

# LEVERAGING ARTHASHASHTRA PRECEPTS TO DETERMINE A COURSE TO STEER FOR NDA 3.0

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In the happiness of his people lies the happiness of the king, in their welfare his welfare, whatever pleases himself, he shall not consider as good, but whatever pleases his people, he shall consider as good.

— *Arthashashtra*<sup>1</sup>

Good governance can be defined as a process of achieving and ensuring that public goods reach the lowest strata of society, with due consideration for the sensitivity and humane touch of the rules necessary to ensure the same. As India celebrated the dance of democracy with the third successive National Democratic Alliance (NDA) establishing itself at the helm of affairs, Pakistan sponsored terrorism showed its ugly face in Reasi, Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), leading to the loss of innocent lives.<sup>2</sup> Further, the ethnic conflict in

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1. RP Kangle, *The Kautilya Arthashashtra Part-III* (New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1965), p. 118.
2. Lieutenant General Sayed Ata Hasnain (Retd), "Reasi Attack: On J-K, India Must Redraw its Red Lines", *The Indian Express*, June 11, 2024.

Manipur which began in May 2023, continues to simmer, resisting any overtures to a symbiotic peace accord. The recent election of two pro-Khalistan sympathisers to the Lok Sabha has also rung alarm bells regarding synergising of separatists in Punjab.<sup>3</sup> Despite having a stable political leadership since the last decade and the recent election results fortifying it for another five years (albeit with a coalition) such intrinsic turmoil's exposes India's inability (yet) to completely arrest its internal security issues. Whilst NDA 3.0 has grasped power at the Centre, it has missed the goalpost of 'absolute power'. The coalition dynamics and ensuing compulsion to keep the flock together may shift priorities away from internal security which will have ramifications on the country's external foreign policy too. Therefore, taking recourse of our rich strategic heritage, the article leverages the *Arthashastra*, an ancient Indian epic on statecraft, expounding the intricacies of kingship, the art of government, and diplomacy, towards suggesting to the government, in its present coalition *avatar* a 'course to steer'.

## POWER AND GOVERNANCE

Power is inherently accompanied with suitably adapted definitions, primarily to justify the attainment of the end goal. In its simplest definition, power is A getting B to do something that B would not otherwise do.<sup>4</sup> Power is also understood as domination, where domination is exercise of power through command, and the probability that such command will be obeyed. Further, when legitimacy is ascribed by the participants, power can be endured and sustained over a period. In the Kautilyan framework, power and success are interrelated. Power is interpreted as possession of strength, and success is the attainment of happiness,<sup>5</sup> which thereby is the objective of using power. Ensuring (principally at the cost of one's natural enemy) an increase in power drives policy and associated tactics. Increase in power is intended as the preliminary to the

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3. Raakhi Jagga and Kamaldeep Singh Brar, "Punjab Elects Radical Preacher Amritpal and Indira's Assassin Son", *The Indian Express*, June 5, 2024.
  4. Robert A Dahl, "The Concept of Power", 1957, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Robert-A-Dahl#ref1178984>. Accessed on 1 August 2023.
  5. LN Rangarajan, *The Arthashastra* (Gurugram: Penguin Books, 1992), p. 525.

realisation of the ambition to conquer the world.<sup>6</sup> The *Arthashastra* elucidates that 'power' is of three types, and, therefore, is the ensuing success resulting from its use, which is correspondingly, intellectual, physical, and psychological.<sup>7</sup> These three types of power are:

- **Mantrashakti:** Power of good counsel.
- **Prabhavshakti:** Power derived from a prosperous treasury and a strong army.
- **Utsahshakti:** Power derived from valour, energy, and morale.

The *Arthashastra* compels us to introspect (before starting on a campaign or mission), whether the *vijigishu* (potential conqueror) is superior in three types of power or *shaktis vis-à-vis* his enemy.<sup>8</sup> A *vijigishu*, by projecting his power, through the appropriate usage of a foreign policy measure, makes progress. The extent to which the *vijigishu* is superior to his enemy in the three kinds of power is the extent to which he will be mighty and triumphant. Hence, the conqueror shall always endeavour to add to his own power and increase his happiness, whilst attempting to reduce the power of his enemies.<sup>9</sup> Amongst the three powers, the *Arthashastra* prioritises the usage of *mantrashakti*, i.e good counsel, analysis and judgement and other intangible factors dependent on intellect.<sup>10</sup>

Good governance is inextricably intertwined with the just use of power. The *Arthashastra* suggests that governed by his *dharma*, when the king undertakes *raksha* (protection of the state from internal conflict and external aggression) and *palana* (maintenance of law and order within the state and removal of hurdles to economic growth), he strives for attainment of *yogakshema* for his subjects.<sup>11</sup> In the construct of *yogakshema*, *yoga*, is the successful accomplishment of an object/activity, while *kshema* is its peaceful and undisturbed enjoyment.<sup>12</sup> Another distinguishing aspect of governance that the *Arthashastra* invokes is that the people have a worthy king/

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6. Kangle, n. 1, p. 254.

7. Ibid., p. 255.

8. Ibid., pp. 256-257.

9. Rangarajan, n. 5, p. 525.

10. Ibid., p. 508.

11. Kangle, n. 1, p. 118.

12. Ibid

leader, who has mastered the four sciences of philosophy, theology, economics and political science.<sup>13</sup> It is this entrusted king/leader who can uphold the sceptre (*danda*) on which the sustenance and progress of *Anvikshiki* (science of enquiry/philosophy), *Vedas* and *Varta* (economics) depend. The Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi, at the inauguration of the new Parliament building in May 2023, installed a golden sceptre in the Lok Sabha, behind the speaker's chair, reminding the nation of his promise towards them of a just and fair rule.<sup>14</sup>

### GOVERNANCE REJECTION: TREADING CONTINUITY WITH CAUTION

Interpretation of the election results to the 18th Lok Sabha indicate that the citizens of India have rejected the hubris of one leader, there is a resuscitation of coalition politics, and a stronger Opposition. What is also evident is that while numbers have added up to propel a third term for the incumbent government, the mandate has not. Viewed from a Kautilyan prism, the election results resonate with the non-attainment of the central objectives of *raksha*, *palana* and *yogakshema* by the incumbent government for its subjects, especially from the lower income group. It may also be fair to attribute the loss in the majority vote share to a demanding voter base, which, once having reaped the benefits of economic schemes [eg Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 (MGNREGA)], association with religious identities/activities (eg building of the Ram temple at Aydhoya) or caste-based ideology, persistently seeks more gratification, a daunting task for any political party to sustain. Therefore, an astute leader in a coalition government needs to tread with caution to maintain continuity. There are challenges of accountability and submission to the demands of coalition partners, braving a strengthened Opposition and the most difficult one of introspection as to what went wrong. Democracy, as it is defined today, may not be a necessary condition for good governance. Good

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13. Subrata K. Mitra and Michael Liebig, *Kautilya's Arthashastra: Classical Roots of Modern Politics in India* (New Delhi: Rupa Publications India Pvt Ltd, 2017), pp. 46-48.

14. Damini Nath, "Inauguration of New Parliament Begins with Havan, Sengol, Multi-Faith Prayer Service", *The Indian Express*, May 29, 2023.

governance is associated with the people running the show, the bureaucracy and the excellence of the people wielding power in the government. It is here that the *Saptanga* theory of the *Arthashastra* assumes significance and, as the succeeding paragraphs would expound, suggests the 'course to steer' for the new government.

### **SAPTANGA AND COURSE TO STEER**

The *Saptanga* theory is the conceptual foundation of the Kautilyan state and statecraft (from the domestic and foreign policy perspectives) and is expounded in detail in Books VI and VIII respectively. The seven constituent elements of the state (*prakritis*),<sup>15</sup> enumerated in accordance with their relative importance are: *swamin* (ruler), *amatya* (minister), *janapada* (territory, with people settled on it), *durga* (fortified capital), *kosa* (treasury), *danda* (armed force) and *mitra* (ally). The following key deductions can be drawn from the *prakritis* and their order:

- All seven *prakritis* constitute state power, not just armed might alone.
- State power is an aggregate of material (economic and military might) and non-material (political leadership, good governance through counsellors, morale, citizen productivity) variables.
- With the *swamin* (ruler) and *amatya* (council of ministers) as the top two, Kautilya lays a premium on political leadership and decision-making at the highest level. Therefore, *mantrashakti* (power of counsel) scores over *prabhavshakti* (power of the treasury and army) and *utsahshakti* (power of valour).<sup>16</sup>
- The positioning of the ally in the last priority, means that whilst the ally is important, he must be approached only when internal balancing through the first six fails to achieve the desired results.<sup>17</sup>
- A calamity affecting a constituent element higher in the order is more serious than one affecting a lower one; however, these are to be viewed on a case-to-case basis, duly factoring in the prevailing situational dynamics. For example, though the treasury is almost

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15. Kangle, n. 1, p. 127.

16. Kajari Kamal, "Statecraft and International Relations: Contemporary Lessons from Ancient India", Observer Research Foundation, <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/statecraft-and-international-relations/>. Accessed on August 14, 2023.

17. Ibid.

always important, there may be circumstances when a threat to the army should be considered more serious.<sup>18</sup>

### *Swamin*

The ruler/ king is the most important state factor as he alone is the 'independent variable', the other six *prakritis* being dependent on him.<sup>19</sup> The *Arthashastra* places a premium on the ruler's ability to learn, listen, memory retention, thorough understanding, rejecting false views and intentness on truth.<sup>20</sup> A nation-state can be considered to pass through three phases: status quo, decline and progress.<sup>21</sup> These phases, reflected in its constituent elements (*prakritis*) are an outcome of the policy approach adopted by the leader (conquest or consolidation). The ruler, fully conversant with the principles of statecraft, shall understand the conditions of progress, decline and status-quo, and apply the strategic method appropriate to each one in order to weaken or overwhelm the enemy.<sup>22</sup> While pushing for multi-polarity on the global stage may seem to be apparent, it is unlikely that NDA 3.0 will go in for consensus-building. This may imply that the use of the *danda* (with discrimination) through the law enforcement agencies may find more favour. Kautilya warns that when ill-awarded under the influence of greed or anger, or owing to ignorance, it would incite fury even among hermits and ascetics dwelling in forests, not to speak of householders.<sup>23</sup> From the *Arthashastra* perspective, the following are recommended:

- Individualistic personality to retreat to the background, thereby fortifying the belief that the ruler is truly the first servant of the state.
- Obviate placating subjects by implementing welfare schemes in 'mission mode'. Public policy must sustain multiple governments and not a specific government.
- Encourage multi-polarity not only externally, but also internally, thereby ending an over-centralised decision-making process.

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18. Rangarajan, n. 5, p. 103.

19. Mitra and Liebig, n. 13, pp. 76-80.

20. Rangarajan, n. 5, pp. 97-98.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 518.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 519.

23. Rangarajan, n. 5, pp. 97-98.

- The coercive power of the state (*dandaniti*) is to be administered justly, fulcrumed on *dharma* (moral good).

### *Amatya*

The work of the government is threefold: that which the king sees with his own eyes, that which he knows of indirectly through reports made to him, and that which he infers about work not done by knowing about work that has been done.<sup>24</sup> No ruler can govern alone due to the diversified nature of government work and the necessity of it having to be undertaken with simultaneity. Ministers, thus, form an important cog in the government machinery, a fact resonated equally by both the Kautilyan and contemporary modern government. As of December 2023, the Government of India had eight Cabinet Committees (some headed by the prime minister), having a mixed bag of Cabinet ministers.<sup>25</sup> In its third *avatar*, NDA3.0 has retained key ministries with the majority party, ensuring continuity of its incumbent ministers. This *leitmotif*, therefore, indicates that there was nothing wrong with the policies of past governance, especially that of the Internal Security, Defence, Finance and Foreign Affairs Ministries. The Opposition is not fully off the mark when it says that people voted for change, and if the same ministers continue to steer public policies through the same portfolios, democracy appears to be under threat.<sup>26</sup> From the *Arthashastra's* perspective, the following are recommended:

- Support each minister with an equally competent bureaucrat, insulated from any form of favour, inclination, and pressure.
- Election results, apart from being indicative of public sentiments, also reflect the extent of public policy implementation. Therefore, the *amatya* and councillors must adapt as per the circumstances. Talking to the man on the street and never letting own preferences cloud judgement could go a long way in reducing tensions rather than playing party politics.

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24. Ibid., p. 168.

25. Cabinet Secretariat, <https://cabsec.gov.in/councilofministers/cabinetcommittees>. Accessed on June 23, 2024.

26. P. Chidambaram, "Not Modi 3.0 but Modi 2.1", *The Indian Express*, June 16, 2024.

- Respect the views of leaders of the Opposition if not for anything but the fact that a substantial faction of the country's men and women have voted for him/ her.
- Tap into the complementary symbiotic requirements of the coalition which may help the flock to stay together. As an analogy, the two are like nuclear states, fully aware of the mutually assured destruction if either party falters.

### *Janapada and Durga*

There is a deviation from the Kautilian construct vis-a-vis the contemporary interpretation of *janapada* and *durga*. As per the *Arthashastra*, *janapada* is the entire population minus the fortified capital, which is the *durga*.<sup>27</sup> In contemporary India, the entire population, whether or not residing in the capital, holds equal significance. In the Kautilian era, when monarchy was the form of government, and territories were unsettled, acquisition/expansion of land through conquest/consolidation was seen as a means to establish supremacy and keeping the economic engine chugging (through greenfield settlements). The present era is premised on democratic principles and clearly demarcated land borders. Any form of territorial expansion done unilaterally is an act of war/conflict, e.g. the Russia-Ukraine war, India-China border standoff. The Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS) brings out that the two key factors which resonated voter discontent during the 18th Lok Sabha elections were unemployment and inflation. Additionally, the report brings out that economic conditions for the population have either remained the same or worsened.<sup>28</sup> The verdict of the Indian *janapada* who hold the reins every five years to New Delhi (*durga*) seems to associate the incumbent government with a product brand which was introduced in 2014, grew and matured till 2019 and now has plateaued, so as to eventually decline. From the *Arthashastra's* perspective, the following are recommended:

- Ensure that the dream of a *Viksit Bharat* is realised by infusing quality in the Human Resource (HR). This would imply firing

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27. Mitra and Liebig, n. 13, pp. 84-88.

28. Raj Chengappa, "Striking a Balance", *India Today*, June 17, 2024.

on all cylinders in the capacity building sectors of education and skill development.

- Reconsider delimitation of constituencies to increase Lok Sabha seats.
- Acknowledge that polarising of the *janapada* on caste and religion-based ideologies is on its wane. An educated, self-aware, and enterprising voter base wants tangible results rather than just promises.

### *Kosha*

In the Kautilian era, agriculture, cattle rearing, and trade were three major forms of economic activities. The fiscal aim being to maximise state revenue, which, in turn, must exceed the government spending. Wealth alone created more wealth and was necessary to support and sustain a formidable army,<sup>29</sup> which, in turn, could exercise the monarch's rule over his subjects and avoid *matsya nyaya* (rule of the fish). The accumulation of wealth by the state was also made possible by the fact that the king was the principal and residual owner of all property. After World War II, several East Asian countries adopted an export-based approach towards becoming developed economies. Whilst the global share of exports of both India and China was 0.6 percent in the 1970s, in 2022, China captured approximately 12 per cent of the global share in contrast to India's 2.5 per cent.<sup>30</sup> India, reeling under the clutches of the 'licence raj' liberated itself only in 1991, after embracing economic reforms. An important challenge with NDA 3.0 is job creation. Almost 89 percent of all unemployed Indians are between the ages of 15-29. The problem is further exacerbated with poor quality jobs and unregulated wages.<sup>31</sup> From the *Arthashastra's* perspective, the following are recommended:

- Capitalise on our excellence in export of services.
- Factor in *Atmanirbhar Bharat* vis-a-vis cost-effectiveness to achieve it. Intrinsic capacity-building must not lead to poor import substitution.

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29. Rangarajan, n. 5, p. 55.

30. C Rangarajan and DK Srivastava, "Journey to 2047", *The Indian Express*, June 1, 2024.

31. Mitali Mukerjee, "What Modi 3.0 Means for the Market and Economy", *The Hindu*, June 10, 2024.

- Technology is bound to displace labour. Thus, we need to be cautious of 'jobless growth' (due to artificial intelligence, automation, etc).
- Ensure supply chain resilience.
- Develop a mix of sectors (manufacturing, agriculture, tourism, education, healthcare, etc) which stimulate economic growth on a multi-pronged approach.
- Extend financial benefits to states ruled by the Opposition.

### *Danda*

The just and measured use of coercive state power is the foundation on which *dandaniti* is premised. Kautilya states, "The king severe with the rod becomes a source of terror to his subjects, the king mild with the rod is despised. The king just with the rod is honoured".<sup>32</sup>The *Arthashastra* expounds three kinds of *yuddha* (war).<sup>33</sup>

- *Prakasa-Yuddha* (Open Fight): The war is fought at a predetermined place and time, according to 'chivalrous rules'.
- *Kuta-Yuddha* (Concealed Fighting): Irregular warfare involving ambushes, raids and strikes behind enemy lines.
- *Tusnim-Yuddha* (Silent Fight): Involving secret agents, covert operations, targeted assassinations, sabotage, and occult practices.

Since the Kargil conflict of 1999, India has not engaged in any form of *prakasa yuddha* with any of its inimical neighbours. India's response to Pakistan for its misadventures in Uri and Pulwama during 2016 and 2019 respectively can qualify as *kutta yuddha* in the reign of NDA 2.0. However, despite these bold manoeuvres, India considers the sweeter than honey relationship between Pakistan and China as a major security challenge. Several internal security issues such as rise of separatist Khalistani factions, unresolved ethnic violence in Manipur, exodus of people from Myanmar to India, shift in terrorism from Kashmir to Jammu, etc continue to burden our security forces, apart from being resource intensive too. From the *Arthashastra's* perspective of protecting our sovereignty, a few recommendations for our armed forces are as follows:

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32. Mitra and Liebig, n. 13, pp. 50-51.

33. Kangle, n. 1, pp. 258-259.

- Strengthen nuclear deterrence by enhancing assets under the Strategic Force Command.<sup>34</sup>
- Recalibrate the Strategic Partnership (SP) model which involves building defence manufacturing capabilities in India through foreign collaborations.
- Promulgate the National Security Strategy and raise the three Theatre Commands.
- Upgrade the defence space and cyber agencies which were raised in 2019 in Commands, along with establishing a dedicated rocket force.
- Reassess the *Agnipath* scheme to improve the quality of intake and retention of the trained human resource.
- Reduce import dependencies on one nation by diversifying defence imports from friendly foreign countries.

### *Mitra*

In terms of ranking, *mitra* (ally in foreign policy) comes last. This is attributable to it being considered as an 'external' factor and not directly related to the intrinsic health of a state.<sup>35</sup> It is considered as a temporary expedient in order to gain time for advancing the internal power. Based on the health of the intrinsically determined six *prakritis*, the relative bargaining power of a state is ascertained and, accordingly, its ability to exploit to its advantage the state factors of its ally. The *Arthashastra* formulates six foreign policy (*sadgunyas*) options for an active and expanding state in a multi-state setting when confronted with a hostile state. The application of these policies is intertwined with the various stages through which a state progresses (status quo, decline, progress) and, hence, reflects the state of the *prakritis*, the constituent elements. Apropos, the *sadgunyas* relate to *saptanga*, as the correlation of relative strength dictates the choice of foreign policy.<sup>36</sup> Alongside the six policies, there are four *upayas* (*saman, dana, bheda and danda*), which are means to overcome

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34. Press Information Bureau, <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2017114>. Accessed June 27, 2024.

35. Mitra and Liebig, n. 13, p. 95.

36. Kajari Kamal, *Kautilya's Arthashastra: Strategic Cultural Roots of India's Contemporary Statecraft* (New York: Routledge, 2023), pp. 20-21.

opposition<sup>37</sup> and guide the selection of foreign policy. *Upayas*, along with *sadgunyas*, sum up the ways to achieve *yogakshema* (end goal) by utilising the means of *prakritis* and *anvikshiki*.

The *Arthashashtra*, whilst expounding the comparative merits of the six *sadgunyas*, suggests the following foreign policy preferences.<sup>38</sup>

- **When the degree of progress is the same, peace is to be preferred over war.** It can, thus, be inferred that there is preference to address security concerns through good governance and sound administration internally and through building alliances, conciliation, and diplomacy externally.
- **When preparing for war, a policy of neither peace nor war is to be preferred.** It can, thus, be inferred that next in the hierarchy is to adopt an offensive defence approach. War is the last resort.
- **Between the dual policy and seeking shelter, the dual policy is to be preferred.** The reason is because in adopting a dual policy, a state has the bandwidth to promote its interests, as against being submissive whilst seeking shelter.

From the *Arthashashtra's* perspective, the following foreign policy approach is recommended vis-a`-vis other nations (Table 1).

**Table 1: Recommended Foreign Policy Approach from *Arthashashtra's* Perspective**

Ser.No	Country	Remarks
1.	Pakistan	Remain assertive with a non-negotiable approach to terrorism. Despite the new regime in Pakistan reaching out to the prime minister of India, the recent terrorist attacks in Jammu and Kashmir (2024) only demonstrate that until Pakistan mends its ways of state sponsored terrorism, talks will not happen. The <i>upayas</i> of <i>danda</i> and <i>bheda</i> , with the foreign policy approach of <i>dvaidhibhava</i> and <i>vigraha</i> (if required) may be considered.

37. Kangle, n.1, p. 255.

38. Rangarajan, n. 5, p. 530.

Ser.No	Country	Remarks
2.	China	Our border challenge is on the path of recovery, much of which is attributable to the persistent efforts by various government ministries since the Galwan episode. As India continues to remain assertive on disengagement, followed by de-escalation, recent interactions between the Indian foreign and defence ministers with their Chinese counterparts are suggestive of a favourable future course to steer. Apropos, the <i>upayas</i> of <i>danda</i> and <i>bheda</i> , with the foreign policy approach of <i>dvaidhibhava</i> and <i>yana</i> may be considered.
3.	Bangladesh	It is an ally that owes its birth and liberation to India. Whilst it may currently be preoccupied in making the new political regime (post ousting of Sheikh Hasina) globally acceptable, it may not feel obliged any longer to India. The religious persecution of the resident Hindu minority community resonates with its present condescending demeanour. Notwithstanding, India must continue to cultivate it as a buffer state, through cooperation on almost all fronts such as defence, railways, infrastructure, healthcare, and connectivity projects. The <i>upayas</i> of <i>sama</i> and <i>dana</i> , with the foreign policy approach of <i>samdhi</i> and <i>asana</i> may be considered.
4.	Sri Lanka	Having tasted the bitter waters of the debt trap laid by China and seeing its rescue through responsible financial aid by India, Sri Lanka appears to be coming back towards India. We need to remind our island neighbour that we stand resolute with its people and government without expecting any reciprocal obligation. The <i>upayas</i> of <i>sama</i> and <i>dana</i> , with the foreign policy approach of <i>asana</i> may be considered.

Ser.No	Country	Remarks
5.	Maldives	The change of guard in the island nation signalled a pro-China and a recalibrated approach to India. The narrative became significant when Indian military personnel manning air assets were replaced with civilian technical staff. The presence of the Maldivian president at the swearing-in ceremony of the new NDA 3.0 signals a rapprochement, which must be capitalised upon. The <i>upayas</i> of <i>sama</i> , <i>dana</i> and <i>bheda</i> with the foreign policy approach of <i>samdhi</i> and <i>asana</i> can be considered.
6.	Bhutan	The nation sandwiched between two Asian giants (India and China) faces the predicament of choosing one. India has always supported Bhutan financially. Having committed INR 10,000 crore over five years from 2024 onward, Bhutan is the country drawing the maximum external aid package from the Indian coffers. Bhutan is critical and extremely important to India to act as a counterweight to China. The <i>upayas</i> of <i>sama</i> and <i>dana</i> , with the foreign policy approach of <i>samdhi</i> and <i>asana</i> may be considered.
7.	Myanmar	India is finding it extremely difficult to engage with the Junta in view of its preoccupation in overcoming internal armed resistance. The <i>upayas</i> of <i>sama</i> and <i>dana</i> , with the foreign policy approach of <i>samdhi</i> and <i>asana</i> interlaced with <i>dvaidhibhava</i> may be considered.

Ser.No	Country	Remarks
8.	Nepal	Nepal, having shown its susceptibility to Chinese influence, especially amongst the senior political leadership, is also plagued with having forgotten the benevolence of India. The <i>upayas</i> of <i>sama</i> , <i>dana</i> and <i>bheda</i> , with the foreign policy approach of <i>samdhi</i> and <i>asana</i> , interlaced with <i>dvaidhibhava</i> may be considered.
9.	USA	India's relationship with the USA is growing on a very strong foundation. The numerous initiatives springing up between the nations on technological, defence and space cooperation stand testimony to a beaming bilateral future. The <i>upayas</i> of <i>sama</i> and <i>dana</i> , with the foreign policy approach of <i>samdhi</i> and <i>asana</i> , interlaced with <i>sambhuya yana</i> may be considered.
10.	Russia	Russia has been a long standing and time-tested partner for India. Development of India-Russia relations has been a key pillar of India's foreign policy. However, the war in Ukraine is testing this bond, with the Western countries asking India to condemn Russia's actions. India, thus, far has deflected these difficult questions but is slowly running out of options. It is, thus, not surprising, that India is diversifying its defence and energy needs so as to not be dependent exclusively on Russia. The <i>upayas</i> of <i>sama</i> and <i>dana</i> , with the foreign policy approach of <i>samdhi</i> and <i>asana</i> may be considered.

Source: Recommendations by the author.

## CONCLUSION

The *Arthashastra*, through its inclusive amalgamation of all instruments of power and realist enunciation of a nation's interests in clear, elaborate, and practical terms, serves as a comprehensive reference towards estimating a nation's comprehensive national

power and articulating its foreign policy. Attributable to the highly complex, volatile, ambiguous, and dynamic current and future strategic environments, no single text/treatise or strategy can provide an implementable solution. Apropos, the article has premised its approach by using the *Arthashastra*, which builds on a state's strengths and provides the 'Course to Steer' that its policy-makers can adopt when faced with situations in the security and foreign policy domain. The ancient Indian statecraft of *Arthashastra* with its concepts of *saptanga* and *sadgunyais* is still relevant in contemporary times and can provide for the newly elected NDA 3.0 a 'Course to Steer'.