

SECURITY POLICY OF INDIA  
*Modi Doctrine*

*The primary purpose of any country's security policy is to promote its national interest- to ensure security, safeguard its sovereignty, and contribute to its growth and prosperity.*

# SECURITY POLICY OF INDIA

*Modi Doctrine*

Col Dr Narendar Singh (Retd)



PENTAGON PRESS

**Security Policy of India: Modi Doctrine**  
*Col Dr Narendar Singh (Retd)*

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*The Book is dedicated to gallant Indian Soldier, especially  
Infantrymen who ask nothing.*

*My wife Beena,*

*sons*

*Lieutenant Colonel Ravi Raja an infantryman,*

*Major Tarun Singh, AMC,*

*Daughters-in-Law*

*Tapasya and Veena*

*&*

*Grandson Sankalp and Granddaughter Sanskriti*



# CONTENTS

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<i>Foreword</i>	<i>xiii</i>
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	<i>xv</i>
<i>Preface</i>	<i>xvii</i>
<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
Here's What Kautilya told the King of Magadh	1
Strategic Studies: Assumptions and Approaches	5
Strategy	8
The Assumptions of Strategic Theory	8
India and Strategic Culture	10
Sovereign States	12
National Power	14
Globalisation	14
Militarisation	18
Twenty-First Century Challenges to National Security	19
<b>2. NOTIONS OF SECURITY</b>	<b>26</b>
Regulating the Use of Military Force	27
Making the Sovereign State Insecure	27
What does Security mean?	28
The Concept of Security	31
Balance of Power	32
Soft Balancing	33
Containment	34
Deterrence	36
Coalitions/Alliances	37
Collective Security	38

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Common Security	41
Non-Alignment	43
Strategic Partnership	44
Institutional Cooperation	45
Who are the Actors?	46
How does International System Function?	48
What should India do?	49
The Modi Foreign Policy Doctrine: India as a Smart Power	51
<b>3. SECURITY ENVIRONMENT</b>	<b>61</b>
The Revival of Geopolitics	65
The Unipolar World	67
Great Power Relationships would be in a Flux	67
Asymmetric Challenges/International Terrorism/Unconventional Threats	68
Other Drivers shaping the Global Security Environment	70
Multilateralism vs. Unilateralism vs. Non-Aligned	71
Globalisation	73
Spread of Technology	73
India's Internal Situation	74
<b>4. CENTRALITY OF INDIA: GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION AND GEO POLITICAL–GEO STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE</b>	<b>77</b>
Island Territories and Maritime Area	82
The Straits of Malacca	84
The Cape of Good Hope	85
Strait of Hormuz	85
Climate of India	85
Influence of Geography on History	86
Centrality of India	89
<b>5. INDIA AND THE GREAT POWERS</b>	<b>98</b>
THE FIRST PHASE: POST-INDEPENDENCE	100
India's Policy: 1947-54	100
India's Policy: 1954-62	105
THE SECOND PHASE: POST INDO-CHINA WAR 1962	115
India's Policy: 1962-65	115
India's Policy: 1965-71	118
India's Policy: 1972-91	121



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THE THIRD PHASE: POST BREAK UP OF SOVIET UNION	122
India's Policy: 1992-2004	122
India's Policy: 2005-14	126
Modi Doctrine in Relations to Great Powers	128
<b>6. INDIA AND REGIONAL SECURITY</b>	<b>147</b>
India's Strategic Neighbourhood	148
Regional Perspectives of Security	151
Regionalism	152
What gives South Asia a Geopolitical Distinctiveness?	153
South Asian Security Architecture	154
Militaryisation of South Asia Post-Independence	158
Nepal	162
Bhutan	168
Sri Lanka and Maldives	171
Myanmar	173
Afghanistan	177
Bangladesh	178
Identity-based Political Violence	179
Illegal Immigration	180
Money Laundering (Hawala Transactions)	182
Drug Trafficking	184
Link West	185
A New Great Game	188
Chabahar vs. Gwadar: India vs. China	191
Indian Ocean	193
Terrorism	199
Modi Doctrine in the Region	200
<b>7. INDIA AND INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS</b>	<b>211</b>
What are International Institutions?	217
Intergovernmental Organisations	218
Supranational Organisations	218
Need for International Organisations	218
Role of International Organisation	220
Advantages of International Institutions	221
Constraining the Great Powers	221

---

Providing Information and Reducing Transaction Costs	222
Facilitating Reciprocity	222
Facilitating Reform in Domestic Politics	223
India and International Institutions	223
India and the United Nations	225
The Prospects for UN Reform	227
International Economic Institutions	228
Global Trade	229
Climate Change	230
New Forums	234
Strategic Partnerships	235
Modi Doctrine	237
<b>8. CULTURAL ASPECT OF SECURITY POLICY</b>	<b>245</b>
Definition of Culture	249
Warfare and Religion	249
National Identity	252
Indian Culture and Strategic Policies	253
Cultural Impact on India's Security Policy	255
Trans-Border Identities	256
Soft Power	259
Indian Diaspora	262
Modi and Soft Power	263
<b>9. TECHNOLOGY AND SECURITY POLICY OF INDIA</b>	<b>271</b>
Historical Background	273
Arms Trade	277
Denial Regimes	278
The Wassenaar Arrangement	278
US Technology Control Regime	279
Export Control Regimes	279
Indigenous Production of Defence Equipment in India	280
Modi and Technology	280
<b>10. INDIA'S DEFENCE FORCES</b>	<b>285</b>
The Officer Shortage	292
Grooming of Officers	292
Officer-men Interaction Gone Haywire	292

---

Security of Men	293
Modi and Indian Defence Forces	293
<b>11. GEO-ECONOMICS AND INDIA'S STRATEGY</b>	<b>299</b>
India and Geo-Economics	303
Modi and Geo-Economics	305
<b>12. THE MODI DOCTRINE</b>	<b>307</b>
In Brief, Nehru Foreign and Defence Policies were Total Failures	308
Neighbourhood First	312
Act East Policy	313
Link West	315
India's 'Connect Central Asia' Policy	316
Indian Ocean Outreach.	316
Economic Diplomacy	317
Soft Power	318
Internal Security	318
Defence	320
Conclusion	322
<i>Bibliography</i>	328
<i>Index</i>	354



**जनरल ( डा. ) विजय सिंह**

पीवीएसएम, एवीएसएम, वाईएसएम (से.नि.)

**GEN. (DR) VIJAY KUMAR SINGH**

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विदेश राज्य मंत्री

भारत सरकार, नई दिल्ली

Minister of State for External Affairs

Government of India, New Delhi



## FOREWORD

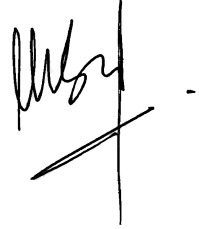
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This Book by Col Narendar Singh, with a fascinating title “Security Policy of India: Modi Doctrine” is focused on India’s Security Policy. The author investigates the underlying principles of India’s foreign policy from 1947 until the present day.

India’s Foreign Policy has been a constant matter of speculations and debate on what approach India should take in the emerging Global Order. There is no denying the fact that India, one of the largest democracies and vibrant economy in the world has a pivotal role in shaping up the Global Order. After sixty years of independence India’s foreign policy in early 21<sup>st</sup> Century created certain doubts. The reason for this is the acceptance of old definitions rather than an appreciation of the country’s background and its human resource potential. The word “neutrality or non-alignment” as applied to India’s foreign policy has little meaning as explained by the writer. Like a hundred other often-repeated words it appears to have been blunted with use, and can be related to India only in the context of her past and present policies. What does neutrality—or, as we prefer to call it, non-alignment—mean and why does India follow this path ? The writer has dealt with this lucidly.

India since Independence did not carry out an assessment of its security needs and lived in an Utopian World. India has a cherished history of collaboration with several countries as the leader of the developing world. India was one of the founding members of several international organizations, most notably the United Nation’s, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Asian Development Bank and the G-20 industrial nations. India also played an important role in international organizations like East Asia Summit, World Trade Organization, International Monetary Fund G8+5, IBSA Dialogue Forum and regional organizations which include SAARC, BIMSTEC etc. but it never ensured that her vital Security interests are more important than being a preacher of peace. No policy can ensure security unless it is backed by economic and military power. India ignored her defence forces to her peril. This is a vital lesson that flows out of the book.

I commend the writer for his forthrightness and logic of views expressed. I wish him many more successful books to his credit.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of stylized, cursive letters followed by a long horizontal stroke and a vertical line.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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I have long been convinced that students of strategic studies especially in India know too little Security Policy. A book should explain what happened and not advance authors, so that the reader can judge for themselves where the balance of probability lies. All that I can say is that I tried to be neutral on the more controversial topics. However, the assertive habits of being a professional soldier cannot easily be set aside.

Since independence, security has taken a back seat. The irony is that today the nation has not provided its forces with the wherewithal necessary to ensure security. The last 10 years were the worst, A chief was haunted when he spoke of the deficiencies.

A professional soldier not only plays his part as executant of the policies of the government but also thinks how the policies of the government can be put into effect in the environment in which he operates. The criticism in the parliament, media and society at large, although healthy at large in a democracy, impairs the functioning of the personnel executing the task or administering the policy. It is during the execution, that we really come to know the efficacy of the policy. Controversies around Indian Defence Forces hurt the morale of the men who faces death at every minute. It is best avoided. It is because of his dedication that we sleep peacefully.

The book is benefitted greatly from what I have learnt teaching, and from numerous discussions and arguments with seniors, peers and colleagues. I know from experience—that reader's experience—that this melding of history, international relations and strategy works well. I would like to thank my peers for their feedback, cooperation and of course friendship. In addition I would like to express my gratitude to them for last minute favours.

My principal debt is to Mr Rajan Arya and the staff at Pentagon Press. I am amazed by his patience. His advice has been sound.

I would like to put on record my gratitude to Honourable Gen VK Singh, PVSM, AVSM, YSM, ADC for having been a guide and at times expressing his view loudly at forums on strategic issues.

Last, but not the least, my ever suffering family deserve the most sincere thanks for tolerating, usually with good humour, my protracted distraction with the challenges of book creation supporting me spiritually throughout writing this thesis and my life in general. I put on record my sincere thanks to my wife Beena for her patience, especially bearing the typing. I would like to thank Lieutenant Colonel Ravi Raja, Major Tarun Singh, AMC, for their candid opinions. I place on record my gratitude to Tapasya and Squadron Leader Veena for their patience in reading the script and suggesting changes. I would be unjust if I do not thank Sankalp and Sanskriti, without their presence nothing could have been possible. They both inspire me daily to do something new.

**Col Dr Narendar Singh (Retd)**



## PREFACE

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Philosophies the world over are 'society centred,' or 'this-world-centred' and direct man to find fulfillment here in this world through socio-political activities, whereas Indian Philosophy looks upon the world as fleeting, transitory and 'unreal' and encourages human beings to seek spiritual realisation of the 'Absolute'. Indian philosophers in olden days never concerned themselves with theories of kingship and nature of government, but were grappling with the problem of transmigration of souls and underplaying the importance of life in this world. Religious and no politics dominated Indian social life. In spite of periodic invasions and few eras of internal breakdown. India never oriented her thoughts to military power, or the socio-politically oriented ideology of a unitary, humane government, and lacked a strong unifying credo. The only book worth mention is the Kautilya's Arthashastra. It is believed that Kautilya, the author of the tremendously influential manual on statecraft, engineered the rise of the Mauryas. Kautilya rose to be the Chief Political Advisor of the first Maurya Emperor.

Another work of importance appeared just as India was about to achieve Independence by Anand Coomaraswamy. In his work *Spiritual Authority and Temporal Power in The Indian Theory of Government*, Anand Coomaraswamy has drawn extensively from texts like the *Vajasneyi Samhita*, and the *Satpatha Brahmana* to arrive at an alternative understanding of kingship, its responsibilities and goals. According to Coomaraswamy, 'the only royal road to power is to become one's own master; the mastery of whatever else follows', this is the traditional secret of government.

Publications and commentaries world over continue to proclaim India has potential. But NO ONE really took India seriously at the high table. The world continues to speak that India will be a power in future. The analyst evinces passion by elucidating the many limits to India's great power ambitions. Fewer still take account of the unique circumstances that India land borders 8 countries (Pakistan Occupied Kashmir abuts Afghanistan) and are at the centre of the Indian Ocean

through which 80 per cent of world's energy requirement flows. India has perhaps the world's most strategically complex geography.

India has made significant progress in forging diplomatic and economic links with its neighbour and in resolving many territorial disputes, but India and its neighbours disagree over a significant number of overlapping, economic, territorial and maritime disputes.

This book is hardly the first to discuss the Modi Doctrine. However, in this book we confront the impact of Modi on Security. The conciliatory behaviour of India reflects a supposed internalisation of international norms, a favourite notion of those who see India bending to the American-Centric global order.

The present volume of 12 essays addresses India's security issues and how the advent of Modi on the scene has impacted the Nation and its standing globally.

Chapter 1 gives the background to the What is Strategy and the strategic culture in India. Strategic culture in India is an indigenous construct over millennia, modified considerably by our experience in the last two centuries. For instance, war and peace are continuing themes in a Indian strategic culture. While not celebrating war, the culture treats it as acceptable when good fights evil. The primary purpose of any country's security policy is to promote its national interest and core values. However, the successive Governments have had a lackadaisical attitude towards National Security.

Chapter 2 primarily deals with Notions of Security. The principle of sovereignty appears to be the hallmark of 'Modi Doctrine'; it underlies the contemporary international system in which state as the main entity may be seen as a major source of instability. Consider 'external sovereignty' in particular – no entity can dictate to a state what it should do; hence, there is anarchy as there is no central law that governs relations amongst the nations and the laws that exist are for the states to accept or reject. Hence, the present system is of 'self-help'. The incipient Modi doctrine has five key elements. First, and most important, is the idea that a strong, self-reliant and self-confident India will pursue a foreign policy of "enlightened national interest". Enlightened national interest adds a moral prism to the policy.

In Chapter 3: Security Environment as existing today is discussed. For strategic leaders of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century primarily concerned with the issues of national security policy, the international system with which they will be dealing is likely to reflect only partially the traditional international system as seen few years back. The change is primarily due to a combination of relationship of nation states at the international level with the transnational threats posed by some of the failed or failing states, ungoverned regions, terror, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), crime, drugs, pandemics, and environmental degradation,

as well as by elements of the system that also have potentially positive impacts such as globalisation and the information revolution. Threats, challenges, and opportunities can come in many shapes and sizes. A traditional threat might take the shape of a nation-state in possession of WMD and a hostile attitude. India suffers from internal and external threat. The permeability of India's borders with several of its immediate neighbours combined with India's constitutionally guaranteed freedoms and the free flow of potential security threats of various sorts across these boundaries continues to preoccupy Indian policymakers. Regional insecurities are exacerbated to a great extent by the persistence of domestic challenges to India's national security and foreign policy. India today represents a fascinating coalescence of caste, ethnic, religious and regional groupings, often cutting across each other, that has produced arguably the world's oldest and, during many centuries, and most successful, pluralistic society. The vibrancy of its democratic experiment combined with its heterogeneous society and rapidly growing economy has caught the attention of observers around the world.

Chapter 4: Centrality of India. History of India has been profoundly influenced by its geographical location and physical features. India lies amongst politically assertive and dynamic states. All the historical pretenders to global power originated in the vicinity of India or aimed to reach India. The world's most populous aspirant to power, as also, the entire potential—economic and political challengers—lie in her vicinity. The geo-strategic importance of India cannot be overemphasised, due to its interrelationship with large part of the world, in terms of its location, trade orientation, cultural and ideological bonds. India meets five of the six critical elements as advocated by Admiral Mahan for a country to be a great sea power viz. geographical position, physical conformation, and extent of territory, population and national character; lastly, the direction from the government. The region is world's axial super subcontinent. A power that dominates the vicinity and India would exercise decisive influence of worlds two of the three most economically productive regions, Europe and East Asia. A glance at the map also suggests that the dominant power would almost automatically control the Middle East and Africa.

Chapter 5: Traditionally great powers have played a dominant role in shaping international society. Great powers, the main actors, pay careful attention to how much economic and military power they have relative to each other. It is important not only to have substantial amount of power, but also to make sure that no other state sharply shifts the balance of power in its favour. That role can be either responsible or predatory. Classical History was confined to three distinct areas of China, India and the Mesopotamia with little awareness of events in the rest of the world viz. Greece etc. In the Middle Ages, the policy of the European Powers was conducted in isolation from that of Asian Empires. With modern technologies,

and in the face of the contemporary intellectual ferment, there is no longer any isolated area; any diplomatic or military move involves worldwide consequences. History indicates that a prominent power cannot long maintain its global leadership without the support and the cooperation of other nations in the pursuit of mutual interests. Modi understood that is power the currency of international/ world politics. Modi cosseted with the US; he did not leave Russia, China and Japan behind. India's partnership with Japan has witnessed the most dynamic growth. Several historic decisions have been taken, the most telling being the decision by Japan, the only country to have suffered a nuclear attack, to sign a civilian nuclear deal with India. Modi just changed the game with China; he was candid and forthcoming. 'Panchsheel' was out. Look East Policy (LEP), initiated by Prime Minister Narasimha Rao in 1992; Prime Minister Narendra Modi, renamed and advocated Act East Policy (AEP), which was launched at the East Asia Summit in Myanmar in November 2014. India Modi accorded a new focus to promoting connectivity through Myanmar and Thailand with other ASEAN states

Chapter 6: The ongoing power shifts in the world are primarily linked to Asia's phenomenal economic rise. One of the most striking things about the larger Asian strategic landscape is the arc of failing or troubled states around India. This harsh geographical reality is India's most-glaring weaknesses—one that weighs it down regionally. Its neighbourhood is so chronically troubled that India confronts what can be called a tyranny of geography. The root cause of these manifold failures, in many minds, is the very artificiality of Pakistan itself: a cartographic puzzle piece sandwiched between India and Central Asia. Pakistan is the most dangerous nation in the world, hub of all terrorism. The ongoing power shifts in the world are primarily linked to Asia's phenomenal economic rise. Modi clearly enunciated 'Neighbourhood First Policy', 'Act East policy'; 'Link West Policy', entered into Defence Agreement with Qatar, 'Connect Central Asia', held an African Conclave and for Indian Ocean region went if for SAGAR and 'Indian Ocean out Reach'.

Chapter 7: Modi clearly followed the policy to create web of allies as stated in the Bhartiya Janta Party manifesto. In the short-term Modi has new international initiative to bring structural reform in the world's financial system with more effective regulation and stronger systems of multilateral consultations and surveillance as well as a collaborative and cooperative global effort for successfully overcoming various challenges. India has to confront with well entrenched powers like US, Russia, European Union, Japan and China in getting the institutions to be more responsive to new needs.

Chapter 8: India's soft power worked its magic before without much government support. India had been able to use Bollywood, Buddhism and other

spiritual forays to promote the country. Modi has taken on to promote India. He has gone on to promote soft power of the nation. Yoga, Sanskrit Conference in Bangkok, Buddhism Circuit etc are some of the initiatives.

Chapter 9: Technology has been his favourite. Modi has taken on to reduce dependence of India on imports. Modi Government for the first time accepted to export weapons. Modi's policy changes include fewer curbs on foreign investment in defence, looser export controls and a reworked procurement policy that's set to encourage domestic output

One of the major failures has been to keep the Defence Forces in good stead. There has been a general resentment in the Armed Forces against the Modi Government. This has been covered in Chapter 10.

From the strength of the treasury the army is born', said Kautilya. Traditionally, the economy has entered into the national security debate through its impact on the nation's hard power: the funding of defence. 'Make in India' has become Narendra Modi's signature programme as he aspires to convert India into a global manufacturing hub. His foreign policy mantra therefore is strongly driven by geo-economics—especially attracting foreign direct investment (FDI)—and at the same time seeks to consolidate India's leadership role in South Asia covered in Chapter 11.

The Modi Doctrine is about projecting India's soft economic power along with military might for strategic initiatives in the region and across the globe. the Modi Doctrine does not seek to confine itself to the old set rules of international diplomacy and relations. Modi seems to be redefining the terms on which India is likely to engage with the world in the coming years. Pragmatism coupled with a more confident assertion of Indian interests is likely to be the hallmark.

The Modi Doctrine about "Strategic Autonomy" with Deterrence.

