regard, the Indo-US alliance is aimed at achieving a balance of power avoiding one-sided superiority and encouraging free and inclusive regional interactions.

Nonetheless, there are major differences that the Indo-Pacific is understood by India and the United States. At the same time, the U.S. strategy tends to focus on strategic rivalry and disarmament, India explains Indo-Pacific as a place of collaboration, inclusion, and discourse. This difference is indicative of the larger paradigm of Vishal Bharat, where India is an actor of civilisation who believes in connectivity, respect towards each other and shared prosperity. Normative approach is highlighted by the focus on centrality of ASEAN, sovereignty respect, and non-political bloc which is inclusive.

The Indo-Pacific vision is therefore a dual nature and that is it is a strategic construction with a power politics colouring its nature and a normative structure with civilizational values colouring the structure. The Indo-US relationship does just that, juggling the need to maintain security and the desire to welcome more members to the regional order. Such a synthesis is very conspicuous in the language of diplomacy in India,



where the concept of strategic engagement is always maintained in the context of global responsibility and cooperative security.

4. Defence and Security Cooperation: Buyer-Seller to Strategic Interoperability.

The enhancement of the defence and security collaboration has become one of the most critical dimensions of the Indo-US relations in the era of Modi. The lack of military participation which was approved of in the past has now taken the shape of a holistic approach of interoperability, joint training and military alliances.

The signing of the basic agreements like the LEMOA, COMCASA and BECA has enabled the two countries to have better coordination and information exchange of the military. These deals have in addition enhanced operational compatibility as well as indicated a high degree of strategic trust. The defence cooperation has also been enhanced by joint military drills such as naval drills and trilateral engagement of the military that has given the two countries the capability to conduct operations effectively in complicated security scenarios.

Other than operational factors, the co-development and co-production of defence technology have also seen an increase. This shift indicates a change in the relationship between buyers and sellers to a more cooperative one. In the case of India, this has been in line with its aim of establishing local defence forces and taking advantage of the state-of-the-art technologies in the United States.

Nevertheless, this strengthening of the relations between defence also poses significant concerns about the strategy autonomy. Though, more interoperability will boost the security capabilities of India, it will also produce dependencies that can play a role in terms of long-term decision-making. The question, thus, is how to balance strategic cooperation and the independent policy formulation.

In the context of Vishal Bharat, defence cooperation is not only a weapon of power projection but also a measure of creating a stable situation in the region and a common security system. The fact that India has focused on humanitarian aid, and disaster response and maritime security is an indication of a wider definition of security that is beyond the typical military issues.

5. Economic and Technological Alliance: Drivers of Strategic Change.

Economic and technological aspects of Indo-US relations have become vital forces of strategic change especially with the effect of globalisation and digital interdependence. Due to the increasing knowledge-



based global economy, cooperation in aspects like innovation, digital infrastructure and emerging technologies have taken centre stage.

India and the United States trade and investment flows have increased greatly and portray increasing economic complementarities. United States is a great source of technology and capital whereas India is a huge market and a dynamic work force. This reciprocity has established a great platform of continued interaction even amidst the incidence of occasional trade friction.

The collaboration in the technological domain has grown in the technological fields such as artificial intelligence, semiconductors, cybersecurity, and space exploration. The actions that focus on the critical and emerging technologies emphasize the technological leadership awareness that is a decisive power factor in the 21 st century at the world level. The Indo-US partnership in the said is therefore, not just economical, but also strategic, which is supposed to construct the world standards and resilience in supply chains.

It is namely in this respect that the concept of Vishal Bharat can be relevant, as it is concerned with the necessity to combine technological progress to the welfare of the society and the citizens of the world as a whole. India is not limited in its attitude towards technology to merely economical gains but is taken at the level of digital inclusion, data governance, and ethical innovation. An overlap between technological cooperation and these broader objectives, the Indo-US relationship can aid in possessing a more encompassing and sustainable trend of growth.

6. The Modi Era: Strategy, Leadership and Diplomacy.

The Modi era is a unique period in the history of the development of Indo-US relations, which was marked by activism in international relations, clarity of strategy, and ambitions of the world. The current government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has taken a more aggressive foreign policy stance taking a bid to extend its influence and enhance the strong partnering with international powers.

The focus on personal diplomacy and high-level interaction was also one of the characteristics of this era. Regular summits, bilateral talks and symbolic actions have strengthened political trust and managed to coordinate policies. Meanwhile, an apparent attempt to make the foreign policy of India align with the new trends in the world and, in the Indo-Pacific region, in particular.

The way the Modi government is handling the Indo-US partnership is indicative of a practical view of the global power conflict. Although India has appreciated the need to have strategic partnership with the United



States, it has persistently dealt with other dominant powers and has had a multi-aligned approach. Such a degree of flexibility can be explained by the fact that it is in line with the principle of strategic autonomy and emphasizes the fact that India does not want to be bound with strict alliances.

Notably, a larger civilizational narrative has also been expressed in the discourse of foreign policy by the Modi period. Ideologies like Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam and Vishal Bharat bring out the desire of India to become a positive force in the international government. Through the integration of strategic alliances into this normative structure, India aims at projecting itself as a responsible inclusive global player.

7. Difficulties, Challenges, and Question of Asymmetry.

Although the relationship between Indo-US has become very profound, the relationship remains under structural asymmetries and inherent contradiction that makes the relationship difficult to follow in the long term. The most noted is the disparity of power between the two nations especially in the economic, technological, and militaristic strength. The US is still a world superpower which has strategic reach unparalleled, and India, though on the verge of becoming, is still struggling with developmental restrictions, and regional security pressures. This unequal is a factor that affects the conditions of participation, as most times India is left between being cooperative and cautious to ensure that it is not excessive in its reliance (Mearsheimer, 2001).

The second contradiction is related to the different strategic priorities and geopolitical orientations. Although the United States perceives the Indo-Pacific as a strategic competition (mostly against China), India takes a more nuanced view which focuses on inclusiveness, dialogue, and peace in the region. The fact that India is still active in relations with other nations like Russia and that it is not keen on following western ideologies on issues of global conflicts shows its determination in maintaining strategic independence (Mukherjee, 2019). Such differences sometimes create tensions particularly on matters related to defence acquisition, sanctions policy and multilateral diplomacy.

Moreover, the institutionalization of the strategic cooperation in such mechanisms like the Quad brings in both possibilities and constraints. Although it improves the coordination of the like-minded partners, it also draws concerns of securitization and the view of the containment strategies within the region. The reservation of India about formal alliances highlights the tendency to remain flexible and not to be involved in great-power politics.



Conclusion:

The Indo-US strategic partnership has in the last 20 years become one of the most important pillars of the changing order in Indo-Pacific region, which is not only a logic of geopolitical convergence but also a reality of the changing international system. Since the era of the post-9/11 rapprochement to the landmark Civil Nuclear Agreement of 2008, and since the expansion of the collaboration of the governments in the field of defence cooperation, and into the sphere of deeper economic and technological interaction, the relationship has been transformed radically. What was defined by mistrust and restricted interaction has transformed into a multidimensional collaboration that is security-based, trade-based, and innovation-based and governs the region. It is especially clear in the times of the Modi era when a new level of diplomatic activity, institutionalization, and strategic clarity in the Indian approach to the United States has been observed.

It is also the symptom of a multifaceted competition and collaboration that the rapid development of an economic and technological partnership grows. Trade between the two countries has grown significantly and one of the areas of strategic importance of collaboration has been established in technological relatedness through artificial intelligence, cybersecurity and supply chain resilience. Nevertheless, the issues relating to market entry, regulatory frameworks, intellectual property rights, and preserving digital sovereignty still led to the tension. These tensions lead to the fact that economic engagement, as well as strategic cooperation, is predetermined by convergence and rivalry that precondition the necessity to establish the constant conversations and other institutional arrangements to be able to manage the differences successfully.

The conceptual framework presented by the Vishal Bharat provides a deeper and more detailed understanding of the India-American involvement. It puts the foreign policy of India within a broader civilizational perspective, in which the historical significance is made in the sense of India being an intermediary of the regions, cultures and economies. This framework portrays the aspiration by India that it is a responsible player in the world with a notion in inclusivity, dialogue and cooperative security. India aims to strike a balance between the demands of the power games and those of the globalized responsibility through cementing its relations of strategic alliances to this normative vision that will re-brand its role in the international system.

In conclusion, the balance between the capability of Indo-US partnership to maintain its future in a more complex and uncertain world will depend on its adjustability to the new reality. The rise of China,



fragmentation of world supply chain, technological competition, and the rising image of multilateralism will all continue to stand along the way of the association. The maintenance of such alliance will not only mean the deepening of the existing spheres of interaction but also the most effective management of the differences meaning dialogue, respect and institutional innovations. In particular, the need to strike a balance between strategic convergence and autonomy will be critical to India and its stance to the United States would be advantageous rather than limiting its involvement in the international scene.

Lastly, Indo-US strategic alliance is not just a bilateral understanding but a significant determiner of the new Indo-Pacific order and hence, the future of world governance. This is of significance since it merges material skills and normative desires to come up with a pragmatic yet principled model of co-operation. The international system is still undergoing a radical change and so the need to work out the relationship of United States and India of shared interests, but under the influence of various identities will be critical in developing a stable, inclusive and robust global order.

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