

Indian Institute of Public Administration



#### GANDHIJI's TALISMAN

I will give you a talisman. Whenever you are in doubt or when the self becomes too much with you, apply the following test:

Recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man whom you may have seen and ask yourself if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him.

Will he gain anything by it? Will it restore him to a control over his own life and destiny? In other words, will it lead to Swaraj for the hungry and spiritually starving millions?

Then you will find your doubts and your self melting away 55



meganshi

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi

for the SIXTY-SIXTH MEMBERS' ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2022



Dream is not what you see in sleep. Dream is something which does not let you sleep.

Late Dr. Abdul Kalam, Former President of India

### Dr. Roma Debnath



## Indian Institute of Public Administration New Delhi

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## **FOREWORD**

The power dynamics of nation-states around the world have undergone a sea change in the twenty-first century with regard to foreign policy and other governance aspects. Today the world is interconnected and interdependent on each other for their growth and development. Hence, the governments have no choice but to spend heavily in their soft power matrices.

Within this shifting global landscape, India has the opportunity to put in place a new framework for its own and that of developing countries around the world. As a rising global power, this must be India's principle endeavour in the coming decades.

The Republic of India is now considered as one of the emerging Global Leaders of the world, besides a fast-growing economy. We have advantages in the field of agriculture, ground breaking technology in space, a relatively young and dynamic population, good foreign relations, robust democracy and competent armed forces.

This is a fascinating article by IIPA which shows that India is emerging to become a global leader. We have a long way to go, despite all that we have achieved since Independence. However, we as citizens of India, are positive and confident that India has all required resources—natural, human, technological and intellectual to become *vishwaguru*.

The article discusses numerous factors of soft power that have been adopted by India in the past and in the present. I am sure the readers will find this article stimulating and positive.

– S N Tripathi (Director General, IIPA)

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am thankful to have the opportunity to academically contribute towards the Members' Annual Conference at Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA) to present a kaleidoscope about India's growing global leadership power.

In bringing out the theme paper, I wish to place on record my sincere gratitude to Sh. S.N.Tripathi, Director General, IIPA for his profuse support, encouragement and constant guidance. I would also like to express my appreciation to my colleagues and friends at IIPA for their moral support in completing the task.

I am thankful to the IIPA Administration for the necessary administrative and academic support.

I am indebted to all the silent heroes of our armed forces, serving at national and international borders, paramilitary forces and frontline corona warriors for their supreme sacrifices to keep our country safe and great. I also acknowledge the significant contribution made by common citizens of India to make a great country and secure a place on the global pedestal.

Let us continue to work towards the growth of our nation to make our presence felt in the global arena.

- Roma Debnath

## **ABSTRACT**

Today, soft power is seen as the key component of a country's overall growth and development. It has the power to strengthen a community's commitment, and resolve and provide a country more control over its international affairs.

India has achieved diplomatic victories and advanced the country's national objectives by leveraging India's unique cultural diplomacy wealth, such as the diaspora, yoga, Buddhism, and economic support. India's Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has decided to support a "soft power matrix" to assess the success of the country's soft power outreach.

India is well aware of the significance of cultural engagement and needs to make a few more efforts to make its culture appealing to the rest of the world. India envisions a liberal, nonviolent, relatively pluralistic democracy with non-threatening global leadership. Soft power assets generated by luminaries such as Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, as well as the arts, literature, music, dance, the software industry, Ayurveda, and so on, highlight India's appeal to the world's population. Indians are known for their core values of respect, harmony, and fraternity, with Ashoka, Buddha, and Gandhi serving as primary leaders.

India celebrates 75 years of independence. It has been a phenomenal 75 years since Independence. Few Indians now alive know how uncertain our future looked in 1948. The question then being asked everywhere was 'Will India Survive?' India seems to have travelled a long way since 1948. Now, seventy-five years down the road, that fearful query has been replaced by a far more hopeful one, namely, 'Will India Become a Global Leader?'

The relevance, importance, and impact of soft power is impossible to ignore. The great advantage of using 'soft power' is that it 'does not cost anything'. Using 'soft power' a country need not make concessions: it simply gets its way – softly.

A due credit goes to her founding fathers and Constitution writers. They did not leave any loophole in the Constitution .They established a responsible legislative body to make laws and new policies, an executive body to execute various policies enacted by legislation and an independent judiciary to safeguard the Constitution and the fundamental rights of all citizens.

Global power politics is a serious game requiring countries which think and act big. Given its many attributes, India belongs to this group which has been trying to increase its ability to get things done.

The study highlights various policies of Government of India to strengthen its global position, mainly using the soft power.

**Keywords:**, M.K. Gandhi, Soft Power, Cultural Diplomacy, Education Diplomacy, Health Diplomacy, Peace and Humanitarian Assistance, Sports Diplomacy,

## WHO IS A GLOBAL LEADER?

The oxford dictionary meaning of a Leader (noun) is a person who leads a group of people, especially the head of a country, an organization, etc. The definition of a global leader is a person in control of a group, country, etc. who is recognized as being important in all parts of the world.

Needless to say, that a global leader possesses certain characteristics, which can make their nation a super power. Similarly, the world's most powerful countries also are the ones that consistently dominate the policymakers and shape global econom-



ic patterns. Their foreign policies and military budgets are pursued and compared constantly. These countries enjoy substantial global influence.

What is 'influence'? 'Influence' is the ability to shape events, gain bargaining power for negotiations, and—at its crassest—would also include the power to use incentives in order to shape the behaviour of others. 'Influential powers' are states that are important to the well-being and security of other countries, which means countries have a stake in their welfare. Regional and global powers can be thought to have 'influence' if they are able to mobilize states to act in a certain manner, against a common threat or in pursuit of a common purpose (Zeeshan, 2021)

The existing literature provides few characteristics of super power or a global leader. The paper tries to describe few indicators/characteristics that makes a global leader.

"Soft power has always been a key element of leadership. The power to attract—to get others to want what you want, to frame the issues, to set the agenda—has its roots in thousands of years of human experience. Skillful leaders have always understood that attractiveness stems from credibility and legitimacy. Power has never flowed solely from the barrel of a gun; even the most brutal dictators have relied on attraction as well as fear" (Nye Jr. 2004)

"Superpower is a state with a dominant position by its ability to influence on a global scale. It's a combination of economic, military, cultural, technological, diplomatic and political spheres". Thomas(2020).

Australian scholar and leading exponent of the English school of international relations, Bull in 1977, pointed out, great powers are identified by 'comparability of status', 'rank in military strength', and the ability and recognition to 'play a part in determining issues that affect the peace and security of the international system as whole'.

As Waltz in 1981 noted, a "state becomes a great power not by military or economic capability alone but by combining political, social, economic, military, and geographic assets in more effective ways than other states can".

According to the above definitions, the group of countries, five boast of strong militaries (US,

Russia, China, India and Japan). This group of countries has the ability to project its dominating power and influence anywhere in the world. Their power is primarily economic and military. On the one hand, three nations are hegemonic powers viz, Russia, China and the US. There are other three who are genuine great economic powers viz, US, China and Japan), and all of them barring India are self-sufficient in arms and are generators of high technology (Karnad, 2018)

On the other hand, three are civilizational states (India, China and Turkey), which are emerging as global powers with a large role in one or more Superpower characteristics, and with a growing influence. Their power is often based on increasing economic importance and sometimes resources.

There are regional superpowers who can project dominating power and influence over other countries within the continent or region. Their sphere of influence tends to be continental rather than global. For example, UK, Germany, France have influence in Europe; UAE, Saudi Arabia and Iran in the Middle East; South Africa and Nigeria in Africa.

Even though, there is no clear cut definition, it can be summarized that a global leader is one who can a play major role in world affairs, work for maintaining peace and tranquillity and can extend all types of help in preventing global crisis such as climate change, food insecurity, hunger, poverty, etc. Summarizing the above definition, we can conclude that leadership means going ahead or showing the way. To lead is to help a group achieve a common purpose. There are various types and levels of leadership, but all have in common relationship with followers. Therefore, leadership and power are intertwined.

The idea to distinguish between hard power and soft power was first introduced by Nye in 1990 in a book titled, "Bound to Lead: Changing Nature of American Power". The concept was further expanded in his other series of publications namely in year 1990, 2002, 2004, 2007, and 2008. In general, he defines power as the "ability to affect others to get the outcomes one wants" and command or hard power as forced power exercised through threats. Hard power is based on military intervention, intimidating diplomacy and economic sanctions (Wilson, 2008,) and relies on tangible power resources such as armed forces or economic means (Gallarotti, 2011). Thus, the UN economic sanctions against Iraq in 1991 following the first Gulf War are examples for the use of hard power. In simple terms, 'hard power is push; soft power is pull' (Nye, 2012).

Hard power rests on incentives ("carrots") or threats ("sticks"). In international politics, by this definition, we consider a country powerful if it has a relatively large population, territory, natural resources, economic strength, military force, and social stability.

However, sometimes one can get the outcomes without tangible threats or payoffs. The indirect way to get what you want has sometimes been called "the second face of power." A country may obtain the outcomes it wants in world politics because other countries admire its values, emulate its example, aspire to its level of prosperity and openness. This soft power—getting others to want the outcomes that you want—co-opts people rather than coerces them.

In an interdependent world where traditional power resources have become costlier, technology, education and economic growth have risen as important factors determining a country's power (Nye,1990)

The power to influence others' wants— to make them align their interests with your own — enables an actor to achieve its desired outcome without having to use coercion ("sticks") or inducement ("carrots").It can do so by capitalising on various assets, such as a country's culture, political values and foreign policy, as well as by legitimising itself to the world and standing beside popular channels of communication. This leads to others admiring the nation and aiming

to follow in its footsteps, which increases its power. (Shetty and Sahgal, (2019).

According to Jaishankar, (2020) expressed his views that India would be a country which brings its capacities to bear on the international system for global good, which is a net security provider, which is a contributor to connectivity, which is firm in dealing with challenges like terrorism, which has its values and practices, and which addresses global issues like climate change and water scarcity.

With this background, this paper emphasises the emergence of India as a global power through a number of resources among which soft power is the major one.

## **QUEST FOR LEADERSHIP**

## A nation that doesn't honour its past has no future

- Johann Wolfgang von Goethe



India has always been a country of attraction. Since millennia it has attracted the countries of both East and West towards it. The attraction of India originates from its spiritual, artistic, learning centres, religious ideas and culture. It is imperative to look into the past to understand the influence of India on to the world towards the journey of Global Leadership. The most important element is India's long history, culture, and civilisation. These have attracted both intellectuals and common folk from across the globe to India.

Vivekananda travelled across America between 1893–1896. His speech at the Parliament had made him famous, and, building on this, he established the Vedanta Society in New York in 1894. Vivekananda's intervention in the Parliament "may be considered prophetic not just for the impact of India on the West but also for the future of dialogue between the West and the East" (Paranjape, 2005).

One manifestation of such a dialogue was that by the end of the nineteenth century, texts such as the *Gita* were increasingly recognized among European and American scholars as spiritual sources with universal relevance.

Whilst the term 'soft power' is relatively new, the concept itself is not. It is a staple of daily democratic politics. The ability to establish preferences tends to be associated with intangible assets such as an attractive personality, culture, political values and institutions, and policies that are seen as legitimate or having moral authority.

Kurlantzick (2007) has defined soft power as "anything outside of the security and military realm, with not just common culture and public diplomacy, but even more coercive economic and political levers such as assistance and investment as well as involvement in multilateral organizations."

In the context of 'Soft Power", what are the instruments to be used? Kautilya in his *Arthashastra*, talks of four *Upayas* or instruments to be used. These are *Saam* (extending friendship), *Daan* (offering material incentives), *Bhed* (dividing the adversary's group), and *Dand* (use of force). Of these, the first two preferences are for peaceful means and incentives (Vishwanathan, 2019).

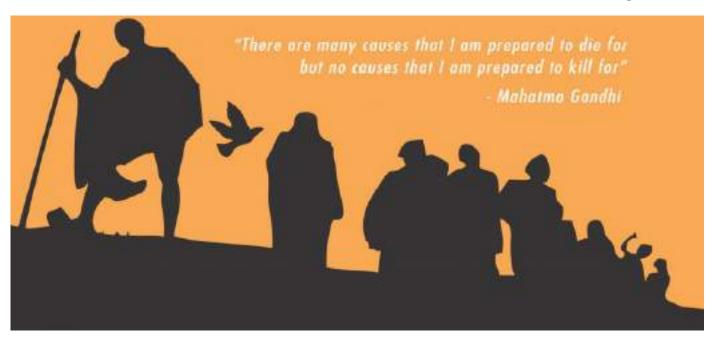
India earned its "golden bird" label centuries ago because of her boundless riches and enviable advantages in trade and commerce, which paved the way for her twenty-four-percent share of world trade in the 1700s.

During the 17th century, the two largest economies in the world were India and China, over 50% of the world's economic output during that time came from these two countries. In fact, India was the richest country in the world during the 17th century with almost 27% of the world's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) that came from India alone, producing about a quarter of global GDP. (Thomas , 2020)

Then came the Britishers and for more than 200 years, we were under the British rule. However, when India became free in 1947, it wasn't the oldest major democracy on earth, but it was the first major democracy to be set up on the pillars of a non-violent movement. Indeed, in many ways, modern India's biggest influence in international politics came through its non-violent struggle for freedom—of which it was a pioneer in world history.

# GANDHI AS AN APOSTLE OF SOFT POWER

The notion of *ahimsa* (non-violence), drawing on ancient Buddhist tradition, and *satyagra-ha* (seeking of truth), were the twin doctrines that defined his political and social philosophy (Parekh, 1989; Weber, 1996). "India has an unbroken tradition of nonviolence from times immemorial," he once wrote, admitting that "but at no time in her ancient history as far as I know, has it had complete nonviolence in action pervading the whole land. Nevertheless, it is my unshakable belief that her destiny is to deliver the message of nonviolence to mankind. It may take ages to come to fruition. But so far as I can judge, no other country will precede her in the fulfilment of that mission" (Gandhi,1970).



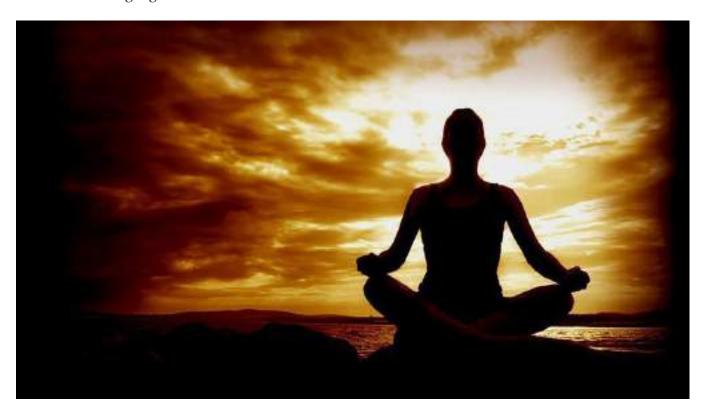
In the midst of his fight against racial segregation in public buses, Martin Luther King Jr. told a crowd in Brooklyn, New York: "Christ showed us the way, and Gandhi in India showed it could work." Until India's civil disobedience movement against the British Raj, King said, few had seen non-violence work in real life as a tool of protest. The African-Americans did not have the means to wage an armed struggle against their government and survive. South Africa's black population did not have the military power to defeat their heavily armed opponents during the Apartheid. Most oppressed colonial states in Asia and Africa did not have the wealth and resources to wage wars against European armies. But in India's victory, there came a ready template for success for all these nations—no government could rule for long enough a population that refused to be ruled.

When King finally visited India in 1959, after historic breakthroughs in America's civil rights struggle, he told reporters at the airport, "To other countries I may go as a tourist, but to India I come as a pilgrim." Several years later, in 2004, when a South African television channel ran a poll on the 'Greatest South Africans' of all time, Mahatma Gandhi was nominated in the top ten standards (BizCommunity).

Gandhian ideas have inspired anticolonial movements in many countries, such as Ghana, while political figures like the Dalai Lama, Nelson Mandela, and Aung San Suu Kyi have been inspired by the Gandhian philosophy of nonviolence. Gandhi remains the most recognizable Indian in the world and his message of nonviolence and truth is as valid today as during his lifetime. In recognition of his importance, in 2007 the United Nations General Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution to observe and celebrate annually Gandhi's birthday on October 2nd as the International Day of Nonviolence.

Other major democracies such as France and the United States had won their freedom through wars and revolutions, but India was too underprivileged and underdeveloped after two centuries of British rule to afford such wars. It was that last factor—of India's unfancied masses taking on the world's greatest imperial power—that made the Indian freedom struggle such a compelling story for persecuted peoples and nations around the world.

The message of peace propagated by Gautam Buddha and Mahatma Gandhi, Tagore and Nehru provided Indian soft power with a historical depth rooted in a civilizational context.



During 1960's, when the Hippie movement started, many in the West got attracted to Yoga, Meditation, Indian Classical Music and Indian spirituality. (Vishwanathan, 2019). The example of The Beatles, then the world's distinguished band, came to India to spend time in the ashram in Rishikesh. That stint turned out to be one of the most creative periods in the group's career. They wrote many songs and 17 of them were used in The Beatles (White Album) and two more in Abbey Road. (*The Wire*, 2017) India was the flavour in the West, especially among the counter-culture types, hippies and other more upscale travellers heading here in search of inner peace and the meaning of life.

It was India's Technicolor canvas of peace, meditation, and spirituality that caught the imagination of the global travellers in that era and it is known as soft power of India.

Since soft power is an intangible component, it is difficult to measure its actual impact. The advantages of hard power such as military and economic resources can be measured and compared, and their direct effects are more or less tangible. It is easy for example to compare Indian and Chinese military expenditures. It is impossible, however to quantify the appeal of a country's values, culture, institutions or achievements, an appeal which is inherently subjective and therefore contested and fluctuating. Having said so, there are few measurable indictors which will be discussed in the next section.

## **ANALYTICAL PERSPECTIVES ON INDIA -**

### AN EMERGING GLOBAL LEADER

Fortune favours the brave, the Ancient Romans said.



In the 20th century, the entire world considered USA, Russia, Japan and some of the European countries as the global leaders.

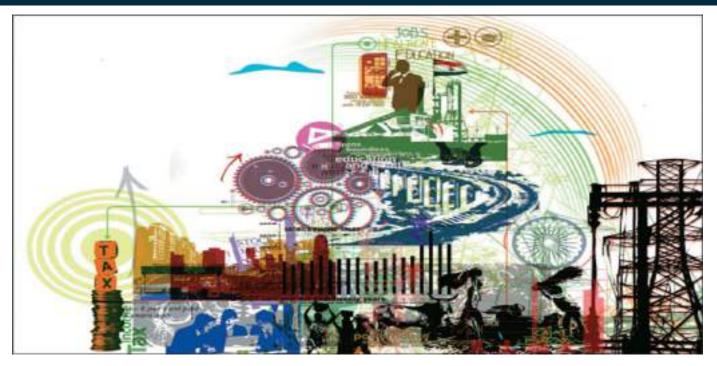
There is a saying that, time changes all things. That may be a cliché, but it's certainly a suitable description of what has happened on the global front over the past couple of decades. First, we are entering a new era. The artificial era of Western domination of world history is coming to an end. Second, we are seeing the natural return of China and India as the world's largest economies. This is perfectly natural as China and India were the largest economies of the world from 1 to 1820 AD, as documented by Maddison (2001). Third, the world has shrunk. As Kofi Annan said, we live in a global village.

Huge leaps in science and technology, accompanied by massive economic and social advances in many societies around the world, especially Asian societies, indicates that twenty-first century will be massively different from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

It seems, life and times have uncannily come to a full circle. India has emerged as a major power in Asia along with China in recent times. Very recently, as per the Bloomberg Report (2022), Britain has slipped behind India to become the world's sixth largest economy. India is behind the US, China, Japan and Germany. Even a decade ago, India ranked 11th among the largest economies, while the UK was 5th.

However, according to the objective of the paper, a focus will be provided on various diplomatic measures adopted by GoI under soft power.

# INDIA'S SIZE AND ECONOMIC STRENGTH

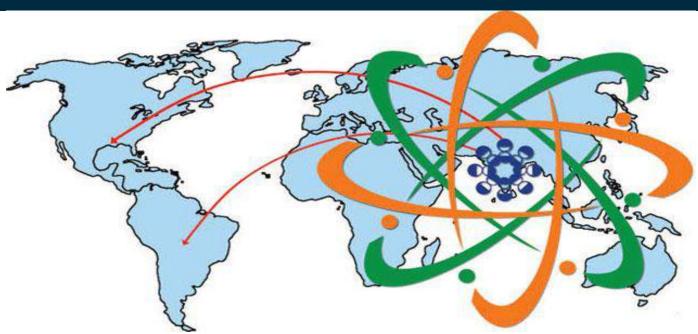


India's population at 1.38 billion is the world's youngest at 28.4 years. By 2023, India will be the most populous country in the world (1.43 billion) according to the World Population Prospects 2022; United Nations (Patra, 2022). A comparison of the ratio India's working-age population (WAP) (as defined as 15 - 64 years) population (WAP) to the total population with that of other countries, viz., China, Brazil, USA, and Japan, shows that India stands at an advantageous position. The working-age populations (WAP) of these countries have started declining already while India's WAP ratio will increase till 2045, even exceeding that of China by 2030. Making the most of this demographic dividend is India's opportunity as well as a challenge.

Currently, India is the third largest economy in the world in terms of purchasing power parity (PPP) terms, with a share of 7 per cent of global GDP (after China (18 per cent) and the US (16 per cent)). India's GDP in market exchange rates is expected to reach US\$ 5 trillion by 2027. By that year, India's GDP in purchasing power parity terms will exceed US\$ 16 trillion (up from US\$ 10 trillion in 2021). The OECD's 2021 calculations indicate that the Indian economy will be overtake the US by 2048. This would make India the largest economy in the world after China.

The Indian economy is a world leader in the production of various agricultural commodities. In 2021, India has emerged as the world's Number 1 rice exporter, with more than the combined exports of world Numbers 2 and 3. India has one of the widest manufacturing bases among emerging economies, ranging from the largest producer and exporter of tractors and two wheelers to among the top 10 exporters of smartphones, cars and spacecraft. In several services, including shipping personnel and information technology (IT), India is a world leader. In the case of IT, India has come to be known as the back office of the world. (Patra, 2022).

## GLOBAL PEOPLE, GLOBAL POWER



People often say that there is an Indian in every country in the world. According to the Indian Ministry of External Affairs, there is a person of Indian origin or citizenship in every country or territory in the world—except San Marino, the Vatican and, of course, Pakistan. The world's largest diaspora: a whopping 31 million people, that if they were to constitute a country, they would be the forty-sixth largest member state of the United Nations—more populous than Australia and New Zealand put together. Being part of an ancient civilization, with well-established trading and cultural links with the Euro-Asian, Arab, and African worlds, Indians have traditionally travelled for centuries, carrying with them their ideas, languages, religious beliefs, and ways of thinking (Dubey, 2003).

The Indian diaspora, which is known for its achievements, has helped strengthen India's position in the world by causing an increased respect for India, its culture and diversity, and its quality of education across the globe. This is a relatively recent phenomenon as Indians immigrates to the richer countries started to come from the more educated professional class, particularly doctors and engineers.

In recent years, India's diaspora has been an influential foreign policy asset. The landmark India–US nuclear deal, for instance, was aided in Washington by strong political lobbying from the Indian-American community. In 2011, Indians in Australia helped convince the then Australian government to lift a ban on uranium exports to India.

Over the years, people of Indian origin have served as heads of state or government in over two dozen countries around the world—from Malaysia to Mauritius, and from Singapore to Suriname. At one point, America had over half a dozen Indian-origin politicians in office—two of them as governors. When Donald Trump became president, he chose a person of Indian origin to represent his administration at the United Nations. His successor as president, Joe Biden, now has an Indian-origin vice president. In 2020, New Zealand got its first Indian-origin minister in the form of Priyanca Radhakrishnan. As of November 2020, as many as six countries were headed by a person of Indian origin, including countries as far as Guyana and Portugal. (Zeeshan, 2021).Presently, several Indian-origin CEOs are leading some of the world's biggest

companies, for example- Sundar Pichai- Alphabet, Satya Nadella- Microsoft, Parag Agraw- al- Twitter, Leena Nair- Chanel, Shantanu Narayen- Adobe Inc, Arvind Krishna- IBM, Sanjay Mehrotra- Micron Technology, Nikesh Arora- Palo Alto Networks, Ajaypal Singh Banga- Mastercard, Sanjiv Mehta-Uniliver. Earlier, Indian origin personalities like Indira Noooyi consistently ruled the roost in the global corporate space. While being PepsiCo's CEO, Nooyi ranked among the world's 100 most powerful women.((PBNS, 2022).

Like many countries, India has a strong economic interest in maintaining and furthering this globalization. Easier immigration is already one of the big objectives of Indian foreign policy:

India started different policy such as Look East Policy, Act East Policy, Link West Policy, Connect Central Asia Policy and enhancing its link with Africa. All these policies help India serve its two dimension goal---one serving its foreign policy goals and other in enhancing its image in the region targeted. This reflects that in this new world order, India began a concerted effort to channel these resources—including those of Indians living abroad, into generating soft power that might produce beneficial foreign policy outcomes (Hall, 2012).

To celebrate this occasion of returning of Mahatma Gandhi, the greatest *Pravasi*, to India from South Africa, *Pravasi Bharatiya Divas* is celebrated on 9th January every year since 2003 to mark the contribution of Overseas Indian community in the development of India. The *Pravasi Bharatiya Divas* convention is an attempt to bringing together influential members of the diaspora to celebrate India's development and the role of overseas Indians in that rise. It is a show of foreign policy influence that is truly unique to India.

## **INCREDIBLE INDIA**

Spirituality is at the core of India's soft power. "If India is to die," said Swami Vivekananda, "religion might be wiped off from the face of the earth and with it Truth." (Narayanaswamy (2012).



India is fortunate to have all the major religions of the world. Four are indigenous: Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism. We have also embraced the religion came from outside like Judaism, Christianity, Islam etc. This works as an incentive for the religiously minded foreigners to visit India.

Apart from the Kumbh Mela, the other religious sites like Varanasi, Badrinath, Puri, Kedarnath, Vaishnao Devi, Amarnath, Tirupati, Sabarimala, Tanjavoor, Madurai, etc., attracts a large number of tourists. India is also the most favoured destination for Buddhist pilgrims. Throughout the year, there is a steady stream of visitors from the ASEAN countries, Japan, Sri Lanka, and Myanmar to Bodh Gaya and Nalanda. We also have historic Churches and Synagogues in India. Some of the *darghas* of Sufi saints like Moinuddin Chishti and Nizzamuddin Aulia attract thousands of devotees. (Vishwanathan, 2019).

## VACCINE MAITRI

In the globalized world, it isn't merely goods, services and people that travel the world. Viruses do too. The year 2020 started with a nightmare infection, the novel coronavirus—scientifically called COVID-19. Since then, the virus has spread like wildfire and had significantly changed the global geopolitical landscape.



Health diplomacy is a form of soft power that is being used in the 21st century. Against the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, India has played an important role in addressing the demand for pharmaceuticals, diagnostics, and for vaccines to demonstrate India's global health diplomacy. India made its Covid tracking and tracing App as an open source as soon as it was technically feasible. The PM pointed out that with nearly 200 million users, the 'Aarogya Setu' app is a readily available package for developers. Having been used in India, the Prime Minister told the global audience to be sure that it has been tested in the real world for speed and scale (PIB, 2021).

The Vaccine Maitri initiative in many ways reinforced India's credentials as "pharmacy of the world". COVAXIN, made by Indian company Bharat Biotech, has received WHO emergency use listing (EUL). World leaders publicly commended India's efforts to rapidly expand vaccines

production and supplies at critical junctures of the pandemic. As on 31 December 2021, India has supplied more than 110 million vaccine doses to 97 countries (MEA, 2021-2022). During the crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic, India employed an African-focused strategy to support the African nations. India has launched a capacity-building program for healthcare workers of African countries. India has deployed rapid response teams of doctors to assist African countries such as Mauritius and Comoros to combat the COVID-19 pandemic under Mission Sagar (Security and Growth for All in the Region) (MEA, 2020). Responding to their requests for assistance in dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic, Government of India has sent Indian Naval Ship Kesari to Maldives, Mauritius, Madagascar, Comoros and Seychelles, carrying on board two Medical Assistance Teams, consignments of Covid related essential medicines and essential food items.

A key factor in India's success is a digital platform CoWIN (Winning Over COVID-19), developed by the government. It is a cloud-based system that facilitates registration, immunizations and appointments, and issues digital vaccine certificates. (Pant, 2022).

CoWIN has also become the world's biggest digitally verifiable vaccination certificate generating platform, the CEO of the National Health Authority, Dr. R. S. Sharma, said that India has already signed an MoU with the Government of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana for sharing CoWIN. The CoWIN platform 'know-how' now available free of cost to any country (*The Hindu*, 2022).

If there is one idea that can bridge political, religious and social divides, heal bleeding minds, and bring inner peace to 7 billion plus people, it is the unification of body with mind, or Yoga. Globalisation of popular culture and recognition of its health benefits, helped generate near universal interest in yoga, which was evident in the adoption of the resolution on International Day of Yoga, June 21, by 175 sponsors at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) (Raja Mohan, 2014) and as a result of which Yoga events were held in 251 cities across six continents with 192 countries participating.

## **SPACE DIPLOMACY**

Space is now an emerging area for countries to establish their dominance in space. Authority in the space technology creates opportunities to build and expand relations as well as achieve national interests. Almost every sector, starting from agriculture to transport, weather department and even urban development, to name a few, now wants satellite data and imageries and space technology to draw their future strategy and grow business.

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)—now a part of space exploration folklore around the world—is the most credible example of this transformation. In recent years, ISRO has put India in an elite club of space superpowers by landing successfully on the moon, putting a satellite in Mars' orbit, and launching a world record 104 satellites on a single rocket (Zeeshan, 2021).

Blasting apart a satellite that orbits the globe at 17,000 mph, analysts say, represents a technological breakthrough, one that puts India in the small club of nations with such a capability, along with the United States, China, and Russia (Magri P., 2019).

In 2017, Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) launched a record 104 satellites aboard PSLV-C37 from Satish Dhawan Space Center, Sriharikota. Of the said satellites, Cartosat-2,

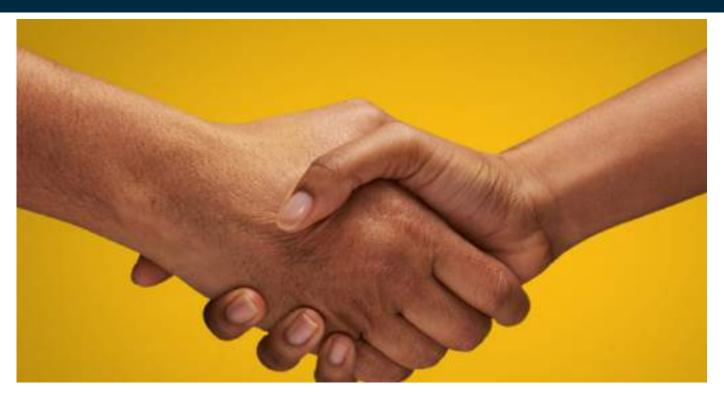


INS-1 and INS-2 were from India while the remaining 101 co-passenger satellites were from the USA (96), The Netherlands (1), Switzerland (1), Israel (1), Kazakhstan (1) and UAE (1), thereby breaking Russia's record of 37 satellites in a single flight. So far, International customers satellites from 20 countries (Algeria, Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Indonesia, Israel, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom and USA) have been successfully launched by PSLV during one of its launches.( ISRO, 2017)

India's advanced space programs have allowed it to cooperate with its strategic partners and meet foreign policy goals of developing influence and goodwill (Goswami, 2019). As part of Space co-operation between India and the Association of South East Asian Nations (Asean), India has started working on establishing a ground station, in Vietnam. It is intended to provide a reliable operational space-based system for remote sensing over the ASEAN — Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam — region. This will help both India and ASEAN members to modernize their military capabilities. These ties will make China uncomfortable who has disputes with both India and Vietnam. (Kumar, 2021).

In a historic decision, The Union Cabinet, headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved private sector participation in the entire range of space activities. ISRO already has tie ups with around 150 private companies. (Kumar, 2021) .This can be seen as long-term technological, economic and industrial gains (Dutta, 2020).

## **EDUCATION AND AID DIPLOMACY**



In modern contemporary times, world has been a witness to the soft power of education as a sure means of grand persuasion strategy to expand, enhance and spread power and position. It has truly been a strong mechanism in building desired perception, orientation of opinions and moulding neutrality into favourable syndrome and even bitterness into a manageable transaction of relation. Education has the ability to influence the approach and thinking of others with acceptable doses of ideas and their attraction over a period of time.

In 1964, India launched the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme, which provided professional expertise and training to bureaucrats and officials of the Third World countries through innovative technological co-operation between India and the partnering nation. It offers training courses, infrastructure-related cooperation, and disaster relief to 161 countries.

Since the early 1990s, thousands of people from Central Asia have attended professional development trainings and earned scholarships to study at Indian universities. Even Turkmenistan, known for its isolation, sends 20 young professionals to India every year through ITEC (Wood, 2018).

Multiple Heads of State have studied in India, including Aung San Suu Kyi from Myanmar, General Hussain Muhammad Ershad of Bangladesh, John Samuel Malecela of Tanzania, Sitiveni Rabuka of Fiji and countless others, hailing from places as diverse as Bhutan and Nepal to Ghana and Malawi. These leaders all have a special connection with India, which results in better diplomatic relations. The example of former Afghan President, Hamid Karzai, is an extremely relevant one. India provides a large number of Afghan students with scholarships to pursue their higher education annually. Afghani elites like to send their children to study in India, many of whom become diplomats and government officials.

## NEW EDUCATION POLICY

Human capital is the new index of power of a country in its relations with the rest of the world. The vastness of territory and the numerical superiority of military is not a significant yardstick of power and prestige at the global stage.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has placed special emphasis on the rich heritage of culture, knowledge and thought as its guiding light are very attractive option and way of life. With pandemic underway, our yoga practice assumed added importance and popularity to deal with multiple socio-psychological and physical issues.

The blueprint and roadmap provided in the National Education Policy 2020 are the appropriate and timely injunctions to ensure requisite soft power teeth to our foreign policy pursuits. The vision must be assimilated in our Neighbourhood and Extended Neighbourhood policy with proper weaving of the educational projects and foreign policy sophistication (Khushnam, 2022).

The New Education Policy (NEP) 2020 visualises the necessary reforms to bridge the gap between the existing learning outcomes and national developmental imperatives. It provides for a revamped and reformed education system in consonance with the needs and challenges of the twenty-first century. The Indian knowledge system has been marked by integrated learning vision involving an effective balance of knowledge, wisdom and truth. A cursory overview of our contemporary challenges will make it abundantly clear that panacea lies only in such system of learning which is capable of equipping individuals and society as a whole with the required life skills (Khushnam, 2022).

The NEP 2020 has the provision for foreign universities to operate in India and the Indian universities can start their campuses abroad. The government is at work to draft the due regulatory mechanism to reap the desired outcomes. The collaboration approach will usher in tie-ups between the foreign universities and the established Indian universities. The former can utilise the brand value of the local universities and add their skills and practice to create a world-class global learning environment (Jain and Kapadia, 2020).

## **IIPA's CONTRIBUTION**

Indian Institute of Public Administration is also contributing towards India's efforts to become a global leader by conducting various capacity development programmes under ITEC. It has conducted programme on Strategic Leadership, Project Management for Public Works, Data Analytics and Risk Management, etc.

Participants from more than ninety countries have been trained on different technical skills and more than 500 participants have been trained. IIPA also conducts special programme for Kyrgyz, Russia and Afghanistan.

## PEACE KEEPING OPERATIONS



India has a long history of service in UN Peacekeeping, having contributed more personnel than any other country. India's contribution to UN Peacekeeping began with its participation in the UN operation in Korea in the 1950s, where India's mediatory role in resolving the stalemate over prisoners of war in Korea led to the signing of the armistice that ended the Korean War.

India's contributions to UN peacekeeping operations (UNPKOs) have been underscored by the experience and professionalism of India's armed forces. Speaking at the September 2015 Leaders' Summit in New York on UN Peacekeeping, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi had said:"The foundations of the United Nations were laid by the brave soldiers on the battlefields of the Second World War. By 1945, they included 2.5 million men of the Indian Army, the largest volunteer force in history." India today is the largest contributor of troops to UNPKOs. More than 200,000 Indian troops have served in 49 of the 71 UNPKOs deployed so far (Mukerji, 2019).

Presently more than 2,53,000 Indians have served in 49 of the 71 UN Peacekeeping missions established around the world since 1948. Currently, there are around 5,500 troops and police from India who have been deployed to UN Peacekeeping missions, the fifth highest amongst troop-contributing countries. India is the fifth largest troop contributor (TCC) with 5,323 personnel deployed in 8 out of 13 active UN Peacekeeping Missions, of which 166 are police personnel. The UN entrusted the Indian armed forces with subsequent peace missions in the Middle East, Cyprus, and the Congo (since 1971, Zaire). India also served as Chair of the three international commissions for supervision and control for Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos established by the 1954 Geneva Accords on Indo-China. One cannot ignore the role of women in Indian Peace Keeping Mission.

In 2007, India became the first country to deploy an all-women contingent to a UN Peacekeeping Mission. The Formed Police Unit in Liberia provided 24-hour guard duty and conducted night patrols in the capital Monrovia, and helped to build the capacity of the Liberian police. These women officers not only played a role in restoring security in the West African nation but also contributed to an increase in the number of women in Liberia's security sector.

A Supreme Court ruling in 2021 allowed women to train at defense institutions is paving the way for greater inclusion in the Indian armed forces. This would enhance the active participation of the women for a greater inclusion in protecting the world peace.

India has been recognized for her international contribution to peace. The Indian contingent in the Upper Nile region (includes the Indian Battalion, the Horizontal Mechanical Engineering Company, the Level II hospital, the Petroleum Platoon and the Force Signal Unit) have all received UN Medals of Honour. India has provided 17 Force Commanders to various Missions. Besides the Force Commanders, India also had the honour of providing two Military Advisers, one Female Police Adviser, and one Deputy Military Adviser to the Secretary General of the United Nations. India was the first country to contribute to the Trust Fund on sexual exploitation and abuse, which was set up in 2016. (*Journals of India*, 2022).

## DISASTER AND HUMANITARIAN DIPLOMACY



For India, respecting sovereignty lies at the heart of providing Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR). This is in adherence to the 1994 Oslo Guidelines that states, 'Humanitarian Assistance must be provided with the core principles of Humanity, Impartiality and Neutrality and must also fully respect the sovereignty of states (Parmar, 2012).

The Tsunami of 2004 that caused immense destruction and loss on the rim of the Indian Ocean, served as a game changer with regard to India's active entry into disaster relief efforts not only in South Asia but also in the wider global arena. India started to be recognised as a compassionate regional power that was quick to respond, and capable of providing international relief (Upadhyay, 2018)

Indian response to the 2004 tsunami when the Indian Navy deployed 32 naval ships, 7 aircraft and 20 helicopters in support of five rescue, relief and reconstruction missions, in Indian Ocean 'Operation Castor' (Maldives), 'Operation Rainbow' (Sri Lanka) and 'Operation Gambhir' (Indonesia; Sakhuja, 2005). (Khanna and Moorthy, 2017).

In 2015, India's disaster relief efforts touched new heights when an earthquake of 7.9 on the

Richter scale struck Kathmandu, Nepal. Within three hours, the Indian government was coordinating a response involving the armed forces, the National Disaster Response Force, medical teams, and volunteers. Indian Air Force planes - including a C-130J Super Hercules - were swift to carry blankets, a mobile 'field hospital', and search and rescue teams.

Launched by Hon. Prime Minister of India, Shri. Narendra Modi at the UN Climate Action Summit at New York on 23 September 2019, the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) is a partnership of national governments, UN agencies and programmes, multilateral development banks and financing mechanisms, the private sector, and knowledge institutions that aims to promote the resilience of new and existing infrastructure systems to climate and disaster risks in support of sustainable development. CDRI boosts India's soft power, but more importantly it has wider connotation than just economics, as synergy between disaster risk reduction, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Climate Accord provides for sustainable and inclusive growth. CDRI promotes rapid development of resilient infrastructure to respond to the Sustainable Development Goals' imperatives of expanding universal access to basic services, enabling prosperity and decent work. It provides a platform for India to emerge as a global leader on climate Action and Disaster Resilience (CDRI website).

By undertaking the rescue operations, India not only safeguards the Indian citizens from conflict zone by using its hard power capabilities, but it also succeeds in projecting its soft power by evacuating foreign nationals of developed countries. The example of recent Operation Ganga illustrates this.

Amidst the escalating tension between the two --- Russia and Ukraine, the Union Government has launched Operation Ganga to evacuate more than 20,000 Indians in Ukraine. Operation Ganga successfully evacuated about 23000 Indian citizens, as well as 147 foreign nationals belonging to 18 countries, from Ukraine (MEA, 2022)..

In 2021,under Operation Devi Shakti, India carried out the evacuation of hundreds of Indians from Afghanistan with the aid of the Indian Armed Forces. Hundreds of Indians were left stranded in Afghanistan after the collapse of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the fall of Kabul, the capital city, to the Taliban.

Operation Vande Bharat was launched in 2020, when the Indian government brought back Indians stranded in different countries in the Covid-19 pandemic-hit world. Under this operation, more than 2.17 lakh flights have been operated under Vande Bharat and over 1.83 crore passengers have been facilitated as of October 31, 2021.

Another mission launched by the Indian government in 2021 to bring back Indians stranded overseas during the Covid-19 pandemic, Operation Samudra Setu was a naval operation that brought back over 3,000 Indian citizens to their homeland.

Operation Raahat was launched in 2015 when hundreds of Indians were left stranded in Yemen after a conflict raged between the Yemeni government and Houthi rebels. Under Operation Raahat, India evacuated nearly 5,600 people from Yemen.

Operation Maitri was launched in 2015 as a joint relief and rescue operation by the Indian government and the Indian Armed Forces in the aftermath of the Nepal earthquake. The joint Army-Air Force operation brought over 5,000 Indians back from Nepal by Air Force and civilian planes. The Indian army successfully evacuated 170 foreign nationals from the US, the UK, Russia and Germany.

In 2011, when a civil war broke out in the Northern African state of Libya, the Indian government launched Operation Safe Homecoming and rescued 15,400 Indians..

Operation Sukoon was launched in 2006 as Israel and Lebanon broke into a military conflict in July 2006. The operation is now famously known as 'Beirut Sealift'. It is hailed as the largest ever evacuation after the 'Dunkirk' evacuation. Over 2,000 nationals, Nepalese and Sri Lankans were evacuated under the operation.

After Vande Bharat, Kuwait's airlift remains the second-largest rescue operation by the Indian government. The 1990 airlift of Indians from Kuwait was carried out after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. The resources were deployed to rescue 1, 75,000 people. Given the scale of evacuation, Air India found a mention in the *Guinness Book of World Records* for airlifting the largest number of people in a civilian plane.

India deployed its naval assets under the United Nation Security Council (UNSC) mandate. Two interventions by the Indian Navy exemplify the naval role in peace and good order at sea. In the first ever deterrent action against Somali pirates undertaken in 2008. In another direct action in 2009, INS Talwar escorted a Liberia-registered cargo ship with two other merchant vessels, along the north of the Horn of Africa. Approximately \$110 billion of international trade passes through the erstwhile piracy infested waters off Somalia. India contributes around 7% of the world's merchant mariners and thus has an abiding interest in their safety and security (Johnson, 2020).

## FUNDING ECOSYSTEM: RISE OF UNICORNS



The term 'Unicorn' refers to the rarest of the rare startups which become Unicorns attaining a valuation of more than USD 1 billion. The Indian Startup Ecosystem, the third-largest in the world in number of Unicorns, as of 5th May 2022, is home to 100 unicorns with a total valuation of USD 332.7 billion. 2021 experienced a huge surge in the number of unicorns, registering a total of 44 startups entering the Unicorn club through the year with a total valuation of USD 93 billion.

In the first four months of 2022, India has given birth to 14 unicorns with a total valuation of USD 18.9 billion (PIB, 2022). The high number of start-ups is part of the reason India has made remarkable progress in the global innovation index ranking finding a place in the top 40,

said the annual report released by the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) on 29 September, 2022.

India's technology ascent in recent years is due in large measure to its focus on nurturing tech start-ups and incentivizing innovation. For instance, the \$3 billion Startup India initiative the government launched in 2016 has helped pave the way digitally by offering micro-financing and low-interest rate loans to entrepreneurs (India Tech Unicorn Report 2021)

With more than 66,000 startups and over 100 unicorns, India is home to the third-largest startup ecosystem, behind only the US and China (Invest India, 2022). Projections indicate that by 2025, India may well have over 100,000 startups that employ more than 3.5 million people and produce over 200 unicorns; with a total market value closer to US\$1 trillion (Pa, 2021). The pipeline of companies that will potentially become unicorns and go on to list in the public markets is also expanding rapidly.

Most recently, India's fiscal year 2022-2023 budget, released on 1 February, has been called "a budget for a digital-first India" in that it positions the country to be among a few that are leading the way in regulating crypto assets and introducing a national digital currency.

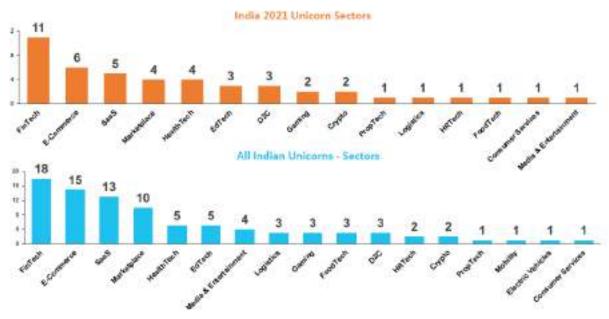
## Advancing solutions to global problems

Alongside its aim to become the largest start-up ecosystem, India is also sending signals that it is committed to using technology to advance key global priorities. In 2018, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the launch of the Centre for the Fourth Industrial Revolution India in partnership with the World Economic Forum. The centre serves as a hub for the public and private sectors to work together in accelerating the widespread adoption of new technologies and shaping these technologies in a way that benefits society.

India is also sending signals that it is committed to using technology to advance specific priorities, particularly relating to public health, social inclusion, and climate sustainability.

Notably, India has deployed technology to advance public health priorities during the COV-ID-19 pandemic. The government launched the Aarogya-Setu app to track infections, which was developed in 21 days through public-private partnership. A part of this app, the CoWIN Portal, has received global acclaim for its success in becoming the digital backbone of world's largest vaccination drive executed by India. These innovations offer powerful examples of robust, inclusive and scalable models for expanding public services through digital technology. (Business today.in)

Figure 1. Unicorns by Sectors



Source: Business Today.in

Though the majority of the unicorns are in the FinTech sector, some are also engaegd in solving the global / local problems like sanitation, water, agriculture, supply chain, mid-day meal delivery, etc. as depicted in Figure 1.

## **KINDNESS ECONOMY**

Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's needs,
but not every man's greed — Mahatma Gandhi



November 13th, is World Kindness Day. It's an opportunity to celebrate kindness and to reflect on the importance of kind actions in making our world a better place. Indeed, "kind" is among the top five hundred most frequently used words in the English language. During the COV-ID-19 pandemic, acts of kindness have featured prominently in the news. In India, we witnessed many organisations coming forward to distribute food packets to migrant labourers forced to trek back to their villages. So many people have gone the extra mile to show kindness to others.

There is no mention of kindness—the act of giving without expecting anything in return—in the ambitious 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which has been adopted by 193 countries. While this may have been a surprising omission, the Agenda is still remarkable in that it unites all United Nations Member States in striving to achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), not just those countries traditionally classified as "developing" or "least-developed". The Agenda represents the recognition that "we are all in the same boat" and that we need to work together to build a better world (Duraiappah, 2019).

At a time when countries are closing borders and curbing migration, health workers are the exception. India is racing to touch the magic target of producing 1 lakh doctors every year to achieve the WHO recommendation of one doctor per 1,000 population. People worldwide are living longer. Today most people can expect to live into their sixties and beyond. Every country in the world is experiencing growth in both the size and the proportion of older persons in the population.

By 2030, 1 in 6 people in the world will be aged 60 years or over. At this time the share of the population aged 60 years and over will increase from 1 billion in 2020 to 1.4 billion. By 2050, the world's population of people aged 60 years and older will double (2.1 billion). The number of persons aged 80 years or older is expected to triple between 2020 and 2050 to reach 426 million (WHO, 2022).

In this situation, skilling and sending Indian healthcare workers abroad is a way of showing the soft power.

Kindness is the new SuperPower for leaders and one of the reasons why we need more female leaders in this new era of leadership we are entering. It's also a new and powerful form of currency: one that we can trade for loyalty, trust, and influence. The old era of leadership was about status, title, power, dictatorship, self-serving, and having people do what you say. The new era of leadership is about kindness, compassion, authenticity, collaboration, trust, and humility, and being a leader people choose to follow (Callander, 2021)

The promotion of health in India's foreign policy agenda can be traced back to WHO negotiations leading to the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC), ratified by India in February 2004 (Kaur and Jain, 2011). The severity of the tobacco problem was greater in India than anywhere else .To discourage tobacco use, the government continues to focus on the strict implementation of control policies and prohibits the advertising or promotion of tobacco products. India has also passed an ordinance banning the production, manufacturing, import and export, sale, distribution and advertising of electronic cigarettes, drawing global attention to the health hazards from such devicees (Kalra and Ahmed, 2019).

The foreign policy and policymakers in India are committed to strengthening cooperation and sharing of experiences in public health sector. India uses foreign assistance as diplomatic tool for foreign trade and investment; and sustained cooperation to many developing and under-developed nations including Africa. India strongly believes in the concept of south-south cooperation and critical about western donor-aid concept. Indian foreign assistance typically includes technical cooperation, grants, and contributions to international organizations, soft loans, and

Export-Import (EXIM) Bank lines of credit with subsidized interest rates (Singh, 2017).

Although the COVID-19 crisis has provided an immediate context for Indian outreach, health has been for years on its foreign policy agenda, and we been quite active in promoting global health partnerships. India's role has proceeded on three broad fronts. First, India has been a donor of health aid by ensuring access to medicines and sharing its experiences, particularly with developing countries. India has offered telemedicine and training of healthcare professionals from SAARC countries and Africa. As part of South-South Cooperation, it has also tried to facilitate best practices by linking hospitals and educational institutions with Indian counterparts. The country has supplied low cost diagnostic kits for malaria, tuberculosis, HIV, hepatitis, SAARS and H1N1.

Second, the government's efforts have been reinforced by India's private sector which has provided solutions and high-quality, low-cost healthcare to the developing world. For instance, WHO has undertaken community ophthalmology training in several African countries. Narayana Health has a hospital in Grand Cayman island that has treated patients mainly from the Caribbean and Central America. All these have helped India to earn goodwill and boosted its soft power.

Third, with rising challenges to human security, India over the years has been engaged internationally on issues such as non-communicable diseases and bioterrorism. The corona crisis has demonstrated that no country could escape its impact. At another level, it exposed the struggle of countries to craft a global response as most of them have concentrated their efforts on the domestic front and there is a lack of leadership at the world stage to coordinate steps to combat the virus (Mohanty, 2020).

During the pandemic, we have seen countries like Maldives, which had managed so far to escape the pandemic and stay open for tourism, its sources stated that its health workers came almost entirely from India. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) was similarly affected, as a travel ban on flights from India after the onset of the second wave left hundreds of its health workers sourced. Data available from 2017 by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) shows there were 69,000 doctors from India working in the UK, US, Canada, and Australia, and 56,000 Indian nurses working in these four countries in the same year (Sunaina, 2021).

The good news is that people are empathetic by nature. This natural trait, however, has been suppressed by the external environment to which we are subjected today. The fast pace of life, increasing employment insecurity, the stress of needing to excel at all times and, more recently, the increasing frequency of extreme events driven by climate change have all dampened our sensitivity to the plight of other beings. However, India has adopted an approach towards Kindness Economy, as an opposite of knowledge based economy.

India has increased its soft power diplomacy in Afghanistan and with other neighbouring countries in terms of building connectivity.

## **BUILDING CONNECTIVITY**



India signed a memorandum of understanding with Afghanistan for construction of the Lalandar (Shatoot) Dam in the war-torn nation on a tributary of the Kabul River that would provide safe drinking water to over 2.2 million people in the capital city and boost cross country irrigation facilities. Since 2001, when the US-led war on terrorism ousted the Taliban regime from Kabul, New Delhi had pledged and implemented development and reconstruction projects worth more than \$3 billion. India has built roads, dams, electricity transmission networks and substations, schools and most prominently, the Afghan Parliament.

The Afghan Parliament in Kabul was built by India at \$90 million. It was inaugurated in 2015, by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. It was a gift from India to the war-ravaged nation.

Salma dam in Herat's Cheshte Sharif district is one of the largest dams in Afghanistan and provides irrigation water and electricity to thousands of families in the province.

Salma Dam has a water storage capacity of 640 million cubic meters and an irrigation capacity of 2,00,000 acres of farmland from the Chishti Sharif District of Herat to the Zulfiqar area on the Iran Border. This dam has been India's most expensive infrastructural project in Afghanistan in recent years.

The 218-kilometre highway built by the Border Roads Organisation is located close to the Afghanistan-Iran border. The 150-million highway is of strategic importance to India as it connects Delaram to the northeast of Zaranj with all major regions such as Kandahar, Ghazni, Kabul and Mazar-i-Sharif, and Herat. Built at a cost of Rs 600 crore, the highway is a symbol of India's developmental work in this country and was handed over to Afghan authorities (*First Post*, 2021).

India has signed an agreement to set up hybrid power projects on northern Sri Lankan islands in a deal seen as a strategic victory in its competition with China for influence in the Indian Ocean (*Times of India*, 2022)

India has committed Rs. 4500 crore for the implementation of development projects and Rs. 400 crores for the transitional Trade Support Facility during Bhutan's 12th Five Year Plan (2018 - 2023). According to official statistics, 77 large and intermediate projects and 524 Small Development Projects (SDPs)/ High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDPs) are at various stages of implementation under the 12th Five-Year Plan of Bhutan (*LiveMint*, 2021).

Nepal has formally awarded the much-touted West Seti Hydropower Project and Seti River Project in western Nepal to India through a negotiation window, nearly four years after China withdrew from it.

Investment Board Nepal on Thursday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with India's state-owned NHPC Limited to develop the two projects—West Seti and Seti River (SR6)—joint storage projects totalling 1200MW (*Kathmandu Post*, 2022).

## SPORTS DIPLOMACY



Sports diplomacy has gained much importance with increasing interest in sports internationally. As per Daya Thussu, "Sports has always been a form of soft power in terms of promoting a national brand or identity, and which itself has been used by nations to promote their products and cultures."

The importance of this new arena as a focal tool of traditional diplomacy cannot be neglected anymore. Bringing nations together on one ground along with their differences in culture and language helps the societies to fill-in the vacuum of understanding one another. Sport is meant to connect the people across the globe and act as a means for many governments to pursue the political interests (Mazahir et al. 2020)

Another instrument of soft power that India is capitalising on in the recent times is sports diplo-

macy. The ability of the sports to connect people even in the face of adversity and commotion has been employed by statesmen in diplomacy throughout the twentieth century; India, in this regard, is no exception. The use of cricket diplomacy in diffusing tensions with Pakistan and generating goodwill among other South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) nations is just an example of it. With the creation of the Indian Premier League (IPL) in 2008, at a time when Indian economy was booming, has helped in projecting India's soft power.

It is interesting to note that Afghanistan's first test match was hosted by the BCCI in India and thereby catapulted the former as a full-fledged test playing nation.

Other experts on cultural diplomacy and soft power have reiterated that at least in India's case, cricket has been at the forefront to connect with the globe. However, this does not imply that other sports are not significant. The victorious Iranian kabaddi team in the Asian Games held in 2019 was coached by an Indian.

## **CULINARY DIPLOMACY**



Indians being the largest diaspora, Indian culinary heritage has travelled the length and breadth of the earth too. This has spread the culinary traditions of the subcontinent throughout the world. These cuisines have been adapted to local tastes, and have also affected local cuisines. Major cities across the globe have a good number of Indian restaurants.

Indian *tandoor* dishes such as chicken tikka enjoy widespread popularity. Indian cuisine in the Middle East has been influenced greatly by the large Indian diaspora. Centuries of trade relations and cultural exchanges have resulted in significant influence on each region's cuisines, the most notable being the Biryani. It was introduced by Persian invaders into Northern India and has since become an integral part of the Mughlai cuisine.

Indian cuisine is very popular in Southeast Asia, due to the strong Hindu and Buddhist cultural influence in the region. Indian cuisine has also had considerable influence on Malaysian cook-

ing styles and also enjoys popularity in Singapore. Singapore is also known for fusion cuisine combining traditional Singaporean cuisine with Indian cuisines.

Chicken tikka masala has been called "a true British national dish." In 2001, former Foreign Secretary Robin Cook cited chicken tikka masala as Britain's national dish. In 2003, there were as many as 10,000 restaurants serving Indian cuisine in England and Wales alone.

UK supermarkets have been quick to pick up the rising trend of Indian street food: as the classic Indian ready meal category is built upon the same foundations as the traditional curry house, it also must evolve to avoid facing the same eventual decline.

Iceland claims to be the first retailer to launch in 2018 an Indian street food range in response to Britain's changing eating habits. Style (Koyenikan, 2018).

## COMMONWEALTH DIPLOMACY



The Commonwealth is a unique association of 54 equal member states, and 2.4 billion people spanning six continents, and accounting for a third of the World Trade Organisation, a quarter of the G20, and a fifth of all global trade. India is a founding member of the modern Commonwealth, and home to nearly 60% of Commonwealth citizens. India is the fourth largest contributor to the overall budget of Commonwealth (High Commission of India, London)

As a leading member, India provides impressive support to Commonwealth members, including funding to the Commonwealth Small States offices in New York and Geneva, training for officials from Commonwealth governments, and in 2019 held the first Commonwealth cricket camp. (British High Commission, 2022).

## CULTURAL DIPLOMACY



Culture is one of the most relevant, intangible forms of power—and so it has been for centuries. Soft power—worth pointing out—is a nation's ability to exert a certain level of influence to shape preferences by influential leverage. It is the ability to "make others change their behaviour in a desired direction as a result of persuasion" via invisible currency. (Joseph Samuel Nye, "Soft Power and Cultural Diplomacy" (article adapted from a speech delivered at Syracuse University Cultural Diplomacy Symposium, September 20, 2009), *Cultural Diplomacy*, (New York, 2006).) Films, like other forms of cultural expression, work better in open and democratic societies (Gao, 2017).

At the forefront of India's cultural diplomacy is the Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR), established in 1950 to forge cultural relations with foreign countries and thereby, enhance its soft power.

It has established 36 cultural centres across the world (PIB, 2017). The various modalities through which it works to enhance India's cultural attraction include organising Indian cultural festivals abroad (since the 1980s) and foreign cultural festivals in India. It has more than 100 Chairs of Indian Studies abroad and awards fellowships to international scholars specialising in Indian studies in the fields of culture and social sciences. It also offers a number of scholarship programmes.

If all these were not enough, India has diplomacy of free expression of culture Bollywood. Bollywood is undoubtedly the most visible manifestation of India's "global popular" brand. In a postmodern, image-saturated world branding is considered an effective means to promote a country's soft power (Anholt, 2007; Aronczyk, 2008; Van Ham, 2008; Marat, 2009; Lee, A. L., 2010; Kaneva, 2011).

In the 1980s, the famous theatre personality Peter Brook produced the 'Mahabharata' with a universal cast. The impact was spectacular. The great Indian epic became popular in the far corners of the world overnight. When discussing about the culture, our own Bollywood cannot be neglected.

Bollywood has proudly been one of India's key soft power resources, with unparalleled popularity not just with the South Asian and Indian diaspora but also in the Middle East, parts of Africa and even as far as Latin America. Indian movies first became popular in the Soviet Union in the 1950s, and people who grew up watching classics like Shri 420 or Disco Dancer remember the plots and songs fondly. A vibrant film culture can thrive and excel only in countries where cultural expression is not heavily regulated or censored. (Zubair, 2012). That has only been more than evident in the success of Bollywood across the democratic world, language being no bar. In 2017, Indian films made a handsome \$367 million in box office revenues overseas—more than thrice the previous year. Indian films released in theatres and cinemas abroad made about 16.7 billion Indian rupees in revenue in financial year 2020.

Taking an example of Germany— It got its own Bollywood magazine, printed in the German language. Nasim Khan, its Indo-German owner, told a BBC reporter that Germany's interest in Bollywood began with the screening of the family drama *Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham*. 'More than 2 million watched it,' In 2010, when one of the movie's biggest stars, Shah Rukh Khan, visited Berlin, he was mobbed by hundreds of fans who stood in front of the Grand Hyatt, braving the snow and the winter chill.( Zubair, 2012).

However, what is less known is the popularity of Indian soap operas outside India – particularly in countries such as Afghanistan, Vietnam and parts of Africa. Of these, Indian soap operas – in particular, the famous *Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi* – is the most popular in Afghanistan. (Shetty and Sahagal, (2019)

The situation in Vietnam is similar. In 2015, Google released a list of the most widely-searched terms in various countries of the world.(Milson, 2015). According to the list, the Vietnamese-dubbed version of the popular Indian soap Balika Vadhu was incredibly famous. In fact, *Balika Vadhu* runs in sixteen languages across eighteen countries, including Swahili and Serbian.(*Economic times*,2013) Evidently, international audiences have taken a liking to Indian television series.



As India's TV and film industries churn out pop culture gems, the government also organizes several cultural and educational exchange programs. The Indian Council for Cultural Relations funds the translation of Indian poems into Central Asian languages, co-sponsors cultural festivals, and funds dance and musical troupes' tours around the region(Wood, 2018).

Similarly, Indian art and culture is popularised by fashion designers such as Sabyasachi and Manish Malhotra and artists such as Pandit Ravi Shankar and A.R. Rahman, all of whom are recognised worldwide.

# ANIMATION, VISUAL EFFECTS, GAMING and COMICS, (AVGC) AND E-SPORTS



The 1st Industrial Revolution (IR 1.0) is known for producing Steam Engines and Small Machine tools. But the 2nd Industrial Revolution (IR 2.0) occurred between 1870 – 1914, during this time, the world started to adapt new technologies such as electricity, railroads, telegraph, telephone, mass production of steel, petroleum, Combustion Engines and much more. Soon after the 2nd Industrial Revolution, came the 3rd Industrial Revolution (IR 3.0). This was the period of the 20th century, where we witnessed the invention of computers, software, automobiles, nuclear technology and electronics. The 4th Industrial Revolution (IR 4.0) is heavily tied to an event that is currently going on, called Artificial Intelligence (AI). AI is being used in war, health, education and even in media and entertainment.

Indians are becoming an essential part of VFX used in Hollywood flick. The adventure movie like the Thor; The Dark World and Avengers or Projects like the Shape of Water and Handmaid Tale Hollywood is increasingly inclined toward Indians specializing in VFX. The science-fiction epic Dune bagged several awards at the Oscars 2022. It also went home with the Best Visual Effects trophy. And it was all made possible by an Indian-origin man, Namit Malhotra.

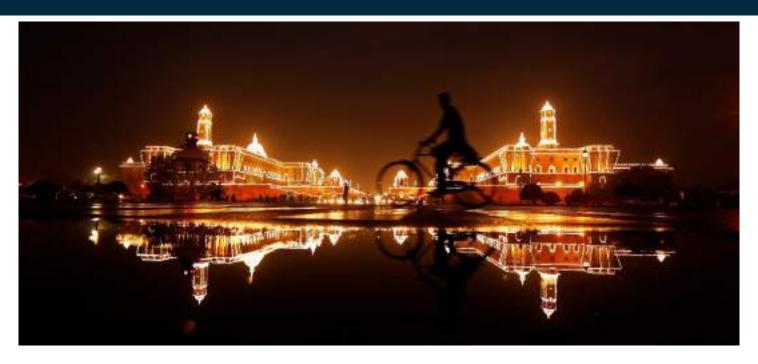
He is also behind the VFX of Daniel Craig's last James Bond movie, *No Time to Die*, which was also nominated in the same category(*India Today*, 2022)

One of the most anticipated and most ambitious projects in the history of filmmaking in India saw the light in the last month. 'Brahmastra: Part 1 - Shiva' which is only the beginning of the three part fantasy action-adventure saga. The film that boasted of VFX never seen before in Indian films, had as many as 4500 VFX shots - that's more than even Avengers! Besides, we've had masterpieces like 'KGF', 'RRR', 'Baahubali', '2.0' and many others that boasted of world class use of VFX technology.

Now that the Indian AVGC sector has expanded its global footprint and gaining maturity, this is the time to leverage the culture of storytelling and India's soft power potential. The success of Indian animation series like *Chota Bheem* on the international stage can be emulated to create more Indian characters from Indian mythologies and folklore for the international audiences.

Over the last two years of the pandemic, the creation of corresponding virtual spaces has become an essential component in media. Like physical spaces, 3D experiences are used to showcase art and cultural heritage to global audiences, eventually persuading and influencing the real world. Since culture is the most powerful means to identify a country AVGC sector has the potential to become the torchbearer of 'Create in India' & 'Brand India'.

## **INDIA'S SOFT POWER**



India's civilizational connect "was never a consequence of a war or colonization, but rather an outcome of exchange of ideas, traditions and culture that accompanied trade of various goods," as Dr. Vinay Sahasrabuddhe, President of Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), said in his address at Namaste 2020: Global Utsava of Indian Soft Power. The global recognition of India as a "non-aggressor country, whose vision is inclusive and worldview rests in the idea of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* – the world is one family." Diversity of lifestyles, yet a coherent and shared identity and harmony between humans and nature are hallmarks of this philosophy. The Indian civilizational thought is rooted in the idea of co-existence with mother nature rather than conquering it. In this sense, the "practice of soft power is embellished in India's core identity

that dates back to millennia, even though the term is comparatively new in the foreign policy and cultural discourse.

Beyond cultural and civilizational heritage, India has been recognized for its role in addressing global challenges and being at the forefront of various development-related initiatives. Though India's international engagement is guided by its security and strategic interests, it is also underpinned by the values of inclusivity, plurality and welfare for all. The establishing of International Solar Alliance, for example, demonstrated India's commitment towards mitigating environmental risks through multilateral cooperation. Similarly, Indian offers humanitarian aid to smaller mainland and island economies in times of calamity, while its contributions to the UN Peacekeeping forces are amongst the highest in the world. The country's cooperation at bilateral and multilateral forums for fighting COVID-19 through supplying hydro-chloroquine to the world as well as directing R&D efforts towards vaccine development highlight India's contribution in the global pharmaceutical and wellness sector (Gupta, 2020).

A research organization called Brand Finance measures 7 'pillars' contributing to the favourable or unfavourable perception of the nation brands in their study to develop the soft power index for the nations.. The pillar research explores various aspects of Business & Trade, Governance, International Relations, Culture & Heritage, Media & Communication, Education & Science, and People & Values.

The concept of soft power has undergone a critical analysis by a wide range of academics, journalists, think tanks, politicians, diplomats, and consultancies. World leaders, global corporate brands, civil society, entrepreneurs, academics, journalists and thinkers are endlessly attempting to make sense of the concept of power.

India's soft power is like a river flowing down from the Himalayas. It is understated at times, gentle mostly, displays power when situations demand and carries itself with elegance through the tumults of time. With India earning a ranking of 29th in the Global Soft Power Index, the river is as wide, quiet and calm as a lake. India exerts its soft power very gently, but is prominent in a number of fields: From being the world's largest democracy to its spectrum of cultural and linguistic diversity to its moral doctrine of non-violence of Mahatma Gandhi, to its biggest non-monetised global export of Yoga, Spiritualism, to its Classical Music and Dance, to the millions who come to India every year for its Holistic healthcare, to its delicious and flexible cuisines enjoyed globally as curries and to its loud Bollywood known over the world.

Behind the scenes, India is today the world's most powerful IT factory, earning it a strong rankings for science and technology. Indian IT firms lead the way in providing digitisation for the world going through pandemic. From its limited reserves, India finds a way to help other countries in healthcare – both in terms of hard power (vaccines) and soft power (healthcare professionals).(Francis, 2022).

With its dependence on world resources, India found a way to remain balanced in a polarised world of geo-politics, and earned a decent rating of 4.2 for 'good relations with other countries'. This is a country which cherishes innovation and at the same time develops cutting edge block-chain technology. India is yet to showcase itself on a global stage. Perhaps it does not need to. (Global Soft Power Index, 2022)

# CONCLUSION

Power is, not simply the "the ability or right to control people or things", but crucially it is also the possession of influence over others and the "ability to act or produce an effect". Ultimately, soft power is the ability to convert states rather than coerce them, or simply "getting others to want what you want", which is achieved by proving your shared values and norms. The strength of a nation in bringing others on-side can be said to rest broadly upon its culture, economy, political values, foreign policies, quality of life, robust academic institutions, and rule of law.

The first decade of the twenty-first century saw the chants of the rise of an Indian superpower. These claims of the twenty-first century as India's century were not only based on the massive economic growth that the country saw in the post-1991 liberalisation period, and the concomitant boost in military infrastructure, but also by virtue of its having the biggest functional democracy, an influential multi-million plus diaspora, the sway of Bollywood in the region and abroad and the spectacular religious-linguistic diversity of the country. From conducting mega disaster-relief operations during the 2004 tsunami to effectuating the world's largest civil evacuation during Operation Rahat, India has ceaselessly augmented its soft power potential to project its national power in the region.

The various components of India's soft power are as diverse as films and Bollywood, yoga, ayurveda, political pluralism, religious diversity and openness to global influences. While the successful export of cultural products such as Bollywood across the world has helped raise awareness of Indian culture and modified existing stereotypes, other soft power elements such as the institutional model of a long lasting democratic and plural political system have also inspired societies abroad.

India's soft power has grown in view of its economic liberalisation and success as well as its rapid acquisition of military power. The growth of its hard economic and military power resources has reinforced India's confidence in projecting its soft power as.

Therefore, going as per the above discussion, it is logical to infer that India is emerging as a global leader in the 21th century due to it's all round development.

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