

Raja mandala theory and its relevance history essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Chanakya stated that every state is surrounded by many states, out of which one would be a natural adversary. Other states might be allies, vassals, neutrals or hostile. The king should focus on the natural adversary and defeat it.

Chanakya advised the king to be pragmatic in his approach towards his enemies and prudence in choice of foreign policy. He was against spineless surrender or foolhardy valour. He preferred peace over war in most cases. He said that when the degree of progress to be made from choosing between war and peace were same, the king must choose peace. He took into consideration the losses of troops, expenditure and absence from home while giving this advice. He also said that if the balance of power were not to become favourable as a result of war, peace must be chosen.[28]

Circle of States

According to Chanakya, the king, his friend, and his friend's friend are the three primary kings constituting a circle of states. As each of these three kings possesses another five elements of sovereignty; such as the minister, the country, the fort, the treasury, and the army; a circle of states consists of eighteen elements. The three Circles of States having the enemy, the middle king, or the neutral king at the centre of each of the three circles are different from that of the conqueror. Thus there are four primary Circles of States, twelve kings, sixty elements of sovereignty, and seventy-two elements of states. Each of the twelve primary kings have their elements of sovereignty, power, and end. Strength is power, and happiness is the end.

Strength is of three types: power of deliberation being the intellectual strength; a prosperous treasury and a strong army being the strength of sovereignty; and martial power being the physical strength.

The end too is of three kinds: that which is attainable by deliberation is the end of deliberation; that which is attainable by the strength of sovereignty is the end of sovereignty; and that which is to be secured by perseverance is the end of martial power. The possession of power and happiness in a greater degree makes a king superior to another; in a less degree, inferior; and in an equal degree, equal. Therefore the king was always required to augment his power and elevate his happiness.[29]

Six Methods of Foreign Policy

The states participate in diplomacy and war using the six methods of foreign policy. To understand the concept of Raja Mandala theory, the six methods of foreign policy enunciated by Chanakya must be understood. These cater for different situations in international relations.[30]

(a) Samdhi. The peace treaties were to be concluded with specific conditions that enabled the state to promote welfare and development, strengthen alliances or use the period as one arm of dual policy. Chanakya said that treaty could even be entered into with one's enemy and may be broken when one grows strong. The interests of the state being supreme, such betrayals were justified.

(b) Vighraha. The policy of hostility was recommended to be followed by the stronger state. The hostilities could be conducted as open, secret, undeclared or clandestine attacks. Diplomatic wars too were discussed extensively by Chanakya. Having had to fight conventional and proxy wars, India in addition to fighting militarily, has been dealing with this on a diplomatic level as well.

(c) Asana. The policy of remaining neutral was recommended by Chanakya to be followed when both states were equal. The Chinese observed neutrality in the cold war between USA and erstwhile USSR and utilized their efforts towards development. India was the leading proponent of non-alignment and in following the policy was able to get the best of both the Western and Eastern Blocs. India must be amongst the few nations in the world that can acquire weapon systems, nuclear technology, industrial knowhow and even support for permanent membership of UNSC from USA and Russia.

(d) Yana. Posturing for war was an important decision that the king had to take. The preparation for war and the long march entailed heavy expenditure and prolonged absence from the capital, thus necessitated careful consideration before taking such a decision. After the attack on Parliament on 13 December 2001, the armed forces were mobilised. The forces remained in the offensive posture for a complete year. While the war never took place, many skirmishes on the line of control occurred. The tensions on the line of control brought international pressure upon Pakistan resulting in imposition of sanctions on the terrorist groups and the leaders in February 2002. The continued pressure resulted in a ceasefire agreement in 2003 that holds good till date.

(e) Samsraya. The policy of seeking protection of a stronger king could be practised by entering into alliances or by signing a treaty. Various alliances formed during the cold war indicate that this policy is relevant even today. In 1971 when war with Pakistan was imminent, India signed a treaty of Friendship with USSR as a safeguard against intervention by USA and China

on behalf of Pakistan. Pakistan's alliance with China in can be seen as a means of seeking protection against India.

(f) Dvaidhibhava. This was the policy of seeking peace with one king in order to pursue hostilities with another. China, which has territorial disputes with both India and Japan, maintains cordial relations with one while getting into a diplomatic row with other in order to channelize the complete effort of the state to achieve the objectives it sets for itself.

81. Special Cases. Chanakya envisaged certain situations wherein he considered the role of kings who could influence the outcome of a conflict without being directly involved. In context of India-Pakistan relations, China could be classified as middle king as described by Chanakya. Pakistan could create some problems in the course of Sino-India conflict, but would not fit the description of a middle king, being weaker than both India and China. However, USA, Russia and even UN fit the bill of a neutral king, a king who is more powerful than the belligerents but does not share the borders with the two.

Parshingraha. The attack in the rear in diplomatic, economic or psychological sphere had been described as an important aspect of foreign policy by Chanakya. It could be in form of posturing or supporting insurgency movements as well. China has been increasing her influence in India's neighbourhood through economic and diplomatic initiatives. In the last week of November 2012, Maldives annulled the contract of an Indian firm soon after its cabinet had returned from China. India too has developed closer ties with countries like Afghanistan, Iran, Mongolia, Japan, South Korea and Vietnam in order to counter the influence of Pakistan and China in their neighbourhood.[31]

Objectives of Foreign Policy

Chanakya said that the objective of foreign policy was to increase the power of a state. Military, intellect and morale were vital components of power according to Chanakya[32]. The king had to continuously project his power by using appropriate foreign policy. The dynamic relationship between power and progress was essential to be understood and had to be attained through implementing the right policy and correct execution within the circle of states.

Both India and China have been projecting their power in a different ways. While India has laid emphasis on soft power, China has embraced the policy of projecting comprehensive national power to included military and economic might in addition to its cultural influence around the world to exert influence on the policies of other nations.

Chanakya had said that peace could be made with the enemy albeit as a temporary measure to gain time to enhance own power. The wars in modern era are also fought on economic and cyber space. Both India and China are growing economies and the growth is expected to stabilise in another 20 to 30 years. They have bilateral trade running into billions of dollars every year despite being rivals for markets and captive resources. If the two were to engage in any form of war at present, the impact on their growth would be catastrophic. Moreover, the modern economies being inter-woven, it would have a domino effect on all the leading economies of the world. Thus, the setback the two countries would receive would be dynamic and would set their progress back in a big way. The two countries have adopted a very pragmatic approach and cooperate at various international and not let the disputes over boundary or South China Sea over shadow the areas of cooperation.

China maintains friendly relations with India at the same time supports Pakistan in all its misadventures. China has invested a great deal in infrastructure in Pakistan. The armed forces of Pakistan are being equipped by the Chinese at a frantic pace. China has little to gain directly from Pakistan except for access to the sea through Gwadar Port[33]. The main purpose of propping up Pakistan is to divert India's focus. Although growing at a fast pace, the resources with India are limited and thus can optimally focus on one front only.

Relative Power. Chanakya said that the king must always strive to enhance his power in comparison to the enemy. The relative power can be improved by making oneself stronger or by denuding the power of the enemy.[34]

India's military strength is dissipated on two fronts externally and internal security duties. India must strengthen her relations with Japan, Taiwan, South Korea and other littorals of South China Sea to force China to focus on many fronts at the same time. USA has provided all possible help to India in recent years to make China focus more on India. The aim of USA is to further her own interests in the Pacific Ocean region, Indian Ocean and the oil rich West Asia. The policymakers have to be careful in using the US card while dealing with China. Reliance on USA to provide deterrence against China, though beneficial in short term, would be counterproductive in long run. India will have to become stronger economically, diplomatically and militarily to enhance her relative power in long run.

Having realised her inferiority in conventional battlefield, Pakistan resorted to proxy war. The diversion of resources of Indian Army helped it achieve parity on the conventional battlefield. India responded by raising Rashtriya Rifles Battalions to deal with insurgency. The situation is now returning to normalcy. In 1998, Pakistan tested nuclear weapons in response to trials by India. The acquisition of nuclear weapons and missile delivery system by Pakistan gave her the deterrence capability and thus it avoided a war in 2002. However, the development of ballistic missile defence system by India would nullify the deterrence capability built by Pakistan[35].

Relative power is dynamic and its balance continues to change at all times. Every move by India, China or Pakistan draws response by the adversary. India would have to continually monitor the development in China, Pakistan and also within the countries that can be described as the inner circle of these countries in the circle of states.

Preference of Peace Over Conflict

The king had to adopt policies that would enhance the power of the state and economic and material well being of its subjects. This would necessitate improving infrastructure, increasing avenues for employment, to exploit mines and natural resources, and at the same time to deter similar progress of the enemy. A state that was in a position to grow in power more rapidly both in quality and quantity than the adversary could neglect the enemy's progress some time. Two states were to make peace when growth could be achieved by doing so. Hostility with the enemy was to be opened if it ensured better growth than the enemy. If the adversaries were neither in a position to destroy the progress of each other nor in a position to safeguard their own progress in case of hostilities, every endeavour was to be made to maintain peace.[36]

Pakistan. India is developing faster than Pakistan in all fields. The tool of Jihad that had been used by Pakistan to disrupt peace in India and to enable USA fight USSR in Afghanistan has become bane for very existence of Pakistan. Peaceful and stable Pakistan is essential for India's growth. [37]India has offered assistance to

Pakistan to help her overcome these challenges.

Chanakya had advocated destruction of enemy as and when the opportunity presented itself. The world order today is different from the times of Chanakya. Any hostile act by India would bring immediate sanctions from the comity of nations and thus will destroy the economic progress and well being of the state. Moreover, if the state of Pakistan were to disintegrate, the terrorist groups would reign supreme and they would most likely target India like never before. A large swell of refugees would migrate and cause demographic and economic catastrophe for India. The population that has been brought up on the staple of blaming India for every misery will turn their anger against India. Thus, when seen in the larger context, the policy being adopted by India is in sync with Chanakya's thought process that professes economic growth and welfare of citizens as a primary duty of the state.

China. Despite the size of the GDPs and the growth rate, India and China are yet to acquire a truly middle class status. The Chinese economy is industry driven while Indian economy is services driven. In order to continue on the path of growth, both need to add millions of new jobs every year. [38]The creation of so many new jobs requires unhindered economic activities. The present path of economic growth leaves adequate space for both the states to coexist peacefully.

In order to create millions of jobs every year, India will have to change to an industrial economy. In a decade or two, the two countries would end up competing for the raw materials and markets. This could lead to conflict between the two. It would be prudent for India to develop her military capabilities. Improvement in human development index would ensure that the manpower is educationally and technically qualified to absorb the technology at the given time.

India is surrounded by large number of small countries that are being wooed by China. These countries resent the perceived big brotherly attitude of India. In November 2012, the government of Maldives cancelled the contract of GMR for development of the airport. Nepal-India relations have taken a downward spiral due to neglect by Indian government as well as the bureaucracy's inflexible and inconsistent behaviour. One of the glaring examples of such neglect is the absence visit to Nepal by any of the Indian Prime Ministers, since 2002[39]. Bangladesh too has been antagonised over India's reluctance to finalise the water sharing agreement. India has to work towards bringing these countries back to her fold.

Dealing with Threats Posed by China and Pakistan using Arthashastra

Forging Alliances/ Partnership.

(a) Chanakya was of the opinion that forging alliances should be resorted to when needed[40]. War being one of the methods of executing foreign policy of the nation, the diplomacy has to garner a favourable opinion and if not, at least a neutral attitude from the comity of nations.

(b) From the very beginning Pakistan entered into military alliances like CENTO and SEATO. India entered into a 20 year treaty of friendship with USSR. Since the 90s Pakistan became closer to China to overcome the impact of sanctions imposed by USA. The alliance between Pakistan and China assures Pakistan of some degree of deterrence against India.

(c) India has forged closer relations with USA and maintained the historical relations with Russia. The cooperation achieved has been catalyst in enabling the Indian military to modernize at a rapid pace, thus gradually building up a deterrence capability against China. Herein India needs to maintain a very fine balance, as close relations with USA, China and Russia are important for the development of the country. The challenge for India is to manage her ties in such a manner that she is not seen as leaning towards any country in particular, nor is seen as a country that is indecisive.

(d) USA. During the visit of Mr Leon Panetta in June 2012, India politely told USA that there is a need to re-calibrate the US policy called ‘ Rebalancing of Military Strategy with focus on Asia-Pacific’ that envisages deployment of at least 60% of US Naval assets in Asia-Pacific[41]. The concern of India being that the policy would increase the militarisation in its immediate neighbourhood and such rapid militarisation would throw India’s modernisation plans out of gear.

(e) India has enhanced bilateral cooperation with US and participates in a number of joint military exercises without entering into any formal military alliance. The support that had been extended by USA to Pakistan in last half a century plays in the minds of Indian policy makers while deciding on the extent of military cooperation with USA. The US insistence on signing CISMOA, LSA, EUMA and BECA make the policy makers in India sceptical. Moreover, by openly embracing USA, India does not want to upset China[42].

(f) Littorals of South China Sea. India has indicated that she would prefer cooperation with countries like Japan, Vietnam, Philippines and others in working out an amicable solution to the South China Sea dispute. In last few years, India has participated in number of military exercises with Japan, Singapore and Vietnam. If the navies of these countries enforce a blockade of Malacca and Sunda Straits, China will be put on the back foot. The entire transshipment of oil and gas would then be channelised through Arakan region of Myanmar and Gwadar port in Pakistan. The domination of Bay of Bengal and Arabian Seas by the Indian Navy would quickly result in enforcing a blockade to shape the outcome of war.

(g) Myanmar. India has improved her relations with the Myanmar in recent years. The people of Kachin have been known to resent Chinese activities in the region. India should exploit this resentment and persuade the government of Myanmar to limit the Chinese activities, China can be further contained.

(h) Iran. To avoid the SLOCs dominated by India, China needs to open a transshipment route through Central Asia. The Chabahar and Bandar Abbas ports in Iran could be the ports of transshipment. India lost some ground in Iran after siding with USA over nuclear issue. By attending the NAM conference in Tehran, Dr Manmohan Singh tried to make some amends to the earlier mistakes. In his visit, the India's energy and security issues were discussed by the PM[43].

(j) Iran could be a partner of strategic significance for India. The relations between Pakistan and Iran took a downward spiral during the 80s whereas India and Iran cooperated in supporting the Tajik groups opposed to Pakistan backed Pashtun groups in Afghanistan. Pakistan became closer to Saudi Arabia, who is a staunch rival of Iran. The officials of Iran and Pakistan have accused each other of aiding the insurgents in Baluchistan[44].

(k) India has stood by its commitments in Iran despite the pressure from US and EU. China too has supported Iran and done so more boldly than India. In addition to the vast reserves of oil and gas, Iran is significant as it is a littoral state of Persian Gulf and Caspian Sea. It provides a gateway to the landlocked Central Asian Republics. China has been wooing Iran to gain a foothold in West Asia and enhance energy security. The route from Iran, Central Asian Region (CAR) and into China would enable China to avoid the SLOCs that are vulnerable to interception by India and other South East Asian countries.

(l) It is unlikely that Iran would become a party to containing Chinese influence due to her animosity with USA. However, India should work towards exploiting Iran's sensitivities towards developments in Baluchistan and Afghanistan and Pakistan's proximity to Saudi Arabia. India should exploit get Iran onboard in containing Pakistan from the West.

(m) Afghanistan. Afghanistan has been apprehensive of Pakistan's intentions in the region. On many occasions President Karzai has blamed Pakistan for the troubles in his country. Pakistan's open support to Taliban means that barring South and Eastern Afghanistan, rest of the country is unlikely to warm up to Pakistan in near future. Afghans are known to be fond of Indian culture. India's contribution towards development activities in Afghanistan has further endeared her to the Afghans. Unlike China, India has not yet acquired any stakes in the unexplored natural resources of the country.

(n) India should work very closely with the Afghan government and keep Pakistan out of the region. India must be prepared to provide security forces for filling the void left by the withdrawal of ISAF in 2014. The aid being provided to Afghanistan could be linked with keeping Pakistan out. India must ensure that Taliban does not gain entry into Afghan political arena. This would deny the strategic depth that Pakistan so badly craves.[45]

Create a Divide between China and Pakistan. Chanakya talked of creating division amongst the enemy to weaken them. Sino- Pakistan relations are not as deep as are made out to be. China tilts towards Pakistan to secure its own geopolitical interests. It props up Pakistan militarily to keep India's armed forces engaged on the Western borders. The Gwadar port and Karakoram highway provide China with an overland trade j and Islamists in Pakistan[46].

(a) Make Gwadar Port Unviable Option. The port held a vision of prosperity for Pakistan and to provide the Pakistan Navy with strategic depth along its coastline. It provided China with an opportunity to diversify its oil import routes and extend its presence in the Indian Ocean. China's interests in Gwadar port are to diversify and secure its crude oil import oil routes and to extend its presence in the Indian Ocean.[47]It would enable monitoring naval activities of both US & India in the region.

(b) India & Iran have had reservations about the project from beginning. Iran responded by constructing Chabahar port and road links joining Iran, Afghanistan and Tajikistan with India's assistance. Plans to extend a road from Iran through Herat, Mazar-e-Sharif and Sherkhan Bandar in Afghanistan and onwards to China too have been discussed.[48]

(c) The fragile state of lines of communication in POK region was highlighted in January 2010 when the Attabad landslide cut off the Karakoram highway[49]. The Baluchistan province in Pakistan remains restive with ever increasing levels of violence.

(d) Iran remains peaceful and stable making Chabahar port more attractive alternative to Gwadar. China has repeatedly used its veto power in support of Iran over the nuclear standoff. Iran's energy reserves and good relations with Afghanistan & Central Asian countries are of significance to China as well. India and Iran enjoy good relations. Like Iran, India too enjoys good relations with Afghanistan and Central Asian countries. If situation in Afghanistan stabilises in near future, Iran remains peaceful but Balochistan remains restive, use of Chabahar would become more attractive and economical in comparison to Gwadar.

(d) China's Aspirations as a Super Power. Most of the incidents of terrorism in the world have been tracked back to Pakistan. Despite its contribution in the GWOT, Pakistan is viewed as a state that harbours terrorists and fundamentalists. Osama Bin Laden was killed in a safe house located within a few kilometres of Pakistan's military academy. As an aspiring super power, China will have to pressurise Pakistan to rein in the fundamentalist and terrorist groups. Aspirations of China and Pakistan's support to terrorist groups make the two to partners who cannot be natural allies. India should take every opportunity to highlight this issue at various forums and bilateral meets. The academicians and the think tanks should be asked to write articles and papers that would embarrass China on this issue. When Pakistan loses China's support, it would be forced to change its policies and thus the menace of terrorism would reduce to a very large extent. The probability of external war on two fronts would also be minimised.

(e) Uyghur Separatists Movement. Since its incorporation into China in 1950s, Uighurs have organized more than 400 uprisings[50]. The ethnic strife has taken a religious twist in the last few years[51]. The Chinese leaders have expressed apprehension that Pakistan may not be able to contain the links between the separatists and the Islamists in Pakistan. China had in the past resorted to curtailing border trade and closing the Karakoram Highway to contain the unrest. Such measures send a signal to Pakistan that China would not hesitate to freeze the relations if required, in order to curtail the separatist movement[52].

Engaging Neighbours. Chanakya in his treatise had been categorical that a friendly or a neutral neighbour is essential for the growth and stability of a state. He also warned against the dangers of an adversary becoming influential in the neighbourhood. China has been using her diplomatic and economic clout in marginalising India's influence in the neighbourhood. Indian government has to understand that these nations are on the development curve and therefore need huge investments. For many years India invested in the development of these countries to the extent she could. China has bigger reserve of foreign exchange than India and is ready to suffer economic losses in short term. The investments made by China have enhanced her influence in these countries.

The government of India has started exploring the historical and cultural links and soft power to strengthen relations with the neighbours. The Indian government provides billions of dollars as aid to Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Nepal and Bhutan. It has entered into trade agreements with all her neighbours that may be more favourable to the neighbours than to India. The volume of trade between India and her neighbouring countries has steadily increased in the recent years.

The efforts have yielded positive results. Sri Lankan officials have been harping about the very good and very ancient links with India. The aid to the displaced Tamils is not viewed with scorn as in earlier times. Homage was paid to the martyrs of the IPKF in Sri Lanka in 2012. India-Pakistan trade has been on the rise with Indian exports to Pakistan surging by over 30% per year[53]. The Awami League government in Bangladesh is working towards generating a favourable public opinion towards permitting transit facilities to India and the Indian government too has shown inclination towards signing a treaty on sharing of river waters. With Myanmar, relations have been growing stronger. Aung San Suu Kyi visited India in 2012. The economic ties and trade have grown manifold in recent years. India still has work to do on improving relations with Nepal. The relations with Nepal have been stagnant since the Maoists came to power. With Maldives, relations took a downturn over the controversy over the operating of international airport in Male by GMR. The Government of India suspended monetary aid to Maldives as a retaliation to revoking of the GMR's contract by the Maldives government.

Engaging China and Pakistan till Own Military Capability is Developed. To realise their true potential, India and China need an environment of peace and stability. Both the countries have kept the disputes on the back burner while focussing on areas of convergence. The trade between both has been growing at a steady rate and is expected to touch \$100 billion in 2015.[54] Talks to resolve the boundary disputes continue to be held at regular intervals. Talks with Pakistan have made a slower progress in recent years. CBMs have been in place for many years. The two countries have signed an agreement to ease visa restrictions. [55] Sporting ties too are being resumed between the two countries. Such measures will bring the people closer and thus create pressure on the governments to resolve the disputes at the earliest.

107. Chanakya identified military option as an important facet of foreign policy. The government of India seeks peaceful coexistence with the neighbours. However, to safeguard her nati