

# REDEFINING INDIA'S CENTRAL ASIAN POLICY

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Shri Narendra Modi, on taking over as the 14th prime minister of India on May 26, 2014, made development the Key Result Area (KRA) of his government. The energy resources, especially oil and natural gases, are known to play an important role in the process of development due to every big project surviving thereupon. These energy resources have been witnessing a rising demand but inadequacy in the production capacity thereof within the country. As per the available government records, the petroleum consumption for Financial Year (FY) 2019-20 was 214 Million Metric Tonnes (MMT) and 194 MMT (provisionally) for FY 2020-21.<sup>1</sup> Against this, the production capacity of oil in India during 2019-20 was 24.38 MMT. The annual consumption of natural gas was estimated as 64.14 Billion Cubic Metres (BCM) for FY 2019-20<sup>2</sup> against its production capacity estimated as 30.85 BCM for FY 2016-

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1. Energy Statistics, Publication Report, Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation (MoSPI) Govt of India, Ch 6, p.52, [https://www.mospi.gov.in/sites/default/files/publication\\_reports/Energy\\_Statistics\\_22/Chapter%206-Consumption%20of%20Energy%20Resources.pdf](https://www.mospi.gov.in/sites/default/files/publication_reports/Energy_Statistics_22/Chapter%206-Consumption%20of%20Energy%20Resources.pdf) Table 6.1 p. 55. Accessed on August 4, 2023.
2. Annual Report Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas for 2019-20, p. 32, [https://mopng.gov.in/files/TableManagements/2020-12-08-115045-xyd7b-AR\\_2019-20E.pdf](https://mopng.gov.in/files/TableManagements/2020-12-08-115045-xyd7b-AR_2019-20E.pdf). Accessed on August 4, 2023.

17 and 31.73 for 2017-18 (provisional),<sup>3</sup> bringing to the fore a clear deficit. There was, therefore, a need to look at these energy sources outside the Indian boundaries. The five republics of Central Asia i.e. Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan are rich in terms of these resources and, therefore, there was a need to have a favourable environment to ensure an uninterrupted supply of energy resources ex Central Asia. The Indian prime minister then paid a maiden visit to all the five republics of Central Asia at a single stretch in May 2015. This visit marked the focus that India started directing towards Central Asia mainly to pursue its energy and other strategic interests.

It is imperative for India to direct an objective focus on Central Asia based on the spirit of mutual takeaways so as to facilitate the furtherance of its overall sway in Central Asia, besides addressing its quest for energy security. The Indian foreign policy towards Central Asia, therefore, needs to be redefined to include various conventional diplomatic and soft power factors in order to address the course of India's Central Asian involvement in a more effective manner. This paper aims to highlight a few significant factors that the framers of Indian foreign policy may take into consideration while formulating and directing the Indian diplomacy in the Central Asian region.

### **INDIA-CENTRAL ASIA RELATIONS: BACKGROUND**

The unparalleled journey of India-Central Asia relations started with the series of invasions over Indian territory since the days of ancient history. Almost all the invaders—the Huns and other Turks, Genghis Khan or Sakas or a number of Mongol groups or Alexander or Mehmood of Ghazni or even Zaheeruddin Muhammad Babur who invaded India in 1526 AD—entered India through the Central Asian routes. The relations were, therefore, not so pleasant till about the modern ages. In the modern era, the bilateral relations between India and Central Asia began taking some shape in the form of India's ties

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3. Energy Statistics, Publication Report, Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation (MoSPI) Government of India, Ch 3, Table 3.5, p. 42, [https://www.mospi.gov.in/sites/default/files/publication\\_reports/Energy%20Statistics%202019-final.pdf](https://www.mospi.gov.in/sites/default/files/publication_reports/Energy%20Statistics%202019-final.pdf). Accessed on August 4, 2023.

with the erstwhile Soviet Union which spanned almost 76 years and still continue in some shape.

The relations between India and the Central Asian Republics (CARs) were mainly based upon India's experiences of the ancient days of invasions from the Central Asian routes. The Indo-CAR ties were mainly cultural till about 2012 when, with the announcement of the Connect Central Asia Policy 2012, an effort was made to address various areas like multilateral synergy, energy, establishing a university in Bishkek, logistics network, setting up industries exchange of students, etc so as to give a meaningful shape to the Indo-Central Asia ties in a finite manner. In short, the Indo-USSR relationship witnessed a gradual upscale trend beginning in the mid-1950s, reached a climax during the 1970s and 1980s, floundered in the 1990s and survived the tumultuous jolt of disintegration of the superpower USSR. Despite this, it emerged unscathed and sensibly poised for an extensive recovery in the first two decades of the 21st century. The Soviet Union assisted in building many large industrial enterprises and other projects in the Indian public sector in the early years of India's independence.

Trade with the Soviet Union was commercially attractive because payment was made in the national currency or kind and not the internationally accepted dollar rate. The rupee-ruble arrangement, which had proved a great convenience for dealing with balance of payment issues, now became a complicated financial burden for both. The Soviet Union was a technologically advanced nation and India had the benefit of receiving world-class technology from it. The public sector projects built with Soviet assistance were industrially comparable with the best in the world. The Soviet cooperation provided significant impetus to the growth of core industries and transformed India from a developing country into a developed one.

#### **POST DISINTEGRATION OF THE USSR**

The erstwhile Soviet Union disintegrated in December 1991 and was replaced by 15 autonomous republics. A loose union of the erstwhile Soviet republics was created which came to be known as the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Since most of the manufacturing units for Indian hardware were dispersed throughout

the former Soviet states, India had the no choice but to establish connections through dialogue individually with each of the newly independent states.

As a matter of fact, the Russian disintegration left India grappling with a crippling debt of nearly \$15 billion owed to the Soviet Union for weapon purchases. The erstwhile special relations of yesteryears got embroiled in the financial quandary, leading to a virtual collapse of Indo-Russian trade in 1992. To top it up, the Russian banking oligarchy endeavoured to manipulate the rupee fund to their advantage.

Following these developments, the Indo-Russian relations witnessed a natural pull away from each other, followed by a simultaneous push of interest towards the US post disintegration of the Soviet Union during the decade of the 1990s. Coincidentally, India's integration with the world economy through the recently proclaimed New Economic Policy of India also happened concurrently with the Soviet collapse.

The Russian disintegration constrained India to look at other options. While India was in the process of tapping other internationally available options, there was also a need to sustain the Indo-Russian relations which till then were actually the limited alternatives available to India. Therefore, in a bid to balance India's trade leanings towards the countries of the West in the transition period, India, during the visit of Russian President Vladimir Putin in October 2000, inked a series of 17 agreements on economic, nuclear, energy, defence, and strategic arrangements towards strategic partnerships and agreed to hold annual summit meetings to carry forward their bilateral political dialogue.<sup>4</sup>

### **MODERN ERA INDIAN LEANINGS TOWARDS CENTRAL ASIA**

The requirement of energy resources, especially oil and natural gas, became a strategic commodity in the process of infrastructure development for the newly independent India. It assumed further

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4. "President of the Russian Federation H.E. Vladimir Putin to Visit India", Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) Report dated November 22, 2002, <https://www.mea.gov.in/pressreleases.htm?dtl/12809/President+of+the+Russian+Federation+HE+Vladimir+Putin+to+visit+India>. Accessed on June 9, 2023.

importance with the development process picking up momentum in modern India. A clear deficit in the national requirements of oil and natural gas and the domestic capability of its supplies was experienced in the face of an inadequate domestic energy infrastructure which was expected to be aggravated due to the constantly rising domestic consumption requirements for the national development campaign. As per the Annual Report of the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas for the year 2019-20, the demand for energy is expected to rise with the pace of development picking up. As per the report, India is importing about 83.8 per cent of its crude oil and 47.3 per cent of its natural gas.<sup>5</sup>

The constraint of inadequate indigenous availability of energy gave birth to the idea of looking at external sources of energy supplies, especially at the time of Russian disintegration. By this time the Central Asian region was emerging as a potent supplier for meeting the rising Indian requirements of energy. Gradually, the Indian focus started strategically shifting towards Central Asia in view of its capability for supply of energy resources due to the presence of huge reserves thereof therein.

Starting with energy security and proceeding to serving the broad national interests, a focussed approach was required towards attainment of India's macro strategic interests in Central Asia. Guided by this far-sighted approach, India launched various thought processes namely "Extended Neighbourhood" followed by "Immediate and Strategic Neighbourhood" and then "Look North Policy" with the process finally culminating into proclamation of the "Connect Central Asia Policy 2012".

The Connect Central Asia Policy 2012 constituted a practical on-the-ground endeavour by virtue of having provided a macro and ideological framework for Indian involvement in Central Asia and focussed upon multi-dimensional concerns contextual to India's need for development, with energy security being a major factor therein. But it appeared that the implementation of the policy was largely confined to certain compartments of the diplomatic and bureaucratic thinking, with almost negligible groundwork that was required for realising the inherent objectives thereof.

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5. n. 2.

The signing of a historic trilateral accord among India-Iran-Afghanistan in May 2016 for creating a logistics support facility in Chabahar port emerged as a major milestone in the direction of meaningfully executing the Connect Central Asia Policy 2012 and cemented the way for facilitating the transportation of energy resources ex Central Asia to pick up momentum.

The challenges in harnessing the energy resources from Central Asia by exercising a strategic hold in the region amidst the presence of China and impediments therein, likely to be created by India's proclaimed adversary Pakistan supported by the Taliban dispensation of Afghanistan, all taken together necessitated formulation of a strong foreign policy by India to have its strategic interests safeguarded in the CARs at all costs. There was, therefore, a need for a foreign policy directed towards maximising the Indian sway in the CARs, besides safeguarding India's energy interests.

#### **DESIRED CONTOURS OF INDIAN FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS CENTRAL ASIA**

Amidst the prevailing upheavals in the geopolitical scenario in the Asian region arising out of organised terror orchestrated by Pakistan, with its open support to the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, it has been wisely suggested that India have a special envoy deputed to Central Asia to look after the strategic interests of India in the region<sup>6</sup>. However, it is felt that in order to derive the maximum mileage out of the Central Asian region, it would be an imperative that the fundamental tenets of Indian diplomacy with respect to Central Asia be guided by a number of cogent factors which may be conventionally diplomatic i.e. through diplomacy, as well as soft/non-diplomatic, albeit undeniably practical factors like addressing the basic requirements of poverty, illiteracy, poor health conditions, and generating employment, besides enhancing the cultural exchanges, etc.

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6. Ashok Sajjanhar, "As Central Asia Looks for Diverse Partners, India Should Expedite Engagement with the Region", *Firstpost*, June 2, 2023, <https://www.firstpost.com/opinion/as-central-asia-looks-for-diverse-partners-india-should-expedite-engagement-with-the-region-12682392.html>. Accessed on June 9, 2023.

There is, therefore, a definite requirement to ensure that the focus of the Indian foreign policy shifts to more multi-dimensional and multi-directional boulevards, covering various pure diplomatic dialogues and soft power-based activities, as stated above, while at the same time, also seeking the support of neighbours and big powers for realising our important national objectives. Success in this sphere is expected to place India more prominently in the forefront as a regional power with an upper hand in the entire regional geopolitical ecosystem.

In the 20th century, guided by an ambition to garner its strategic interests ex Central Asia, India espoused various initiatives such as “Extended Neighbourhood”, “Immediate and Strategic Neighbourhood” and the “Look North Policy” followed by the most important “Connect Central Asia” in 2012.<sup>7</sup> The insistent Indian diplomacy undertaken by the Indian government in the past few years with respect to Central Asia, has exhibited an active forward moving approach, focussed towards managing India’s strategic interests.

The first visit of the present Indian prime minister to the five Central Asian Republics in mid-2015 exhibited a manifest Indian resolve to strengthen the thitherto dormant diplomacy in the region and opened a number of new possibilities of various strategic engagements in the region, besides having propelled a sense of urgency towards geographically and commercially connecting with Europe and Central Asia.<sup>8</sup> It was also significant as China and Russia had already been engaged in Central Asia for long and India was a rather late entrant into the game.<sup>9</sup> The year 2021-22, while the Russians were busy due to their involvement in Ukraine, was an opportune time for India to focus on positioning its diplomacy towards the desired energy relationships with the CARs.<sup>10</sup>

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7. Martand Jha, “India’s Central Asia Policy: A Look Back at India-Central Asia Relations in the Post-Soviet Era”, *The Diplomat*, <https://thediplomat.com/2016/12/indias-connect-central-asia-policy-2/> December 2, 2016. Accessed on June 3, 2023.

8. Banquet speech by the Indian prime minister on July 13, 2015, <https://mea.gov.in/outgoing-visit-detail.htm?25468/Banquet+Speech+by+Prime+Minister+during+his+visit+to+Tajikistan+July+13+2015>. Accessed on June 4, 2023.

9. P Stobdan, “The Modi Factor in Central Asia”, IDSA Issue Brief, [https://www.idsa.in/issuebrief/TheModifactorinCentralAsia\\_pstobdan\\_240714](https://www.idsa.in/issuebrief/TheModifactorinCentralAsia_pstobdan_240714). Accessed on June 6, 2023.

10. Ibid.

Considering the peculiar international challenges arising out of constantly changing geopolitical situation, the desired diplomatic approach of India needs to be a judicious mix of the conventional and innovative diplomatic thinking which should mandatorily be multi-directional, all-encompassing and, above all, guided by the idea of comprehensively addressing the tenets of the Connect Central Asia Policy 2012.

The Indian foreign policy towards Central Asia could potentially include the following:

- Formation of a regional conglomerate consisting of nations like the USA, Russia and China, involved in harnessing the energy resources ex Central Asia, could be considered. This conglomerate may have a mutually beneficial drafted document with the consensus of all the members of the said conglomerate.
- The desired approach of the Indian foreign policy could explore creating and maintaining infrastructure across the entire terrain with the member nations, offering the techno-logistics expertise available with their respective public and private sectors. The responsibility to run this enterprise can be assigned to a jointly formulated body of experts, drawing members from all the nations involved in the activity. This body can monitor the progress of the project on a regular basis and apprise the concerned national governments about the impediments that may arise so that mid-course corrections can be adopted.
- Ways by which China can possibly be handled more effectively through trade relations can be assessed. Therefore, it is here that a better synergy of Indian and Chinese trade ambitions can be formalised into a well-defined business strategy based on mutual takeaways, not only with respect to Chabahar port but also linked to the trade relations of Indian and Chinese corporates with regards to other goods and services. However, given the inept handling of COVID-19 by China, the world and especially India finds it difficult to trust China.<sup>11</sup> Another painful issue is the

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11. Ashali Varma, "Why India and the World can Never Trust China Till it Becomes a Democracy", *The Times of India*, July 20, 2023, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/blogs/no-free-lunch/why-india-and-the-world-can-never-trust-china-till-it-becomes-a-democracy/>. Accessed on August 4, 2023.

fatal casualties of Indian soldiers during the skirmish in Galwan on June 15, 2020.<sup>12</sup> All these, in other words, imply that a cautious approach remains an inevitable requirement in dealing with China—the relations need to be steered carefully. Though China seems to have lost its credibility post the outbreak of COVID-19, with many nations having drastically reduced their imports ex China, this thought process merits a positive consideration. While countering China on the economic and military fronts may be an expensive proposition for India at the moment, the option of Indian diplomacy positively influencing the Chinese economic ambitions and possibly turning the Chinese diplomacy persuasively in favour of India may also be pondered upon. This would be guided primarily by the fact of China suddenly rising globally and shooting into economic prominence in the past few years.<sup>13</sup> For the success of any enterprise in the region, it would be imperative to take China along. In fact, Central Asia’s recently growing dependence on China seems to be slowly but certainly tilting the balance of power in the Central Asian region. This becomes further evident with China’s constantly increasing presence in the region.<sup>14</sup> This confidence emanates from the humble beginning marked by the meeting of the Indian prime minister and Chinese president on April 28, 2018, when they had agreed to launch a joint Indo-China project in economically weak Afghanistan.<sup>15</sup>

- The Indian foreign policy could perhaps aim at achieving and sustaining a fine balance between bilateral advantages arising out

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12. “Mood of the Nation Poll: 64% say India Cannot Trust China”, *India Today*, August 8, 2020, <https://www.indiatoday.in/mood-of-the-nation/story/motn-can-india-trust-china-ladakh-lac-standoff-1708888-2020-08-07>. Accessed on August 4, 2023.

13. Xiangmin Chen and Fakhmiddin Fazilov, “Re-centering Central Asia: ‘China’s New Great Game’ in the old Eurasian Heartland”, <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41599-018-0125-5>. Accessed on June 6, 2023.

14. “Central Asia’s Economic Evolution from Russia to China”, Stratfor, <https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/central-asia-china-russia-trade-kyrgyzstan-kazakhstan-turkmenistan-tajikistan-uzbekistan>, April 5, 2018. Accessed on June 6 2023.

15. “PM, Xi Jinping Commit to Cooperate Further in Area of Counter Terrorism: Highlights”, NDTV, <https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/pm-modi-in-china-live-updates-prime-minister-narendra-modi-and-chinese-president-xi-jinping-to-begin-1844101>, April 28, 2018. Accessed on June 7, 2023.

of favourable Indo-China trade relations, on the one hand, and Indo-Russian trade relations, on the other. A mutually win-win situation would be a desirable consideration in such a diplomatic ambition in today's scenario. With favourable Indo-Russian relations, on the one hand, and stable Indo-China ties, on the other, India definitely stands to gain handsomely in the long run. To compound the effects, with Japan also slowly pitching in with its huge possibilities of investment, the project of development of Chabahar port is likely to get positively accelerated.<sup>16</sup> Recently, even the US seems to have realised that the development of Chabahar port would bring strategic and long-term benefits to Afghanistan besides enhancing its connectivity with the outside world.<sup>17</sup>

- It is important for India to achieve and sustain forward looking vibrant diplomacy in the region, with India indirectly projecting itself as a regional power. This is another imperative which Indian diplomacy needs to aim at. As a modest beginning towards this, for his swearing-in on May 23, 2014, the Indian prime minister invited the leaders of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) nations, including Pakistan, which marked a first in the history of independent India.<sup>18</sup> It can be seen as a subtle onset of forward looking diplomacy by India taking a stance to play on the front foot. Such *joie-de-vivre* in diplomacy has been sustained till date to a large extent and India continues to move ahead, giving diplomacy a personal touch. Though it was criticised in many quarters, this surfaced when the Indian prime minister landed unannounced in Pakistan to meet his Pakistani counterpart on December 25, 2015, in a

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16. "Japan Interested in Chabahar Project", *The Economic Times*, <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/japan-interested-in-chabahar-project/articleshow/54166416.cms>, July 12, 2018. Accessed on June 7, 2023.

17. "Why the United States Should Support Chabahar for the Sake of Afghanistan", *South Asian Voices*, <https://southasianvoices.org/why-the-united-states-should-support-chabahar-for-the-sake-of-afghanistan/>, October 25, 2017. Accessed on June 8, 2023.

18. "8 World Leaders Who Got Narendra Modi's Invitation for Swearing in", *The Times of India*, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/8-world-leaders-who-got-Narendra-Modis-invitation-for-swearing-in/articleshow/35524046.cms>, May 23, 2014. Accessed on June 8, 2023.

move that stunned everyone.<sup>19</sup> A similar personal intimacy was showcased also during the visit of US President Barak Obama to India in January 2015 which took diplomacy to the level of excellent personal bonding.<sup>20</sup> There has been a series of such gestures shown by India while interacting with many leaders of the world be it US President Donald Trump or Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu. The latest example of India being honoured at the international level was on May 23, 2023, when the prime minister of Papua New Guinea greeted the Indian Prime Minister Modi when the latter arrived in the island to hold talks with the Pacific leaders<sup>21</sup>.

- It is also the need of the hour for the Indian foreign policy to follow an effective Track-Two public diplomatic route with respect to other member nations. It becomes important because the government of a nation needs to create an enabling environment to conduct the activities of public good.<sup>22</sup> Various Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) that include many academic, educational and Research and Development (R&D) interests show bright prospects of capturing the spirit, energy and the very texture of a resurgent India by utilising their clout.
- India can also bolster relations with the CARs through application of its soft power. With Indian films and songs being popular among in the Central Asian nations, the Indian film industry can also consider entering into cooperative arrangements with Central Asia and extend their expertise, besides using the region and perhaps the local talent for shooting of Indian films in the most exotic locales.

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19. "PM Modi Lands in Lahore on a Surprise Visit, Meets Pak PM Nawaz Sharif", *The Indian Express*, <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-news-india/pm-modi-lands-in-lahore-on-a-surprise-visit-meets-pak-pm-nawaz-sharif/>, December 25, 2015. Accessed on June 8, 2023.
20. "Modi-Obama Open Heart in Mann ki Baat, Share Values", *India Today*, <https://www.indiatoday.in/obama-in-india/story/modi-obama-on-radio-mann-ki-baat-air-india-us-ties-237627-2015-01-27>. Accessed on June 9, 2023.
21. "Papua New Guinea's Marape Touches PM Modi's Feet", *Hindustan Times*, May 21, 2023, <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/narendra-modi-papua-new-guinea-james-marape-touched-the-feet-video-news-101684673200462.html>. Accessed on June 9, 2023.
22. APJ Abdul Kalam and YS Rajan, *India 2020-A Vision for the New Millennium* (Penguin Random House India Private Limited, 2014), p. 289.

- It would be worthwhile to encourage the big construction corporate players of India e.g. NBCC, L&T, Tatas, etc. to go ahead and attract their Chinese, Russian and South Asian counterparts to invest in housing projects towards creating and sustaining a robust logistics infrastructure around the proposed pipeline network.
- The Indian foreign policy should aim at establishing active synergy among various other departments and ministries of the Government of India so as to further liberalise the Indian trade licensing regime and fine tune the Indian diplomatic and bureaucratic machinery to be sensitised for exercising greater flexibility in handling foreign investors.
- In addition to ONGC (V), GAIL, India Ports Global and IRCON, other Indian public sector players e.g. BSNL, SBI, CONCOR, NHAI, Air India, the Indian hospitality industry and IOCL, etc also should be sensitised and encouraged to extend their professional services in the Central Asian region, along the logistics support lines.
- The Indian foreign policy should aim at encouraging exchange of medical and educational facilities among the nations that are members in the said conglomerate. This would help especially those nations that may not possess adequate medical and educational facilities.
- The Indian foreign policy should focus upon establishing specialised multi-national professional bodies with the participation of talent from member nations to protect their mutual trade interests by preventing monopolistic trade practices. This is also likely to ensure healthy professional competition among the participating nations.<sup>23</sup>
- The Indian foreign policy should promote R&D in the areas of multi-modal transportation technologies through the creation of a multi-national body consisting of qualified techno-logistics experts from the member nations of the said conglomerate.
- The big corporate giants of India need to undertake the projects under Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in the

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23. Ibid.

infrastructurally weak member countries in the said conglomerate. The Indian vaccine diplomacy and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) may be assigned to the big corporate houses of India operating in Central Asia through their robust business enterprises.

- India should make efforts for the creation of multinational socio-cultural groups for achieving the cultural synergy among member nations to directly facilitate effective Track-Two diplomatic efforts.
- India should also make efforts for the creation of multi-national professional training establishments, especially in respect of the latest skill training for the youth of the member nations, as these are cardinal to help India emerge as a powerful nation.<sup>24</sup>

## CONCLUSION

It is evident that the time has arrived when Indian diplomacy needs to evolve with the changing times and redefine itself, so as to have a broader base, multi-dimensional and multi-pronged focus, and a highly professional, all inclusive and wide-ranging approach. But, at the same time, we must not lose sight of the fact that a number of neighbouring nations today are grappling with the grave problems of non-availability of even the most basic medical and educational facilities, and tackling these problems at the roots should be one of the primary objectives of the Indian foreign policy.

The development of logistics support lines following the concomitant creation of facilities and infrastructure in and around Chabahar port has actually provided a golden opportunity to India, which we should utilise, so as to achieve long-term national interests as well as international goodwill.

Last, but not the least, India as a whole, and Indian diplomacy in particular, may consider this opportunity in a broad long-term perspective and handle it extremely methodically, meticulously and intelligently, thereby, heading in the direction of achieving the short and long-term national objectives of India.

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24. *Ibid.*, p. 271.

