

## KAUTILYAN GEOPOLITICS AND INDIA'S EXTENDED NEIGHBORHOOD POLICY: A CASE OF PERSIAN GULF

Dr. Asia Karim<sup>1</sup>  
Nusrat Karim<sup>2</sup>

### ABSTRACT

*This paper is aimed at examining India's foreign policy orientation towards the Persian Gulf within the framework of Kautilya's Mandala theory from Arthashastra. By doing this the study highlighted the development of alliances and spheres of influence within the parameters of conventional realpolitik. India's Look East policy received wide attention from analysts. But India's 'Look West Policy', specifically focusing on its approach towards the Persian Gulf Region within the conventional strategic framework, lacked the due attention. New Delhi is aimed at forging a close partnership with Riyadh while at the same time balancing its traditional closeness with Tehran. This strategic objective is based on the Kautilyan principle of 'skilful manoeuvring' between several 'circles' of states. This paper analysed the impacts of great power rivalry and emerging trends in energy security on the varying patterns of Indo-Gulf interactions. The main argument is that India's Look West/Act West approach is not only a reaction to various regional and global developments but is also deeply rooted in traditional political philosophy, which has historically informed strategic discussions within Indian policy circles. This assertion is supported by multiple public statements, diplomatic communications, trade statistics, and strategic alliances. Reassessment of Kautilya's concept provides a unique cultural perspective. This offers a deeper insight into India's engagements with the Persian Gulf.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Mandala Theory, Kautilya, Extended Neighbourhood, Look-West Policy, and India-Gulf Relations.*

### INTRODUCTION

India has a desire to exert influence beyond the confines of its own contiguous maritime and land-based zones of interest (Bandyopadhyaya, 2003). The focus on the Persian Gulf underlines the purpose behind New Delhi's 'Extended Neighbourhood Policy' as it seeks to strategically adjust to areas of significance for India's economy, security, and energy requirements (Malik, 2022). This paper analysed India's role in the Persian Gulf through the prism of the geopolitical strategy developed by Kautilya in Mandala Theory (Chanakya, 1915). This study used the Mandala concept to understand the current forms of policy being pursued by India in the Persian Gulf (Ghoah, 2022). This study fundamentally examines two principal enquiries: How much does Kautilya's Mandala

---

<sup>1</sup> Assistant Professor, Riphah Institute of Public Policy, Riphah International University. She can be reached at [dr.asia@myu.edu.pk](mailto:dr.asia@myu.edu.pk).

<sup>2</sup> MPhil Scholar, Department of International Relations, MY University, Islamabad.

theory help us understand India's foreign policy towards Saudi Arabia and Iran? How do India's looking-west and extended neighbourhood initiatives correspond with the tenets of Kautilyan statecraft? This paper employs a qualitative analytical framework to scrutinise India's foreign policy orientations towards Saudi Arabia and Iran. The framework is fundamentally grounded in the Mandala theory, which posits that nations function within concentric circles of friends, rivals, and allies, asserting that diplomacy is driven by strategic necessity rather than ideological or ethical considerations (Mishra, 2012).

In the Persian Gulf, Saudi Arabia (Sunni conservatism) and Iran (revolutionary Shiaism) represent sharply contrasting political and ideological paradigms. India successfully tackled this divide by pragmatically balancing its relations between the two. It developed independent working relations with both, ensuring that collaboration with one will never impact relationships with others. Thus, it is successfully engaging with both countries in the best national interests. The heavy dependence on energy and labour, plus the vital sea lanes connecting the Gulf to India, adds gravity to this inquiry (Brewster, 2016). This article applies Kautilya's Mandala Theory to track India's shifting ties with Riyadh and Tehran. It observes how realpolitik shapes the country's 'Extended Neighbourhood' and 'Look West' drives. One sees in India's strategy a blend of global adaptation and the domestic strategic logic of the Arthashastra. Analysts have dissected the Look East policy thoroughly. Yet the westward gaze remains unexamined through indigenous frameworks. By asking how Kautilyan tenets explain India's place in the Western Indian Ocean, this research fills a clear gap in the field.

### KAUTILYA'S ARTHASHASTRA: STRATEGIC GUIDE TO INDIAN FOREIGN POLICY

Chanakya Kautilya lived in the 3rd century CE and advised the Mauryan Emperor Chandragupta (Rangachari, 2022). His strategy enabled the dynasty to secure control over the entire Indian subcontinent (Wolpert, 1977, p. 59). Kautilya wrote the Arthashastra around 4 BCE and informed statesmen how to establish, govern, and expand a territory (Vittal, 2011). He chose the Hindi term for 'circle' to describe the concept (Kamal, 2023). The model describes state behaviour in international politics. Kautilya envisioned a core state surrounded by interlocking, concentric rings. He labelled every neighbour as a friend, enemy, or neutral party. For each, he outlined specific tactics (Mishra, 2012). The conceptual diagram below illustrates this structure.

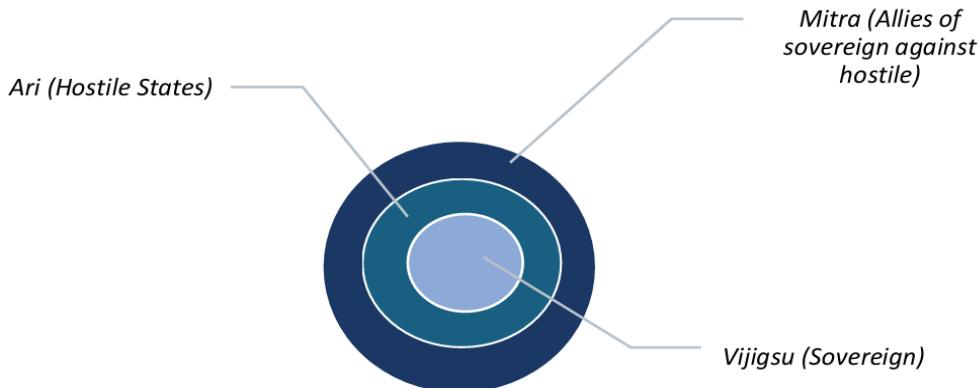


Figure: The Mandala Theory of Kautilya

Kautilya's articulation that "the immediate neighbour state is a natural enemy while the neighbour of neighbours is a friend" is precisely encapsulated by this figure (Mishra, 2012, p. 13). The "six-fold policy" opted by governments for employing for their interaction with other entities is based on the domain elaborated by Kautilya in Book 7 of the Arthashastra (Kautilya Chanakya, 1915). The following diagram illustrates the six-fold policy options of Chankiya.

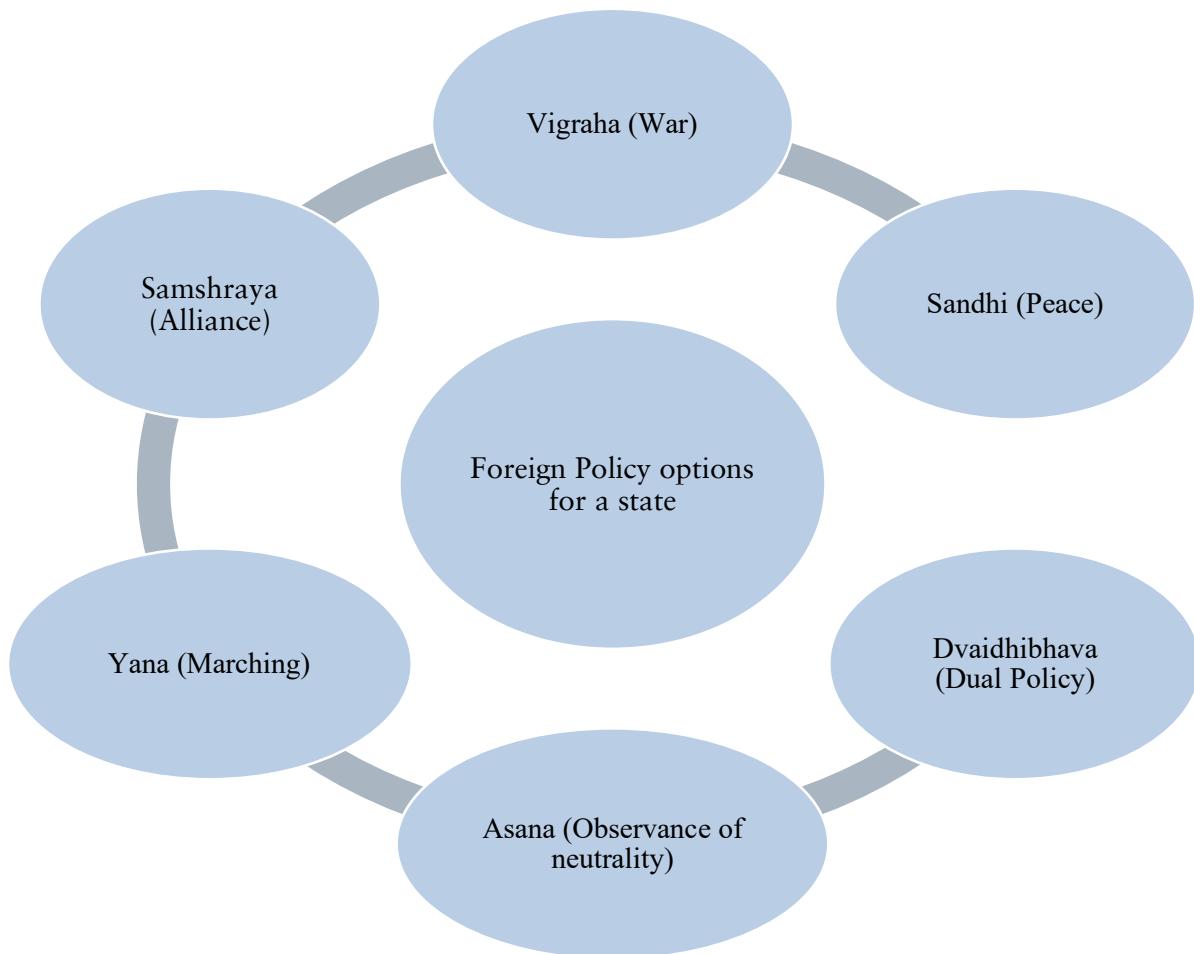


Figure: Six-Fold Policy Options of Chankiya

Apart from the above-mentioned foreign policy options, Kautilya also suggested "double policy". By double policy, Kautilya means "negotiating a peace accord but at the same time supporting insurgent elements in others' entities" (Chanakya, 1915, p. 370). Kautilya further guides: "The inferior should seek peace with the superior; the superior may wage war if confident in their strength. Neutrality is advised if one believes neither can harm the other. Those with sufficient strength should confront the enemy, while the incapable must seek protection. If assistance is deemed necessary to achieve a specific goal, one should negotiate peace with some and engage in conflict with others." (Kautilya

Chanakya, 1915, pp. 370-371). When making decisions, a smart leader should give the present situation a lot of thought.

Kautilya's Arthashastra has consistently served as the foundational doctrine of Indian strategic thought. Arthashastra is based on the principles of realpolitik, power projection and pragmaticism, which shape Indian interactive patterns in the global arena. Indian leaders often expressed these views. For example: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Shivshankar Menon (former national security advisor) used Kautilya's terminologies like 'Rajdharma' (the obligations of a ruler) and 'Mandala theory' (Menon, 2016). Additionally, official documents like "Indian Maritime Security Strategy" (Integrated Head Quarters, 2015), "Neighbourhood First" and "Act East" (Teckchandani, 2025) reflect the concentric circles of power and alliance formation as anticipated by Kautilya. Prior to the end of the Cold War, Indian foreign policy was primarily concerned with South Asia. However, as the period of bipolarity was ending, the era of globalization began and India needed to develop a broader strategic vision for its foreign policy. As part of the Annual Report for 2000-1, the Ministry of External Affairs officially defined the term "extended neighbourhood" and a conceptual broadening of India's foreign policy focus (Ministry of External Affairs, 2001).

New Delhi made this transition due to the recognition of an interconnectedness of India's national security and economic interests; in order to secure both its national security and economic interests, India had to consider looking beyond South Asia. This is how India's "extended neighbourhood" concept emerged (Shina, 2022). Former prime minister Manmohan Singh had already identified the importance of India's "extended neighbour" (Mishra A. B., 2022). Manmohan Singh stated that all of India's broader Asian counterparts have major implications for India's economic development and therefore are important (Mishra A. B., 2022). The term 'extended neighbours' is defined as the entire area of the IOR, including the many island states and countries located in the region. This includes Southeast Asia, Africa, the Persian Gulf, and Eastern Asia, which are but a few of the many (extended neighbour) areas of the world that are important to Indian objectives. When analysing the nature of Indian foreign policy orientation and how it has been executed, its diplomatic manoeuvrings can be understood by way of "three concentric geographic circles", which are illustrated in the diagram provided below (Yoshihara, 2008).

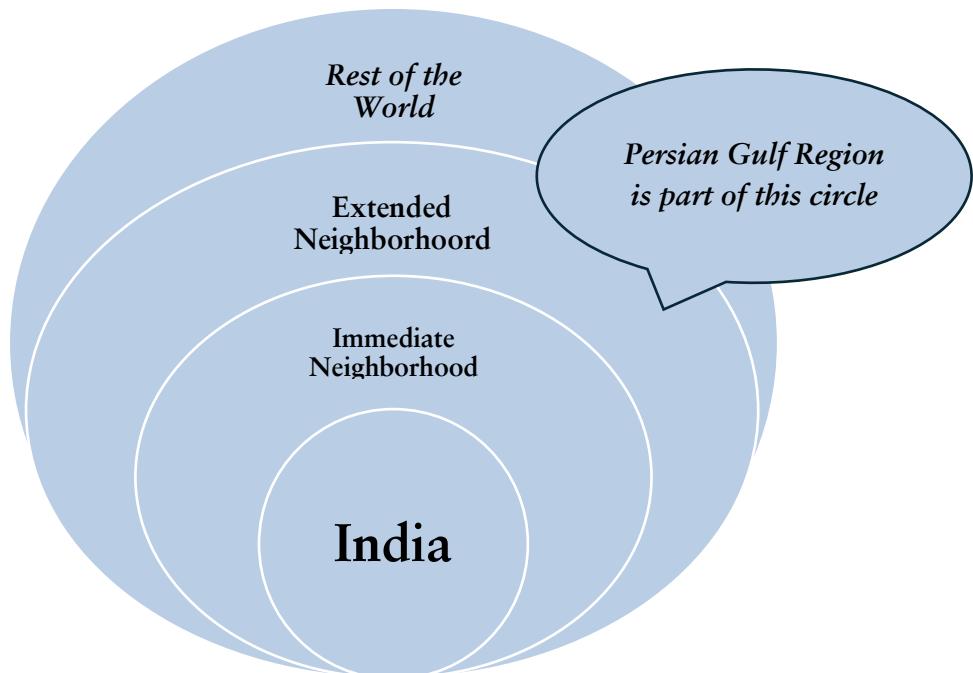


Figure: Depicting India's Neighborhood

### SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PERSIAN GULF FOR INDIA

Policy makers in New Delhi view the Persian Gulf as 2nd tier in their strategic thinking. India has an overwhelming dependence on the region for much of its energy security. India receives almost 60% of its petroleum oil and nearly 80% of its liquefied natural gas from the Gulf states. Historically, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Iran (before sanctions) have been India's primary suppliers of this energy resource. As India continues to grow economically, the continuous flow of this energy source becomes a prerequisite for India's survival (David, 2016).

### MANMOHAN SINGH AND INDIA'S LOOK WEST POLICY

Manmohan Singh's government focused on the Gulf region as part of their foreign policy, which is what makes his term different than all others before him. The Look West Policy, announced by New Delhi in 2005, signalled the first official and formal diplomatic engagements with countries in Western Asia and the Middle East. India's heavy dependence on Gulf oil and financial markets necessitated this new direction. Mr Singh declared during the unveiling of the initiative, "The Gulf Region is a basic element of the natural economic area of India, just like South Asia and Southeast Asia" (Solanki, 2024). Singh noted that the "Look East" strategy had already produced tangible results, establishing stronger connections with Southeast Asia; therefore, he wanted to do the same with West Asia, particularly with the Gulf littoral (Harsh V. Pant, 2023). Manmohan Singh's administration understood that to effectively protect an increasingly expansive geostrategic space, it needed to assign naval resources to accomplish the task. India issued its first-ever maritime doctrine in 2004. The doctrine served as a basis for the 2007 strategy paper titled "Freedom to Use the Seas: India's Maritime Military Strategy." By 2009, the Indian Naval Headquarters issued a revised version of the doctrine, which combined the ideas expressed in prior

versions (Integrated Headquarters, 2009, p. 6). The most recent volume described its national goals and identified coastal defence and security of trade (Integrated Headquarters, 2009, pp. 63-64). The doctrine states that the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz are primary operational areas (Integrated Headquarters, 2009, p. 68).

### INDIA'S LOOK WEST POLICY: DURING THE MODI REGIME

Since 2014, Narendra Modi has transformed the policy that the “Link West” strategy would replace the “Look West” strategy, specifically focusing on the Gulf region in doing so (Burton, 2019). Modi planned to create certainty and eliminate “strategic ambiguity” toward the Gulf nations with the Link West Policy (Hall, 2020, p. 6). The Link West Strategy has the following key objectives:

- New Delhi will base its relationships with West Asian states upon the capacity to deliver tangible returns.
- India will remain neutral and uninvolved in regional disputes and conflicts.
- New Delhi will maintain a calculated distance from all foreign powers' involvement in West Asia (Anas, 2021).

Modi viewed bilateral relationships as paramount and considered them superior to multilateral approaches to regional planning. By using direct government-to-government relationships and bypassing regional stances that may damage India's national interests, Modi has avoided the risk of creating tensions between countries with whom India desires to have friendly and mutually beneficial relationships (Anas, 2021). Indian Foreign Minister S. Jaishankar suggested that the government is now seeking to expand Indo-Gulf relations beyond simply oil and humanitarian aid and is now actively exploring other avenues for cooperation (Times, 2024). Modi visited Riyadh in April 2016; in turn, Muhammad Bin Salman visited India in February 2019 (Embassy of India, 2020). These high-level visits are indicative of the importance of the Gulf region to Modi's foreign policy strategy. Gulf officials made frequent reciprocal calls, indicating a clear interest among regional states to pursue a relationship with New Delhi (Brewster, 2016). Due to the significance of the waterways connecting India to the Persian Gulf, the Modi government developed a maritime security strategy in 2015. The strategy discussed the primary and secondary areas of maritime interest for India. India's heavy reliance on hydrocarbon imports from the Gulf, along with the significant market for Indian human resources, led to West Asia – particularly the Persian Gulf – being identified as the area of primary interest (Integrated Headquarters, 2015, p. 32).

### INDIA'S EXTENDED NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICY: SAUDI ARABIA AND IRAN

In the late 1950s, the Persian Gulf region gained significance for India with the discovery of oil and a subsequent labour market. During the Cold War, India started paying attention to its extended neighbours in Eastern and Western Asia.

#### ➤ INDO-SAUDI RELATIONS

The Look West policy of India, initiated during Manmohan Singh's tenure, culminated in the significant 2006 visit of Saudi King Abdullah to New Delhi (MOEA, 2006). This visit culminated in the “Delhi Declaration.”. This declaration formed the basis

for the strategic partnership between Saudi Arabia and India, and they agreed to enhance cooperation in politics, trade, energy, education, and information technology (MOEA, 2006). Manmohan Singh visited Saudi Arabia in 2010, which resulted in the "Riyadh Declaration"; this joint understanding expanded cooperation into a full strategic partnership (Pradhan, 2013). Since 2015, there have been increased levels of activity in all three areas: the political, economic and security sectors. In March 2016, the Saudi Foreign Minister arrived in India for high-level talks with his counterpart. At these meetings, the two sides reviewed and assessed political relationships, economic needs, and security concerns (Vaid, 2016).

Prime Minister Narendra Modi solidified this new strategic alignment when he travelled to Saudi Arabia in April 2016 (MOEA, 2016). At that time, the two governments had agreed to develop plans and programs for expanding cooperation in key priority areas. Plans were made for the two countries to work together on issues such as cybersecurity, maritime safety and commercial exchanges. Additionally, the Saudi government committed to investing in India's domestic development projects. These investments are being used to finance the construction of infrastructure, including port facilities, shipping and railroads/roads, to support New Delhi's economic growth through investment in infrastructure. The MOFA established the "India-Saudi Business Council" in February 2015. It was designed to promote and facilitate investment opportunities, create new joint venture opportunities and promote long-term trade relationships between India and Saudi Arabia (Ashwarya, 2023). By 2019, the political and strategic cooperation between India and Saudi Arabia reached a new level.

During his trip to India, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman announced that the two countries would establish Strategic Partnership Councils (SPCs) to oversee policy coordination related to technology, energy, security and investment. As a result of this announcement, the relationship between India and Saudi Arabia has evolved from being solely focused on energy trade to encompassing a wide range of cooperative activities (Bakr, 2021). As previously mentioned, energy and trade serve as the fundamental building blocks of this cooperative relationship. Saudi Arabia occupies a prominent position in the global energy export market. India relies heavily on foreign sources for its energy needs. The Modi Administration viewed Saudi Arabia as a critical partner in achieving the goal of meeting India's domestic energy demands. Saudi Arabia currently accounts for a substantial percentage of the crude oil supplied to India. As of 2025, Saudi Arabia has provided 640,000 barrels per day (bpd) of crude oil to India (IEA, 2025). This supply provides a large portion of India's energy needs and also helps power the country's electrical generating plants.

However, the Modi Administration did attempt to shift the focus of the economic partnership beyond simply being dependent upon hydrocarbons. Policymakers attempted to attract Saudi capital into the manufacturing and technology sectors and also attempted to increase the volume of bilateral trade between the two countries. This effort represents an area where the interests of the two countries converge. New Delhi seeks to achieve financial and energy stability. In contrast, Riyadh seeks to expand its economic foundation and penetrate substantial South Asian markets. Despite demographic changes in the Kingdom, Indians remain the largest ethnic minority in the country and make up about 10–

13% of the population (Jain, 2025). Additionally, remittances to India from Saudi Arabian workers have continuously exhibited durability. Between 2014 and 2017, annual remittances fluctuated within the range of \$3.1 billion to \$3.3 billion. In 2024-25, remittances achieved a notable turning point, totalling \$135.46 billion (Mint, 2025). Security agreements were established, and joint military exercises such as "Al-Mohed Al-Hindi" and the first-ever India-Saudi joint land forces exercise "EX-SADA Tanseeq" were initiated. This increase represents a notable progression in defence collaboration between the two nations (NEXTIAS, 2025).

#### ➤ INDO-IRAN RELATIONS

The geostrategic significance of Iran shaped India's "Look West" approach. The 2001 Indian PM visit to Tehran and the subsequent "Tehran Declaration" improved the diplomatic ties between the two (Bhat, 2018). The establishment of an Indian consulate at Bandar Abbas in 2002 increased India's outreach to the Strait of Hormuz and the Persian Gulf. Mohammad Khatami, the Iranian president, established the strategic partnership between Delhi and Tehran during his 2003 visit to India. Through this arrangement, both sides agreed to enhance collaboration in security, counter-terrorism, and military-to-military coordination (Bhat, 2018). Joint military drills were initiated in 2003. India also invested heavily in the construction of Chabahar port and associated roads and railways connecting Chabahar with Afghanistan. The Zaranj-Delaram highway was completed by engineers in 2009 (Mumtaz, 2006). Both sides agreed in 2013 to enhance corroboration in Chabahar Port (Sinkaya, 2016). During the 2015 visit of the Indian Minister of Shipping, Roads, Transportation and Highways, a memorandum of understanding (MOU) was signed. Through this MOU, India expressed its willingness to invest \$195 million in Chabahar Port. In return Iran agreed to lease out two multi-function berths to India (Ashok K. Behuria, 2015).

In 2016 Indian Minister of Foreign Affairs (Sushma Swaraj) visited Tehran, during visit both sides discussed the ways to enhance energy cooperation, accelerating India, Iran, Afghanistan connectivity projects and the possibilities of Indian participation in Ashgabat Agreement.<sup>3</sup> This discussion culminated in the formal 'Trilateral Transport and Transit Corridor Agreement' in May 2016 (Panda, 2016). Owing to US pressures, 2017 witnessed a deterioration in Indo-Iran ties. Iran expressed its dissatisfaction with Indian submission to US pressures and the growing Indo-Saudi Arabia ties. Bilateral relations reached a low point in 2018 as a result of ongoing disputes regarding India's request for preferential access to the Farzad-B gas field and Iran's hesitance to conclude the exploration contract. Iran argued that there were no obligations on behalf of India to develop the field, but rather only agreements to conduct technical assessments (Hafeez, 2019). Despite tensions, the parties continued to use diplomatic channels. In 2018, India officially joined the Ashgabat Agreement.

---

<sup>3</sup> The Ashgabat Agreement establishes a multimodal transport and transit corridor linking Central Asian nations with Iran and Oman, facilitating trade and travel between Central Asia and the Persian Gulf. The agreement was initially signed in 2011 in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, by the nations of Iran, Oman, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

After the US withdrew from the JCPOA, Iran began to seek closer diplomatic relations with other countries, such as India, to mitigate the withdrawal (Talha Latief Tantray, 2024). However, the 2021 strategic partnership between Iran and China likely strained relationships between Iran and India further. Rehman Malik (2021) believes the partnership played a role in Iran's decision to exclude India from the Chabahar-Zahidan railway project. Due to having 16% of the world's natural gas reserves and 9% of the world's crude oil reserves, Tehran is a critical partner for India, which is the world's second-largest energy-consuming country. Iran and India have a large amount of commercial activity. Bilateral trade rebounded to around \$652 million for January–April 2025 (MEA, 2025). India-Iran military cooperation has just begun to take shape. In 2015, an Indian Navy mission visited Bandar Imam Port. They carried out coordinated naval drills in the Strait of Hormuz that same year. By late 2025, India and Iran's defence ties were focused on regional stability, connectivity, and anti-terrorism, with joint drills like Sahand 2025 enhancing strategic cooperation (Forum, 2025).

### INDIA'S GULF STRATEGY THROUGH KAUTILYAN MANDALA: ANALYSIS

India's parallel engagements with Riyadh and Tehran embody the principles of ancient Kautilyan geopolitical thought. Unlike the rigid hierarchy that characterises contemporary notions of international relations, Kautilya views it as a dynamic web of concentric spheres. In such a web, a country's immediate neighbour may become a hostile adversary, whereas a distant country may emerge as a valuable ally. The primary impetus for the moves and countermoves of both parties is a reflection of their national interests. To mitigate threats to their sovereignty, states negotiate with the different states in their concentric circles. Thus, for achieving its long-term objectives, a state can formulate alliances. The practical example of this conception is contemporary Indian foreign policy initiatives in the Persian Gulf. Saudi Arabia is a decisive player in Indian foreign policy objectives and is vital in the protection of its oil supply routes. This pattern closely mirrors Kautilya's assumption of 'samsrayana', which means seeking shelter under the watchful eyes of a kind yet formidable force.

The Riyadh-Delhi partnership was initiated through the Delhi Declaration of 2006 and the Riyadh Declaration of 2010, which was later formalized via the institutionalisation of the Strategic Partnership Council. For dealing with geographically proximate rivals, Kautilya advises rulers to form alliances with the most powerful states. The increased Saudi Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in India clearly demonstrates the adaptation of this approach by Indian policymakers. Enthusiasm in defence cooperation is evident via the initiation of the bilateral naval exercises, namely "Al-Mohed Al-Hind" in 2021 (Laskar, 2015). Closeness between India and Saudi Arabia will benefit the former in exerting influence in the region and it may also ensure the protection of the Indian diaspora in Saudi Arabia. Pragmaticism characterises Indo-Iranian relations. It is a complicated balance between cooperation and confrontation. Iran's geographical location facilitates Indian access to Central Asia and greater Eurasian landmasses. The conceptualisation and development of the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) and the advancement in Chabahar Port illustrate Indian eagerness to establish itself as a 'transit hub'. While engaging with Iran, India faces a significant strategic dilemma.

Many external factors, like US sanctions on Iran hindered progress in Indo-Iran ties. Keeping in view the US reservations, New Delhi withdrew itself from the Farzad B gas field project. Such shifts in Indian policy reduced the possibilities of improved strategic alignment between India and Iran. This vacuum provided space for an improved Sino-Iran partnership (Bhardwaj, 2025). Despite these constraints, India has continued its engagements, like naval exchanges, limited economic interaction, etc., with Iran. Such diplomatic moves are relatable to Kautilya's views on adaptable diplomacy and are the perfect examples of contemporary 'hedging strategy'. Duality is an essential characteristic of Kautilyan statecraft. The Indian approach towards Iran demonstrates an amalgamation of pragmatism and strategic autonomy. This approach allows India to safeguard its national interests in a multipolar global order.

## CONCLUSION

India has formulated a strategic plan to guide its foreign policy initiatives in the Persian Gulf. This plan is based on the fundamental principle of strategic autonomy as guided by Kautilya's Mandala theory. India aims to establish itself as the principal actor in the Persian Gulf region, pursuing strategic autonomy. India's strategic plan is evident in the way it manages its relations with Saudi Arabia and Iran. The Mandala Theory posits that a state can classify its neighbouring states as "neutral," "rivals," and "friends" based on their respective national interests. To grasp India's strategic posture in the Persian Gulf, it is important to learn the underlying reasons for these developments. India established strong bilateral relations with Saudi Arabia and Israel. The US strategically aligns both states. Despite this, India continued to strengthen its commercial ties with Iran (strategic rival of the US). This balancing approach is the practical manifestation of Chankiya Kautilya's 'Upeksha Yana', or 'dual strategy'. The primary focus of the partnership between New Delhi and Riyadh is on security issues, whereas the financial investment made by India in the development of Chabahar Port and the INSTC represents a way to bring different stakeholders together without expecting a consensus. New Delhi uses balance to prevent conflict in the region from escalating. The Persian Gulf represents the second circle of Indian interests, with oil stability, the Indian diaspora community, and naval capabilities as the top priorities. Kautilya preferred indirect influence over direct control and this is the same role that India plays in Western IO. While India is demonstrating a willingness to remain engaged and use its power to affect outcomes, it is doing so without intending to establish an empire. India also navigates the sectarian division in the Gulf in a careful manner. Despite the pressure from the US to distance itself from Tehran, India continues to maintain strong ties with Iran. India's national interest takes precedence over ideological considerations when it comes to its foreign policy decisions. Kautilya asserted that ethics and strategy are two distinct ideas. India demonstrates this principle through its commitment to standing firm in the Arab world while simultaneously engaging in cooperation with Israel in matters related to defence.

## DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

## REFERENCES

Anas, O. (2021). India-West Asia Relations Under the 'Nationalist' Modi Government. *Comaparative Politics*, 59-79.

Ashok K. Behuria, M. A. (2015, May 13). *IDSA*. Retrieved from India's Renewed Interest in Chabahar: Need to Stay the Course: [https://idsa.in/issuebrief/IndiasRenewedInterestinChabahar\\_BehuriaRizvi\\_130515](https://idsa.in/issuebrief/IndiasRenewedInterestinChabahar_BehuriaRizvi_130515)

Ashwarya, S. (2023). India's National Role Conception and Relations with GCC Countries under Modi: A Focus on Saudi Arabia. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 535-555.

Bakr, K. (2021, May 4). *Saudi Arabia-India Strategic Partnership*. Retrieved from Gulf Research Center: <https://www.grc.net/documents/609268281ddebSaudiIndiastrategicpartnership.pdf>

Bandyopadhyaya, J. (2003). *The Making of India's Foreign Policy*. India: Allied Publishers.

Bhardwaj, S. (2025, July 1). *The United States and the Dismantling of India-Iran Relationship*. Retrieved from Institute of South Asian Studies: <https://www.isas.nus.edu.sg/papers/the-united-states-and-the-dismantling-of-india-iran-relationship/>

Bhat, M. A. (2018). *India and Iran Relations in Twenty First Century: Challenges and Future Prospects*. Istanbul: eren gündogan.

Brewster, D. (2016). India and the Persian Gulf: Locked out or staying out? *Comparative Strategy*, 58-71.

Burton, G. (2019). *India Look West Policy in Middle East Under Modi*. Washington DC: Middle East Institute.

David, B. (2016). India and the Persian Gulf: Locked out or staying out? *Comparative Strategy*, 58-71.

Embassy of India, R. (2020, January 31). *India-Saudi Arabia Bilateral Relations 2020*. Retrieved from Embassy of India, Riyadh: <https://www.eoiriyadh.gov.in/page/india-saudi-bilateral-relations/>

Forum, (2025). India-Iran Relations-Significance & Challenges – Explained Pointwise, <https://forumias.com/blog/india-iran-relations-significance-challenges-explained-pointwise/>.

Ghoah, B. (2022). *Kautilya's Mandala Theory*. India: Social Science Research Network (SSRN).

Hafeez, M. (2019). India-Iran Relations. *Strategic Studies*, 22-36.

Hall, I. (2020). Modi and the Reinvention of Indian Foreign Policy. *asia policy*, 167-188.

Harsh V. Pant, H. T. (2023). *India and the Gulf: Theoretical Perspectives and Policy Shifts*. New Delhi: Cambridge University Press.

IEA, (2025). Oil Market Report – December 2025, Available at: <https://www.iea.org/reports/oil-market-report-december-2025>.

Integrated Head Quarters, M. o. (2015). Indian Maritime Security Strategy: Ensuring Secure Seas. *Indian Maritime Security Strategy: Ensuring Secure Seas*. New Delhi, New Delhi, India: Integrated Head Quarters, Ministry of Defense (Navy), Government of India.

Integrated Headquarters, M. o. (2009). *Indian Maritime Doctrine*. India: Integrated Headquarters, Ministry of Defense Indian Navy.

Jain, P. C. (2025). *Indian Diaspora in the Persian Gulf States*. London: Routledge.

Janbaz, Z. A. (2024). Navigating Indian Diaspora Dynamics in Gulf Countries: Challenges and Opportunities. *Journal of Political Science and International Relations*, 135-141.

Kamal, K. (2023). *Kautilya's Arthashastra: Strategic Cultural Roots of India's Contemporary Statecraft*. India: Routledge.

Kautilya Chanakya, S. S. (1915). *Arthashastra of Kautilya(Chanakya tantra): Ancient Indian Sanskrit Treatise on State Craft, Economic Policy and Military Strategy (English Translation)*. Mysore, India: Mysore Printing and Publishing House.

Khan, M. R. (2016, April 1). *Indian diaspora in Saudi Arabia remains connected to its roots*. Retrieved from Arab News: <https://www.arabnews.pk/saudi-arabia/news/904241>

Krishna, B. a. (2025). *Strategic Autonomy and India's Foreign Policy Towards GCC, Israel and Iran: Exploring the Kautilyan Foreign Policy Principles*. Virginia: Virginia Tech.

Kumar, S. (2023). India's relations with Saudi Arabia and UAE under the Modi Government. *MJIR | Malaysian Journal of International Relations*, 1-19.

Laskar, R. H. (2015, February 19). *India, Saudi Arabia prepare for third 'Al-Mohed Al-Hindi' naval exercise*. Retrieved from Hindustan Times: <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/india-saudi-arabia-prepare-for-third-al-mohed-al-hindi-naval-exercise-101739960181054.html>

Malik, R. A. (2022). India's Extended Neighbourhood Policy: An Analysis of India's Central Asia Policy. *International Journal of Research Publications and Review*, 628-632.

Menon, S. (2016, October 31). *Inside the Making of India's Foreign Policy*. Retrieved from Brookings: <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/inside-the-making-of-indias-foreign-policy/>

Ministry of External Affairs, I. (2001). *Annual Report 2001-2002*. Retrieved from Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses: <https://idsa.in/resources/annualreports/ministry-of-external-affairs-annual-report-2000-2001>

Mishra, A. B. (2022). *Varying Dimensions of India's National Security*. India: Springer.

Mishra, S. (2012). Kautilya's Mandala Theory. *Resaerch Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 145-148.

MOEA. (2006, January 27). *Delhi Declaration: Signed by King Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz*. Retrieved from Ministry of External Affairs India: [https://mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/5969/Delhi\\_Declaration\\_Signed\\_by\\_King\\_Abdullah\\_bin\\_Abdulaziz\\_Al\\_Saud\\_of\\_the\\_Kingdom\\_of\\_Saudi\\_Arabia\\_and\\_Prime\\_Minister\\_Dr\\_Manmohan\\_Singh\\_of\\_India](https://mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/5969/Delhi_Declaration_Signed_by_King_Abdullah_bin_Abdulaziz_Al_Saud_of_the_Kingdom_of_Saudi_Arabia_and_Prime_Minister_Dr_Manmohan_Singh_of_India)

MOEA. (2016, April 3). *India-Saudi Arabia Joint Statement During the Visit of Prime Minister Modi*. Retrieved from MOEA India: <https://www.mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/26595/IndiaSaudi+Arabia+Joint+Statement+during+the+visit+of+Prime+Minister+to+Saudi+Arabia+April+03+2016>

MOEA, (2025). India-Iran Bilateral Political Consultations, Ministry of External Affairs, <https://www.google.com/search?client=safari&rls=en&q=Iran+and+India+bilateral+trade+as+per+of+2025&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8>.

MOFA. (2015, May 27). *Saudi Indian Business Council Opened in New Delhi*. Retrieved from MOFA India: <https://embassies.mofa.gov.sa/sites/india/EN/AboutDiplomaticMission/MissionNews/Pages/Saudi-Indian-Business-Council-Opened-in-New-Delhi.aspx>

Mumtaz, K. (2006). Changing Patterns of India-Iran Relations. *Strategic Studies*, 7-32.

Panda, A. (2016, April 18). *India, Iran, Afghanistan Finalize Chabahar Port Agreement*. Retrieved from Khorasan Zameen: <https://www.khorasanzameen.net/php/en/read.php?id=3443>

Pant, G. (2016). Iran returns to global energy market: Issues and prospects. *Contemporary Review of the Middle East*, 23-35.

Pradhan, P. (2013). India's Relations with Saudi Arabia: Forging a Strategic Partnership. *Strategic Analysis*, 231-241.

Qayyum, S. (2021, November 12). *Al-Mohed Al-Hindi 2021: Strategic Options for Pakistan and India*. Retrieved from Center for Strategic and Contemporrary Research: <https://cscr.pk/explore/themes/defense-security/al-mohed-al-hindi-2021-strategic-options-for-pakistan-and-india/>

Rangachari, D. (2022). *The Mauryas: Changragupta to Ashoka: The Backstories, The Sagas, The Legacies*. India: Simon and Schuster Publishers.

Rehman Malik, S. U. (2021). Rehman Malik, S. U., & BChina–Iran Strategic Partnership: Implications for India. *Chinese Journal of International Review*.

Riyadh, E. o. (2019, october 29). *Embassy of India Riyadh*. Retrieved from Joint Statement During the Visit of Prime Minister 28-29 october 2019: <https://www.eoiriyadh.gov.in/page/joint-statement-during-the-visit-of-the-hon-ble-prime-minister-to-saudi-arabia-on-october-28-29-2019/>

Riyadh, E. o. (nd). *India-Saudi Arabia: Economic and Commercial Brief*. Retrieved from Embassy of India Riyadh: <https://www.eoiriyadh.gov.in/page/india-saudi-arabia-economic-and-commercial-brief/>

Shina, A. (2022). India in a Changing Global World: Understanding India's Changing Statecraft and Delhi's International Relations. *Politics and International Relations Journals*, 398-411.

Sinkaya, P. A. (2016, October 17). *Chabahar Agreement: Iran-India-Afghanistan Spring*. . Retrieved from Center for Middle Eastern Studies: <https://orsam.org.tr/en/yayinlar/chabahar-agreement-iran-india-afghanistan-spring/>

Solanki, V. (2024, Feburary 21). *The Gulf Region's Growing Importance for India*. Retrieved from IISS: <https://www.iiss.org/online-analysis/online-analysis/2024/02/the-gulf-regions-growing-importance-for-india/>

Talha Latief Tantray, R. S. (2024). India-Iran Relations in the Evolving Indo-Pacific: A Contemporary Geopolitical Analysis of Strategic Ambitions and Emerging Alliances. *جنوبی ایشانیک الممالی بین فصانامہ* . 303-324.

Teckchandani, S. L. (2025). India's Act East Policy and Regional Cooperation. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research*, 1-11.

Tehran, E. o. (2014, March 7). *Embassy of India Tehran*. Retrieved from India-Iran Bilateral Trade: <https://www.indianembassytehran.gov.in/>

Times, o. I. (2024, september 3). *India's Ties with Gulf Nations Deepen Under Modi: EMA Jaishankar*. Retrieved from Times of India: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/indias-ties-with-gulf-nations-deepen-under-pm-modi-eam-jaishankar/articleshow/113026973.cms>

Vaid, T. M. (2016). India-Saudi Arabia Ties Beyond Oil Diplomacy. *Academic Journal of the Budapest Business School*, 5-20.

Vittal, V. (2011). *Kautilya's Arthashastra: A Timeless Grand Strategy*. Maxwell Air Force Base, AL: School of Advanced Air and Space Studies.

Wani, S. H. (2018). Economic Analytsis of Bilateral Trade: A Case Study of India and Iran. *International Journal of Advanced and Innovative Research*, 68-72.

Waseem Ahmad, A. R. (2023). *Gulf Migration, Remittances, and Development*. India: Routledge.

Wolpert, S. (1977). *A New History of India*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Yoshihara, J. R. (2008). China's Naval Ambitions in the Indian Ocean. *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 367-394.