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**Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar
Open University**

(Established by Government of Gujarat)

CERTIFICATE IN INDIA'S NATIONAL SECURITY



Evolution Of India's Strategic Thought

CINS-02

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In past two years, university has pro-actively implemented innovative student-friendly practices as per the *National Education Policy-2020*, established *Gargi* – Centre for the Holistic Development of Women, *Atri* – Special Learner Support Centre, *Gurukul* – Model Learner Support Centre, *Dronacharya* – Centre for Innovation, Startup and Entrepreneurship, *Eklavya* - Student Support Portal, *Suresh Joshi Gyanpith (Chair)*; and introduced *Tej-Trusha Talent Hunt* – a first-of-its-kind initiative across Indian Open Universities. BAOU has also undertaken noble social initiatives such as providing *free-of-cost education* to Covid-orphaned persons and to war-widows and children of Army martyrs.

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This eponymous university strives to fulfill the vision of Bharat Ratna Dr. B. R. Ambedkarji who believed: *"Cultivation of mind should be the ultimate aim of human existence"*.

Today, the Republic of India is the largest democracy in the world. I believe, we as citizens of India are privileged to enjoy our freedom because of the innumerable sacrifices of our great leaders, freedom-fighters, martyrs, and robust Indian Army and Defence Services that are protecting and preserving our security. In the contemporary world, there have emerged a set of non-traditional issues challenging our security along with the traditional ones; and hence ‘National Security’ becomes very vital for the well-being of every nation as well as human-kind at large. Therefore, we have indigenously prepared the present course on ‘India’s National Security’ with the purpose of sensitizing and orienting the citizens this very crucial and significant concept. As per NEP-2020, we have prepared and launched more than a dozen need-based, indigenous programmes encompassing humanities, social sciences, technology, commerce, management fields.

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Best Wishes!



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Evolution of India's Strategic Thought

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UNIT :1

CONCEPT OF STRATEGIC THOUGHT

:: STRUCTURE::

1.0 Objectives

1.1 Introduction

1.2 Concept of Strategic Thought

1.3 Historical Evolution of Strategic Thought

1.4 Factors Determining the Pursue of a Strategic Thought

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Answers

1.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit we shall:

- Attain a basic understanding of the concept of Strategic Thought
- Understand the historical events that influenced the concept of Strategic Thought
- Understand the various factors that determine the outcome of a Strategic Thought

On completing this unit, you should be able to:

- Understand the concept of Strategic Thought
- Contemplate on the historical events that shaped the concept of a Strategic Thought
- Also get a understanding of various factors that determine and influence Strategic Thought

1.1 INTRODUCTION

A parable that is often used in the realm of defence and the military, the concept of strategic thought is still much debated ever since its preliminary inception. While it is agreed that strategic thought encompasses the concepts of conducting warfare and defeating an enemy, in the modern sense it also discusses the various other facets that may affect national security. In turn, national security and strategic thought are intrinsically linked to one another. The establishment of a command structure, delegation of powers, drawing out the strength and weakness of

the military and even understanding the opponent all form a part of a strategic thought. The rise of various empires and kingdoms and even the formation of modern nation states all required a deep foresight and thought which led to the gradual evolution of a strategic thought.

1.2 CONCEPT OF STRATEGIC THOUGHT

History has played a significant role in the formation of strategic thought, etymologically speaking the word owes its origin to the Greek word *Strategos*, and historically too ancient empires devoted a lot of time to the study of strategy and its application in politics and statecraft.

When it comes to conceptualising strategic thought, one has to delve a bit into history and observe the rise and fall of the empires that preceded modern nation states. Indeed, waging wars and emerging as powerful kingdoms maybe passé, despite which one may not belittle the contribution of history to the gradual evolution of strategic thought. To put it simply, on one side we may understand strategic thought as the channelizing of resources for the purpose of war, defending territories and even waging wars to emerge as an undisputed power in the world. To broaden the concept, strategic thought mostly deals with the military and the command structure that it follows in tandem with the authority which has the power to engage the military for the purpose of statecraft. On the other hand, in our present times, the sole dependence on the military or to say hard power may not be the one realm where strategic thought may be applied. As states have emerged and we have entered into more complex relationships with the rest of the states in the world, newer challenges and possibilities too have emerged. As a result the confinement of strategic thought to the military and defence is no longer valid. Rather, as of now scholars suggest that the concept of statecraft, and strategic thought are inevitably linked to one another. In a broader sense, the concept of strategy is inevitably linked to the military which also includes policy and planning that involves the threat or the actual use of force. Force is thus an instrument of foreign policy or even national policy as coercion is a way to get things done. The formulation of such thought processes is again subjected to the conditions related to the economy, society, geography and the availability of resources in a state. Other things considered to be stable, the development of strategy requires a mastery and utilisation of the resources of the state for its purpose in wars and statecraft.

While diplomacy may simply deal with the concept of engaging foreign states for the purpose of securing one's own vision, statecraft goes beyond traditional notion of diplomacy as it also includes the use of the military and other resources available to engage in power projection, securing national interest, maintaining law and order and as far as engaging hostile states to keep the checked. For a state to develop a proper strategic thought, it needs to observe its strengths and weaknesses,

its liabilities and advantages, the resources at its disposal and its allies and foes. As a result of which a state also needs to observe the various possibilities by which it can engage in maintaining its supremacy or to oust other rival states. In terms of strategic thought too, a state has to realise its short term and long term goals and develop the rationale accordingly. When it comes to short term goals, it may have less time to adapt to the situation and may have to react quickly in order to achieve them, whereas in terms of long term goals it may have to cultivate interest, offer more resources and thoughts to achieve them over a period of time. States would invariably devote a lot of time to assess the situation (which is again subjected to change over period of time), the political and diplomatic options at hand and also the possible reaction from the other states with which they are engaging.

In certain other situations which can be more or less an emergency, the options may be limited in nature and therefore careful forethought and restraint may be called for. Two instances may be discussed here the first being the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis and the other the retaliation against Pakistan in 2016 and 2019. Both these incidents exhibit an amalgamation of strategic thought and effective statecraft for the purpose of power maximisation. The Cuban Missile Crisis is particularly discussed due to its long term effects on international relations as during that time any amount of miscalculation could have led to an open war between two superpowers and their allies. During that period both the USA and the Soviet Union had to calculate various repercussions related to the deployment of the missiles by the Soviet Union in Cuba and the subsidiary issues that emerged related to security and the possible chances of an open war. From the American perspective it was important to exercise restraint in addition to blocking Soviet Ships which were inbound for Cuba and from the Soviet perspective it was important to ensure that the Americans did not authorise clandestine operations against Cuba. Strategic calculations thus came into the play by the means of which a larger crisis was averted.

When it comes to India's response against Pakistan sponsored terrorism, for quite long India had adopted a policy of restraint while respecting the sanctity of the Line of Control between the two states. However, India's gradual strategic shift towards eliminating Pakistani sponsored terrorists by actually crossing the LOC ensured a dramatic strategic shift, which has placed the Pakistani administration in a dilemma as not only did India call of Pakistan's persistent nuclear bluff, but also deployed its military to ensure that Pakistan gets a taste of its own medicine.

The importance of a proper strategic thought cannot be discounted under any circumstances.

Check your Progress - I
Answer the following:

(a) How would you conceptualise Strategic Thought?

(b) How did the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 shape the strategic thoughts?

(c) How is the military related to Strategic Thought?

(d) In which year did India retaliate with airstrikes against Pakistan based terror camps?

(e) After which conflict was the hotline established between the USSR and the USA?

1.3 HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF STRATEGIC THOUGHT

No nation state can develop a strategic conscience or thought overnight and indeed historical factors often play a crucial role in fomenting a strategic culture. When it comes to strategic culture, every nation state depends on a few factors such as the geography, economic assets, population, types of regimes, political ideologies, position of neighbouring states, territorial disputes, position in the international system and various other factors which may be crucial in the long run. For empires and kingdoms always dwelled on the intelligence of the ruling class to gradually develop a strategic culture by which they could decide the outcome of various events.

To discuss shortly, strategic culture would mean the amalgamation of knowledge related to diplomacy, military affairs, affairs related to ruling the state and the basic outlook of the state when it came to administration, taking political decisions and even going for war or suing for peace. Ancient kingdoms depended a lot on the thoughts of philosophers, military officers and generals and also the ruling class to give shape to a strategic culture that could always be referred to when it came to taking decisions that would influence the position of the state.

To understand the historical evolution of a strategic culture, one also has to look a bit deeper into human history of how kingdoms and empires came into existence and how they nominally functioned. The question of kinship, laws of succession, amalgamation and annexation of empires, disintegration of empires and conflicts also come into play. Just as in the modern world, changing nature of international relations and foreign policy influence the thought processes related to strategic culture, so even in those ancient days such events influenced changes in the strategic culture. For instance for the ancient Greeks, the outlook of the state was quite responsible for the creation of a strategic culture. The state was seen as an organic unit whose main purpose was to protect the citizens and responsible for the moral and personal development of the citizens. Therefore the relation between the state and the citizens was very organic and intrinsic. The various city states focussed on the creation of an educated class that would take up the role of policy formulation and other classes would take up various other roles. Hierarchy was very much present as much as direct participation in the matters related to the state. Thus according to classical Greek state system, the state was regarded in the highest order and roles were assigned to every citizens depending on their level of education and class in the society.

If one delves a bit deeper into the ancient Greek system, one may witness that strategy played an important part in the construction of the state, as well as dictating the outcome of political struggles whether internally or externally. Perhaps, when the ancient Greek strategy is considered one has to look into the Peloponnesian war that occurred in

431 and 404 BC, where the coalition led by Athens and Sparta engaged in a vicious conflict. While Athens was a formidable naval power, Sparta dominated warfare on land. The ensuing conflict exhibited a curious tendency of both the states to exhaust the other without actually destroying the enemy completely. The idea was to win a long-term war while maintaining superiority. Ancient Greek classics therefore devoted a lot of attention to the ruler of the city states and their personal relationship with the military, the ruling class and their approval ratings in the society. Both Pericles of Athens and Archidamus II of Sparta were well respected in their city states. On the other hand for a leader like Alexander the Great, the utter destruction of the enemy was the prime objective as he focussed more on gaining territory than on survival. Thus one may notice a fundamental shift in the formulation of Greek strategy. The ancient Roman Empire too had its own take on strategy and in sharp contrast to the leadership based strategy of Greece, the Romans depended a lot more on democratic norms and strategic consensus to arrive at a decision. The Senate which was made up of the important personalities in Rome became an important institution in terms of decision making, and the ruler had to depend on the decisions of the Senate and the Plebians (working class). The Roman army was also composed mostly of peasants and therefore even their opinion was important in nature. Instead of a direct confrontation like the Greeks, the Romans depended a lot on the astuteness of their political class to take decisions which would incur minimum damage and rather offer relatively higher gains. The Greek strategy was to defend the city states from foreign aggression and to engage in peacebuilding after a conflict, the Roman strategy in contrast was the utter destruction of the enemy and the conquest of new territories which would then be divided as rewards for the members of the empire. Thus war in the Roman sense was a serious activity reserved for those who were willing to take the risks. In observing the Punic wars, the Roman strategy pursued by its two leaders Quintus Maximus and Scipio Africanus the Elder exhibited a remarkable set of decision making process that engaged even the common Plebians to the highest military generals. Initially their strategy was to recover from the successive defeats at the hands of Carthage led by Hannibal, but as soon as the recovery was done the target was the utter destruction of the empire of Carthage.

Even when we consider the battle tactics of both the Greeks and the Romans, the Romans certainly were a much more formidable naval power with the exception to the Greek city state of Athens. The Romans depended a lot on long range archers and mechanised archery divisions known as the Ballista. Whereas the Greeks depended a lot on Horse mounted soldiers known as the Hippikons and the foot soldiers known as the Hoplites which were quite fast and mobile. Greek ships known as Tireses and Trebuchets were known to be lightly armoured but faster, in contrast to the Roman ships which were meant for long range operations. Roman Legionnaires were more apt for long range battles, in comparison

to the Greek soldiers. Thus from here one may observe that not only the requirements of the state, but also the basic composition, relevance and the attitude of the ruling class decided the strategic culture of two great civilisations.

Check your Progress - II

Answer the following:

- (a) Mention some of the factors that influence strategic thought and culture?

- (b) How did the Peloponnesian war influence Greek Strategic Thought?

- (c) What was the sharp feature of contrast between the Greek and the Roman Strategic Thought?

- (d) What were the Greek foot soldiers known as? Hoplite or Hippikon?

- (e) The Greeks used long range arrows to defeat their enemies what were they known as? Trebuchet or Ballista?

1.4 FACTORS DETERMINING THE PURSUE OF A STRATEGIC THOUGHT

So far, it is understood that various historical factors gave rise to the evolution of a strategic culture over a period of time. However there are other factors which are equally responsible for the same. As a part of a grand exercise in various states, the debates on strategic culture and thought has been going on for centuries with the World Wars and the Cold War leading to much development in this field. Since every nation has its own history and conscience, it develops a strategic outlook based on its own experiences as well as in terms of positioning itself in the realm of international relations. Strategic culture provides an important lens to observe the actions of a state pertaining to historical and continuously evolving atmosphere in international relations. The pursue of power, the preservation of one's influence and maintaining superiority or even outshining rivals and gaining new positions all are a part of the grand strategic culture. During the interceding period of the World Wars, the focus was laid on understanding the national culture of the Axis powers by the Allies in determining the rationale of the Axis powers, the beginning of the Cold War however led the studies to be more rational in nature in which the process of making decisions based on rationale choices were more important in nature.

The main difference in understanding the factors that led to the development of a strategic culture during the World Wars and the Cold Wars was the overt focus on the role of leadership and national culture during the World Wars, and the acceptance of other factors ranging from personality cult of leaders to geographical conditions during the Cold War. During the 1970s for instance, it was difficult for American policymakers to predict Soviet behaviour due to the fact that they had not considered other factors such as the large geographical area of the Soviet Union and its desperation to keep up with American production in the economic sense. As Synder claimed that the concept of a strategic culture as a sum of ideas that would imitate a regular and repeated behaviour of appropriate responses to international issues, particularly pertaining to the threat of a nuclear war. The idea was thus to establish a series of doctrines based on the repeated and regular behaviour of rival states and the possibility of an encounter with them in order to effectively counter them. However, situations and events do change which also call for an upgradation of security related doctrines. Therefore, the evolution of a strategic culture is a rather slow and tedious process that requires excellent planning and execution considering the options and the constrains that are in place. While most understand strategic choices and culture to be a part and parcel of only those states that are either militarily or economically powerful, in stark contrast even smaller states which may not have much bearing in international affairs too have their own set

of strategy related doctrines. It would however be difficult to consider all the factors that may influence strategic outcomes, nevertheless the elucidation of a few key factors is essential for a better understanding. Primarily the geographical location of a state greatly influences its strategic choices and culture in the long run. States that are landlocked will not focus on creating a navy and states that are mountainous in nature will focus on the creation of troops that are capable in fighting in the mountains. For a country like India, with a vast and varied geography it has to focus on many aspects to manage its military and strategic choices accordingly. In addition to that the presence of hostile neighbours also affect the strategic thinking of a state greatly. For instance, the presence of both the PRC and Pakistan ensures that India has to consider the option of fighting a two-front war at any given situation given the close relationship between the two. Also the presence of other smaller states like Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Sri Lanka ensures that Indian strategic thinkers will have to keep close relations with them to disallow them from being influenced by others. Since India is an expanding power it also has to look beyond its immediate neighbourhood and also consider the option of exerting its influence in the maritime sector such as the Malacca Straits and the Indian Ocean, to not only dissuade rival powers from capitalising in that area but to also maintain its naval supremacy.

Economy is also a very important factor when it comes to deciding on national strategy as a state that faces constant economic troubles will have limited choices. For instance, the USA has always been an economic might and as a result of which it has the means and the capabilities to exercise its influence all over the world. The former colonial powers like Britain, France and Spain lost their sheen due to the fact that they suffered economically especially after the end of the Second World War. The rise of the PRC can also be seen in the economic aspect as its growing economic strength gave it the confidence to assert its position globally. In addition to economic strength, the military strength is perhaps the most important factor that influences strategic choices as no state without a sufficient military may be able to assert itself. The presence of a huge military not only provides confidence to a state but also offers a strong bulwark of defence and deterrence. The presence of nuclear weapons and a good arsenal also does the same. In this context, India's military victories against Pakistan is a good example as to how it managed to assert itself militarily and thus ensure that the threat from Pakistan was minimised to a large extent.

The policy of alliances with other states is also a very important factor that influences strategic choices. For instance, India's previous policy of Non-Alignment did not earn it any friends in the international scenario but after it managed to work out a relatively stable relationship with the Soviet Union it not only managed to obtain higher end technology weapons but also received a lot of assurance of assistance and aid in times of crises. Indeed the Soviet backing during the war of 1971

did aid India a lot. The fact that states often resort to either formal or informal alliances influence its strategic options and choices. Smaller states may either choose to ally with a powerful state for protection and support or they may either form a block in order to speak in one voice. Ideologies also play an important part in this process, for instance the formation of the NATO was also ideologically motivated by the Western European states in collusion with the USA for forming a defence pact against the Soviet Union and its allies, whereas they in turn formed the Warsaw Pact to do the same. The formation of regional, trade and cultural organisations such as the African Union, European Union, DR-CAFTA, ASEAN, Organisation of Islamic Countries are some prime examples as to how allying with various other states influence strategic choices.

Even the type of regime influences strategic choices, for instance liberal democracies may rather focus more on the economy in contrast to preparing for wars whereas authoritarian regimes may actually focus on military preparations at the expense of the economy. Dictatorships such as in Pakistan always focussed on India in the context of Kashmir, whereas being a democratic state, India even though it kept Pakistan as a priority it also managed to extend its influence in the rest of the world. In this sense also, there is a collusion between ideologies and the type of regime as democratic regimes tend to ally themselves whereas communist or religiously oriented regimes form their own groups.

Other factors that may influence the outcome of a strategic thought are, the national culture, historical events that influenced a lot and even the priorities of a particular state. Even changing times and requirements do influence national strategies, as in the case of the raging debate around climate change that has made many states to focus on it rather seriously. Ultimately, these factors influence the strategic thought and process of a state and in the end the final outcome is to provide a series of strategic thoughts and considerations that may enable a particular state to extend its influence and power in the world.

Check your Progress - III

Answer the following:

(a) What is decision making on the basis of Rational Choice mean?

(b) What does Strategic Culture mean?

- (c) Explain the context of a strategic culture pertaining to the economy and the military.

- (d) Which organisation is given the task to frame policies within a communist party? The Standing Committee or the Politbureau.

- (e) Which regional organisation has member states from both the United States and Central America? AU or the DR-CAFTA?

1.5 LET US SUM UP

When it comes to the formulation of strategies in the international context every state seeks to maximise their power and influence and exercise its control on the key issues in the world. While globalisation has opened up a lot of opportunities, it has also brought many unknown issues that compel the states to rationalise their choices. While historically, ancient states and kingdoms dwelled on the concept of strategies and even crafted their own choices to suit their purpose, modern states also engage in the same fashion only that it has to take into account a lot of other factors which are gradually becoming more relevant. Additionally, the formulation of proper strategies not only help states in attaining their goals but it also provides a strong series of plans to refer to when carving out goals and objectives.

1.6 KEY WORDS

- **Parable** A story or a tale
- **Etymologically** The origin of a word
- **Bluff** A lie
- **Intrinsic** Basic
- **Doctrine** A set of thought pertaining to an event which may be used to plan a future set of actions
- **Dissuade** To discourage
- **Bulwark** Strong defence
- **Collusion** in addition

1.7 SUGGESTED BOOKS

- a) Lykke Jr. A.F. (2001), "Towards an Understanding of Military Strategy", *U.S. Army War College Guide to Strategy*.
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Answers

Check Your Progress – I

- (a) Strategic thought is the sum of ideas by the means of which a state may be able to maximise its power and have more influence in the world. It will enable the state to keep its enemies in check as well.
- (b) The Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 led both the USA and the Soviet Union to rethink on their strategies as they had dangerously come close to an open war. The concepts that developed was to exercise restraint and to have better communication with one another so as to avoid such future issues.
- (c) The military is an important component of any strategic thought as it not only is the main defence force that protects the state but also offers more leverage and prestige when it comes to exercising influence.
- (d) 2019
- (e) 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis

Check Your Progress - II

- (a) Some factors that influence strategic thought are the type of regime, military power and strength, presence of rival states, economic power and the allocation of resources.
- (b) The war actually enabled the Greeks to engage the enemy on a long-term conflict without incurring much damage to oneself so as to tire out the enemy. The same strategy was repeated with wars with Persia.
- (c) The Roman strategy in contrast to the Greek one focussed in the utter destruction of the enemy and its subsequent occupation.
- (d) Hoplite
- (e) Ballista.

Check Your Progress - III

- (a) Rationale Choice based decision making means the act of taking decisions rationally based on the issue at hand, the resources available and the optimum choice to be taken without taking much damage.
- (b) Strategic culture is the sum of ideas which enable a state to carry out its interests and exercise its power.
- (c) Both the economy and the military are very important for the purpose of a good strategic culture. Whereas the military provides defence and deterrence a strong economy not only powers the nation it also offers prestige to it.
- (d) Politbureau
- (e) DR-CAFTA.

UNIT: 2**INDIA'S STRATEGIC THOUGHT -
ANCIENT****:: STRUCTURE::**

- 2.0 Objectives**
- 2.1 Introduction**
- 2.2 Locating Ancient India's strategy**
- 2.3 Understanding Kautilya**
- 2.4 Delving into the Mahabharata**
- 2.5 Let Us Sum Up**
- 2.6 Key Words**
- 2.7 Suggested Books**
- Answers**

2.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit we shall:

- Attain a basic understanding of the importance of ancient strategic thought.
- Understand the works of Kautilya and its relevance.
- Delve into the Mahabharat and understand its relevance.

On completing this unit you should be able to:

- Understand how important ancient strategic thought is even in the contemporary times.
- Understand the significance of Kautilya and his works.
- Understand the relevance of the Mahabharata in the present situation.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

To understand contemporary strategic thought and how it has shaped India's defence and strategic thinking one must delve into the past and find the sources that led to such thoughts being prevalent in our modern times. Indeed, if one may observe there is a lot to learn from history as we are all a part of a great continuing civilization. Much has been said and written about the ancient Indian strategic thought and at times authors have criticised the lack of a coherent thought related to strategy in our ancient times. Despite those supposed shortcomings, no

one may deny that ancient India had a glorious civilization that cannot be belittled. The system of kinship, rulers and the presence of large kingdoms with efficient services and systems cannot be ignored. Warfare, diplomacy and statecraft were prevalent in our ancient times too which gradually shaped the way we may see ourselves now. For instance, a thought quite prevalent in ancient India was to build alliances with other like-minded kingdoms for better defence and the age old dictum of ‘enemy of my enemy is my friend’ may also trace its roots to the ancient times. Therefore it is important to study the ancient strategies related to statecraft and diplomacy to achieve a better understanding.

2.2 LOCATING ANCIENT INDIA’S STRATEGY

As mentioned in historical works, ancient India was a brilliant civilisation that achieved a lot and made a name for itself among other classical civilizations. From various scientific inventions and discoveries to medicinal achievements India made a mark for itself. In addition to that the ancient Indian kingdoms encouraged freedom of thought and expression, the society was categorised effectively and even the methods of managing a state involved a curious mixture of diplomacy, coercion and alliances with other states. Warriors were celebrated as heroes, wars were seen as a necessity and trade and commerce flourished. To locate India’s strategy it is important to understand that no ancient civilisation could survive without a proper strategic thought in order to continue their mode of life. Where other civilisations such as the Greek and the Romans perished, India on the other hand survived waves and waves of invasions and efforts to stamp out the glory of its beautiful heritage completely.

In ancient India, the society was organised according the needs of the people with hierarches managed in such a way so as to offer maximum potency to the people. Thus warriors and the ruling class had a very importance place in the society as their roles were effectively outlined and defined. Whereas the ruling class constantly sought advice from the counsel made of learned people it was the duties of the King and the ruling class to dispense justice and ensure smooth administration throughout their realm, the duty of the warriors on the other hand was the guide and manage the armies and to participate either in defensive or offensive battles for the safety of the kingdom.

From here one may be able to connect to the present system of administration which as of now has been overshadowed by a mixture of the past and the later system of modern states. In both the cases, the roles are properly delineated and demarcated. None of the classes may have overlapping roles and the roles are delineated in such a way to ensure maximum efficiency of administration and effectiveness. Secondly, in both the cases the ruling class or regime is properly advised by seasoned advisers and diplomats who are well versed in the art of diplomacy and administration. Even now the ruling government does take advice from a

class of professional bureaucrats and diplomats to manage the daily affairs of the state. Thirdly, the administration was also divided on the basis of internal and external affairs as even the ancient Indian kingdoms realised that effective division of the administration would actually aid them. Fourthly, the role of the military was held in high esteem and frequent wars reinforced this concept.

The system of the ancient times was such that frequent wars were a reality, in addition to the possibility of coups, attack by rogue states, diplomatic manoeuvres and the need to be on the constant lookout for any dangers to the kingdom. The locus of the kingdom was the King who was assisted in his daily administrative dealings with others such as diplomats, representatives of the military and counsels. It was the duty of the King to listen to his advisers and to plan the dealings of his administration effectively. In doing so it was believed that the king would be effective in his administrative capabilities. Wars were also considered a possibility as even in those ancient times anarchy, distrust among kingdoms and the possibility of invasions were always present. Therefore the kings had to be always on guard to offset any chances of an invasion and also had to expand their kingdoms. Classical texts offer a view that in doing so the concept of prestige was very important as wars proved to be a means to achieving prestige and appreciation from the people and while powerful kings were held in awe and respect, kings who were weak were chastised.

Diplomacy was another important aspect of ancient strategies, where if possible wars could be avoided by engaging in friendly relations with fellow kingdoms either through a matrimonial alliance or by the means of paying a tribute in order to arrive at an understanding. It was the duty of the kings to prove their worth and to be considered worthy of ruling. Thus even if the king inherited the empire it was his task to ensure that he could rule effectively and attain the appreciation of his subjects. Known as *Kootneeti* in ancient India and in common usual parlance, the idea was to engage other states in diplomatic moves while avoiding war. Thus even though it was recommended to maintain huge armies to possess powers, diplomacy was given more importance over direct confrontation. One may delve a bit into the role of Lord Hanuman and King Angad in the Ramayana who were sent as envoys to Lanka, or to the role of Sri Krishna who acted as a mediator attempting to prevent the outbreak of the war. Even the Manu-Smriti states that it's the job of the King to appoint ambassadors, commanders of the army and to ensure discipline within the kingdom. The concepts of seeking protection under a universal king akin to today's bandwagoning (Chakravarti Samrat) is also well known. Thus from here one may observe that the ancient texts are well versed in the art of warfare and diplomacy, and many of these features are still followed today.

Militarily too, a lot of attention was given to the organisation and the structure of the armies. In fact the defence of the state was considered to be the prime objective of those days. Texts such as the Ramayana, Mahabharata and the Harshacharitra discuss the formation and maintenance of large armies for the purpose of war and peace. Troops were recruited from all classes and there are records of the existence of mercenaries as well. The King was considered to be the most important part of the armies, it was his job to keep the army together and to fight wars to maintain and expand his Kingdom. The armies were organised in various formations taking into account the terrain, the condition and power of the enemy forces and the amount of intelligence received regarding the battle. The armies were composed of infantry, cavalry, chariots and elephants. All these sections had their roles cut out for them and for instance it was the job of the archers to provide covering fire to the advancing troops and the job of the elephant armies was to charge at the enemy with a devastating effect. While forts were used for defence enough methods existed in order to destroy them. Thus if one may observe the ancient warfare methods, it was not only elaborate in nature but a lot can be learnt from their art of diplomacy, statecraft and warfare which contributed to ancient strategic thought.

Check your Progress - I

Answer the following:

- (a) Which position was considered to be the most important position in ancient kingdoms?

- (b) Apart from war which other strategic feature was important in terms of political moves?

- (c) How were the ancient armies comprised?

- (d) War Elephants were extensively used in ancient wars as heavy troops. Agree or disagree?

- (e) Which title was given to the emperors under which a lot of other kings sought protection?

2.3 UNDERSTANDING KAUTILYA

Perhaps when it comes to understanding the ancient Indian strategic thought nothing comes as close as the works of Kautilya or Chanakya and his treatise known as the Chanakyaniti. In fact so famous are his thoughts that Chanakya or Chanakyaniti are still commonly used in our day to day activities. Kautilya was supposedly from a poor family who guided Emperor Chandragupta in establishing his empire and aided him in the destruction of the Nanda dynasty. In doing so he managed to not only guide an emperor but also created a vast set of treatises which discussed the concepts of empires, politics, warfare and in general the art of diplomacy and statecraft. Kautilya was particularly worried about the moral degradation of empires at the hands of inefficient kings who did not take the matters related to administration seriously. During that time the invasions of Alexander the Great perturbed him to a large extent and to counter it he found Chandragupta to be a worthy opponent who required able guidance to stop the invasions of Alexander.

Comparable to Machiavelli, Kautilya was deeply influenced by the chaotic situation of the country and believed that only strong guidance and administration could aid in solving the problems ailing the territories. He was deeply disturbed by the fact that there were quite small kingdoms that were constantly bickering with one another and as a result of which it was quite easy for foreign forces to subdue the subcontinent. In a short comparison with Machiavelli, Kautilya actually espoused Dharmic values and believed that war should be a means to the end to of course expand and conquer but to also destroy unrighteousness. He believed that the emperor should be guided by religious and moral principles. Unlike the Italian philosopher he believed that people are not inherently evil and it was the duty of the emperor to guide them to their moral goodness. Unlike previous European treatises on statecraft the Arthashashtra is a

staggering work that not only covers issues related to administration and ruling but also covers issues ranging from the art of warfare to that of managing the economy. In fact it is almost like an encyclopaedia that can be an efficient handbook for emperors. If one observes the differences between western philosophy and Indian philosophy related to the administration of the state are clear. While the previous were mostly focussed on short term gains aiming to subdue rivals and to perpetuate the rule of the emperor, the Arthashastra discusses the virtue of a good ruler and how the entire system should be managed for a long term gain. The long term gain would be the pursuit of happiness, the well-being of the subjects and that the relationship between the king and the subjects should be honourable in nature. The King should not act as a despot and should not indulge in excesses which may lead to the degeneration of the kingdom. The King also had no divine rights and had no right to act as a despot, his judgement depended on the observations carried out by his ministers and decisions were taken only after an active consultation with them. In addition to that the King also had to depend on the Purohita or the High Priest for advice and the High Priest was supposed to be very learned who could guide the King efficiently. Thus from here one may notice that the King was not at all sovereign in the real sense and there were ample checks and balances which were essential in nature to keep him in control.

The concept of the state according to Kautilya was that it was an association of people who had come together in order to pursue their common and individual good and that it was the duty of the state to defend its subjects, thus the state was not a personal fiefdom of any one individual and existed through a collective effort. Thus according to him, the first and foremost duty of the King was to bind the state together along with all its elements in a safe and secure way, as only a strong state could actually become a power to reckon with. A careless and unjust king could turn away his subjects and lead others to conspire against him and thus jeopardise the state. Only a strong state could then decide to expand and gain more territories. Thus Kautilya laid a lot of stress on administration and internal security.

Apart from internal administration Kautilya also focussed a lot on the creation and maintenance of a strong foreign policy for the pursuit of supremacy. The main purpose in terms of foreign policy was to secure national interest and security. Even in those days states contemplated on the virtues of national interests and decisions were supposed to be made keeping it in mind in addition to enhancing security of the state. Depending on the Mandala system which was a curious blend of states, Kautilya proposed a three-fold strategy to pursue the foreign interests of a state always offering more importance to diplomacy than war. These three points were preservation of property, recovery of lost property and the gain of new properties. Apart from these the diplomatic means were further divided into six sections which were Treaties with other states,

war, neutrality in the event of a conflict, expeditions to gather resources for war, seeking shelter from more powerful states, and by making peace with one and war with another.

The Arthashashtra condemns undue wars and excesses, and opines that conquered territories should not be plundered but rather subtlety should be maintained in order to ensure that there is ever lasting peace and prosperity, this could be seen as a kind of soft power. War should also not occur unless an absolute necessity and other means of political interference, sabotage, espionage and covert warfare were also favoured.

Thus when we discuss Kautilya, one may see a curious mixture of political realism, self-realisation and where the defence of the state is offered the primary importance.

Check your Progress - II

Answer the following:

- (a) Chanakya can be compared to which other European strategic thinker?

- (b) How did Chanakya perceive the state?

- (c) How did the Arthashashtra give more importance to diplomacy over wanton wars?

- (d) Chanakya was a hyper realist despite that he did invest a lot in creating the goodness of the emperor. Agree or disagree?

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- (e) Which system of states did Chanakya organise in order to define inter-state relations?

2.4 DELVING INTO THE MAHABHARATA

Similar to ancient Indian texts, the Mahabharata can also be considered as a guide to strategy in addition to it being an excellent piece of literature. Indeed if one delves deeper into the Mahabharata it exposes how personal hate, jealousy and diplomatic means were instrumental in the war and how the concept of righteousness and un-righteousness played out in a larger field.

The Sanskrit epic itself is the world's longest epic poem, at 100,000 couplets or 1.8 million words. It is ten times the combined length of the Iliad and Odyssey and three times the length of the Bible. Structurally, the Mahabharata is a compendium of ancient Indian mythology, history, political theory, and philosophy, and has sometimes been described as an ancient encyclopaedia of Indian knowledge. The holy Hindu scripture, the *Bhagavad Gita*, which is considered a summary of the vast Hindu religious and philosophical literature, is also contained within the *Mahabharata*. On reading the Mahabharata it is easy to understand a gradual plot unfolding where various thoughts clash and diplomatic or covert means often amounting to deceit is used in order to pursue one's purpose.

If one delves a bit deeper into the Mahabharata one may easily understand that it deviates sharply from the moral concepts of avoiding deceit and war in order to achieve a purpose. Throughout ancient India, morality occupied a higher ground, but the Mahabharata illustrates that one must plan a strategy according to the needs and not according to the moral position that one may adopt. While in the present context, India's foreign policy has been morally guided based on the principles of non-violence and avoiding deceitful nature, it has often created situations that have spiralled out of control. However, if we look into the context of the Mahabharata the strategy suggested is according to the requirements of the battlefield and hence it was generally advisable to engage in methods that may at first seem deceitful but in the long run assures victory. For instance, it was well known that the Kauravas were stronger than the Pandavas when it came to their armies, however the immoral slaughter of

Abhimanyu, the son of Arjun infuriated Lord Krishna and being a master strategist he advised Arjun to abandon his moral principles and engage in an open conflict with the Kauravas in the same manner which they had begun.

Looking into this particular event, one may easily understand that certain events may compel a state to adopt practices which are harsh in nature, but it has to be in accordance with the circumstances. Since war is a nasty business, adopting a policy of moral high ground may actually backfire as it happened with India in the war of 1962 with the PRC. On the other hand, India's successful surgical strikes against Pakistani based terror camps exhibited a much more practical approach in tending to foreign policy options. Thus the Mahabharata espouses choices which are correct and well timed in relation to the current situation.

The Mahabharata also sways away from the well propounded ancient thoughts of non-violence and benevolence, that should however not entail that the Mahabharata espouses mindless violence, but on the contrary it strikes a chord between morality and benevolence with ruthlessness and strategy, as the texts exhibit that no strategy can be good enough if it lacks conviction, and failure to accept the reality for what it is. For instance, Lord Krishna did try his best to prevent the war from flaring up but to no avail and when the war begun he advised Arjun to adopt his duties as a warrior and to stop lamenting which was unbecoming of a soldier on the battlefield. When we try to see this event from the point of view of strategy, it calls upon leaders and decision makers to cast aside their frailty and emotions and beckons them to adapt to the real time situation and to engage in taking decisions, fighting a war (even if it has been thrust upon them) and to ensure victory and dispense one's duty. Any leader or decision maker should not fall prey to weakness and observe the situation from the point of morality especially when it comes to the reality and brutality of war.

In this context the Mahabharata also justifies war in certain contexts, which is very important from the view of strategy. In contrast to the Gandhian tradition of preferring nonviolence over violence which again has some credibility, the Mahabharata justifies violence through a well fought war if so the need may arise. In order to again discuss this section it is important to understand that the Mahabharata does not justify mindless violence but a well-planned series of actions in terms of war in order to defeat a well-entrenched enemy and that to after taking all factors into calculation. War is unjust as it is explained in the text, but if all political solutions fail then that is the only act that can give a conclusive end rather than engaging in long term negotiations which may not yield any conclusive outcome. Within the text, there are ample examples when Lord Krishna and even the other elders tried to prevent the war from occurring in the first place, but when all seemed to be lost it was decided that a war should be fought for a proper conclusion. In the

modern context too, if we are to think strategically one may observe that leaders abhor war which is important for that requires a lot of resources and planning, not to mention the risks involved but at times that may be the only solution. Therefore again, the Mahabharata actually bases itself on the situation at hand which is real and requires actions. In this context too, the texts justify that rules and regulations should be again interpreted according to the needs of the time and also according to the situation at hand, thus blindly basing one's decisions on morality and rules may actually end up being counter-productive in nature. The Mahabharata is espouses a very practical and realist approach to strategy where the prime goal is self-preservation, victory on the battlefield and also to act according to the situation and time.

Check your Progress - III

Answer the following:

- (a) How can the Mahabharata be termed as an epic that pursues realism as a policy?

- (b) How does the Mahabharata explain the moral dilemma of the rulers?

- (c) How does the Mahabharata perceive war?

- (d) Who sought the divine knowledge in Mahabharat from Sri Krishna?

(e) Which were the two opposing armies during the Mahabharat?

2.5 LET US SUM UP

To end it, the ancient Indian scriptures offer a blend of idealism as well as practical approach to strategy. Though it does not discount the idealist principles based on morality in terms of strategy it focusses on the key areas of self-preservation, projection of power, the use of power for one's goals and agendas as well as keeping the enemy tamed. These texts are a storehouse of knowledge and discuss matters which are of strategic importance. Even though states should not engage in mindless violence against one another, they should use calculated force if required in order to preserve their identity and territory. By simply adopting a position of universal morality not only do they endanger themselves but they may never be able to recover from defeats. These ancient texts therefore discuss that actions must be based on the requirement of times and decisions should be practical in nature.

2.6 KEY WORDS

- **Dictum** saying, thought, quote.
- **Potency** Potential
- **Demarcated** decided, boundaries drawn
- **Subdue** to suppress
- **Degeneration** Destruction
- **Fiefdom** Territory
- **Reckon** Agree
- **Compendium** collection

2.7 SUGGESTED BOOKS

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Answers

Check Your Progress - I

- (a) The King was considered to be the most important person in ancient kingdoms.
- (b) Diplomacy was stressed on as an alternative means to wars.
- (c) The ancient armies were made up of infantry, chariots, cavalry and even mounted elephants in addition siege weapons were also used.
- (d) Agree
- (e) Chakravarti Samrat

Check Your Progress - II

- (a) Chanakya can be compared to the Italian strategic thinker Niccollo Machiavelli.
- (b) Chanakya considered the state to be an association of people who are together for a common good and cause and it was the duty of the state to defend the interests of the people as well as offer protection and the state was not the personal fiefdom of anyone.
- (c) The text discusses that for empires it is important to go for wars but if a diplomatic hassle can be sorted out by talks and without shedding blood then diplomatic means should be adopted. War should always be seen as a last resort.
- (d) Agree
- (e) Mandala system

Check Your Progress – III

- (a) The Mahabharat espouses realism as a policy in contrast to only moral positions as it encourages the rulers to take up the path of dharma and dispense their duties without any prejudice which may also require wars and violence.
- (b) The rulers explain moral dilemma due to the fact that at times the rulers may not wish to go for wars due to unforeseen circumstances but unfortunately at times they may not have a choice. Therefore the major moral problem that a ruler may face is to select between going for war or for peaceful means to an issue.
- (c) The Mahabharata sees war as a necessary evil, something that should be avoided at all costs but if there are no other choices available then it has to be taken into account.
- (d) Arjun
- (e) Pandavas and Kauravas

UNIT : 3

INDIA'S STRATEGIC THOUGHT - MEDIEVAL

:: STRUCTURE::

3.0 Objectives

3.1 Introduction

3.2 Warfare in Medieval India

3.3 Europeanisation of India's Strategic Culture

3.4 Concluding the Strategic Culture of Medieval India

3.5 Let Us Sum Up

3.6 Key words

3.7 Suggested Books

Answers

3.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit we shall:

- Attain a basic understanding of strategic ideas in Medieval India
- Understand the historical events which shaped the strategy of this time
- Understand how after this time-frame the strategic shifts were noticeable

On completing this unit, you should be able to:

- Understand strategic ideas related to medieval India
- Observe and understand the events which led to the formulation of strategy during this period
- Understand the strategic shifts that occurred during this time.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

During the medieval times, India suffered defeats after defeats at the hands of the foreign forces which makes us contemplate on the lack of a strategic culture in India that could have prevented such defeats. Armies from Central Asia and from as far as Arab lands made their way to India, no doubt encountering stiff resistance but ultimately managed to subdue to natives. In addition to that later on even the British and other

European powers managed to get a foothold over India and gradually the British began to dominate the entire subcontinent along with other European powers which made their colonies in various parts of India. During this phase one may witness the lack of an efficient and proper strategy, lack of technological development as well as the general disunity among the natives which offered much leeway to the foreign forces to subdue India. This section will specifically deal with the issues of strategic thought during the medieval period.

3.2 WARFARE IN MEDIEVAL INDIA

India during the medieval period was fragmented in nature with numerous kingdoms ruling the huge subcontinent and in a constant state of bickering among themselves. As such there was no national unity, even though way before the influence of India stretched all the way from modern day Iran (Persia) till the Southeast Asian region. During this phase, the natives were technologically backward in terms of warfare, and lacked a coherent strategy. The primary issue here was the lack of a national consciousness which would enable them to think alike in the defence of the subcontinent. Since each kingdom was at war with one another, it was quite easy for foreign forces to exploit these gaps for their own benefits.

Secondly, India was famed for its riches and civilizational heritage, its fame was so well known that many travellers had made their way into the heart of the subcontinent and had returned with stories of India's wealth which obviously attracted foreign invaders. However, as much as India was rich it also lacked a coherent strategy to ward off foreign invaders. For instance the early signs were also ignored, in the year 711-713 A.D. Arabs from Basra (in Iraq) managed to subdue to local rulers of Multan and Sindh and the native rulers received no help from the other kings and were left all alone to defend themselves. The invading forces were numerically and technically superior which led to a disastrous defeat of the native forces and thus, Arab forces could set their foot in the subcontinent for the first time. However they could not rule for much longer and left. This was a warning sign which the rest of the rulers in the subcontinent had conveniently ignored which proved to be fatal later on.

Despite that, the next series of invasions ranging from 990 A.D. till 1030 A.D. by the Turks ensured disastrous defeats of the rulers of the Sindh region, in total around 17 invasions were ordained by which a huge amount of wealth was drained off, later on the Ghori invasions ensured cementing foreign rule in India in which also the native emperor Prithviraj was defeated in the battle of Tarain in 1192. Right from the establishment of the slave dynasty to the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate under kings ranging from Qutubuddin Aibak to Khiljis and Tuglaq one may notice how gradually foreign invaders manage to subdue

the native rulers and population and completely submerge these native territories. Some key observations from these conquests are, there was no coherent foreign or military policies of the native rulers to offset any foreign invasion, for instance in the first battle of Tarain, Emperor Prithviraj Chauhan had decisively defeated the invading forces but offered them the chance to surrender and escape. In doing so he not only offered them the power to again regroup and attack which ended in a disaster in the second battle of Tarain, but he had not kept up with the behaviour of the enemy even after letting them free. The fact that there was no proper intelligence and strategy costed them a lot. The second factor that is important is that, the coalition of native rulers were always weak and they did not have much in common, religion certainly did not play a very important role as a unifying factor, and on the contrary these kings were always bickering among themselves. This of course offered the invading rulers the chance to take advantage of such serious disunity and deal a lot of damage. The third factor is that the civilians did not take up the role of a militia and did not offer any sort of resistance, after the defeat of their rulers, it always happened that they were at the receiving end of the invading armies without even putting up any sort of a resistance against them.

Defeats of famed native rulers such as Prithviraj Chauhan, Rana Sangha, and Rana Pratap exhibited a ferocious tendency for these rulers to defend their kingdoms against all odds which were unfortunately not supplemented by proper resources, intelligence and unity among the kings. When it came to commitment to the battles and the question of morale, then the native kings did have that and they often fought to death on the battlefield. Even further incidents exhibit how the native rulers engaged in smaller battles even though the outcome were very much decided against them, nevertheless they held on till their last breath. However as historians have shown, battles are not only won on the basis of morale and the number of troops but also due to the tactical management which many of the native rulers lacked.

The invading forces had tactical superiority and knowledge of battle formations with various plans in case something did not work out. In fact the native kings had better knowledge regarding the terrain and territory but they fought defensive wars which had a completely different strategic outlook as compared to a war of invasion. Invading troops depended on mounted archers who would fire bolted arrows into the enemy causing them to panic and therefore rush headlong towards the enemy lines, two other flanks would surround them and crush them in between and not to mention the position of calling in reserve troops in case they faced defeats. Even the ranking of the invading troops were based on merit rather than on hierarchy and communication on the battlefield was better than the defending troops.

In contrast the defending native kings had no different plans or series of actions at their disposal, they studied the battlefield meticulously

but did not have two or three different plans in case things went awry. For them morale and prestige being everything, they casted everything which they had in the battlefield often charging at the enemy without even knowing the consequences and as a result of which often they could not defend themselves against the hit and run tactics of the invading forces. For instance in the battle at the Khyber region or even in the Second Battle of Tarain the native troops outnumbered the invaders but due to the lack of alternative plans they made the foolish mistake of taking on the enemy headlong and thus suffered defeats. Also when it came to the command structure, merit was rarely found as soldiers would respond only to their own kings and thus the entire concept of a confederacy fighting the invaders found itself wanting.

Another flaw in the strategic thought of the native rulers was the lack of mobilisation of the population, this was an important aspect as after the defeat of the regular armies the native population did not rise up in rebellion against the invading forces neither did they resist. The defeat of the regular native armies meant that the invading forces could simply subjugate the native population and pillage their resources to their will. The concept of guerrilla tactics were not in effect as such and only after the Marathas assumed their powers did such tactics come into the play. For instance in the Battle of Talikota in 1565 the empire of Vijaynagar was defeated although the city was not sieged as the main army fell due to the death of the commander the subsidiary armies refused to fight or even change their tactics as they had no contingency plan thus even if a victory was possible it was the lack of fortitude and alternative plans that made the defeat possible.

Regarding battle strategies also, the native armies were slow to adopt new tactics such as the use of gunpowder and canons, rather depending on the infantry and the use of war elephants. While initially the elephants did provide a shock for the invading armies, being animals they would often run amok thus killing friendly troops as well. Another issue regarding the failure of strategy was avoiding power projection in the neighbouring areas. Despite facing constant attacks the native armies rarely crossed the borders of the subcontinent to take over rival kingdoms and always played a defensive game.

Check your Progress - I

Answer the following:

- (a) What was one of the major reasons as to why India was always targeted by foreign invaders?

(b) How did the lack of contingency battle plans prove to be dangerous for the native armies?

(c) In what way did the lack of popular support lead to the subjugation of the subcontinent?

(d) Which armies mastered the use of pincer movements? The Mughals or the Rajputs?

(e) Which were the first invaders of the Indian Subcontinent?

3.3 EUROPEANIZATION OF INDIA'S STRATEGIC CULTURE

Although the Mughals made India their home after invading it centuries ago and riding over the native rulers, they too could not sustain their rule due to the same issues that plagued the native rulers. Before delving into the theme of Europeanisation of India's strategic culture during the medieval period, it would be important to detail the causes of the downfall of the Mughals. One of the primary causes was the resurgence of the Hindu empires in the south, the consolidation of the Rajput forces and the aggression of the Marathas who often dealt decisive defeats to the Mughals. Rebellions in the eastern part of India and peasant rebellions were causes enough for the disintegration of the Mughal Empire. It must also be noted that the people in those days even though

they swore allegiance to the emperor did not hesitate to look for greener pastures. Despite being at the peak of its power at one point of time the Mughals did not offer enough attention to the defence of the empire.

For instance, they never really focussed on the defence of the open seas and it must be understood that the sea routes were critical in terms of trade and commerce as well as an open invitation of the foreign powers. Whereas for the Europeans the defence of the seas was of prime importance and even if we are to observe the history of colonialism, the lack of defence of the seas plagued all the native civilizations right from the Americas to Asia and as a result of which the European powers had a huge advantage when it came to organising invasions.

The second factor when we are to observe the difference between the European and the native strategic thought is the difference between fighting a defensive and an offensive battle. The European powers were invaders whereas the natives were pitched defensively. The European powers were power hungry and looked for better sea routes to cement their trade with Asia and the Americas. Being adventurous and explorers they were willing to take all risks to engage in the discovery of new routes and in addition to understanding the importance of the seas they were also well organised and had a sense of competition among themselves. As an invading force they understood clearly that they would not have the home advantage which the natives may have. On the other hand the native rulers were calm and relaxed and they did not understand that invasions could happen from all the sides. While the natives were embittered and divided among themselves in small princely states, the Europeans were a consolidated force. In terms of a defensive war the natives were found wanting. Disunited, treacherous to one another and embittered they did not have any proper strategy to counter invasions neither did they fight as a united group.

Of course when it came to diplomacy as well, the natives lacked the fortitude to engage in diplomatic moves to counter the enemy. Whereas the Europeans had understood the fact that as an invading force they did not have the home advantage they sought diplomacy to eke out concessions in order to gain a foothold in the subcontinent. The native rulers on the other hand did not have any such diplomatic fortitude to engage in such moves and gradually lost their autonomy.

The poor strategy was also affected by the fact that the people in general were unhappy and did not rally behind their emperors and kings, whereas the empires in Europe offered whatever help and assistance was required for their explorations and backed them with the military and navy. So in terms of fighting a defensive war the natives did not foresee the possible outcomes. The invading Europeans came as traders seeking the permission to engage in trade and gradually invaded the entire subcontinent subjugating it. On the other hand the natives became

increasingly complacent not viewing them as a threat and offering concessions at throwaway prices. Unlike the native rulers, the Europeans were also very observant and keen as they observed the internal struggles within India and took advantage of such political turmoil gradually cementing their place.

While, history has exhibited some brilliant rulers in India whose realm extended beyond imagination, it is indeed hard to fathom that the land of Chanakya would succumb to a handful of European invaders. It is also surprising that far from falling to the British crown, the subcontinent in a span of a few years fell to the rule of the British East India Company where the majority of the soldiers were native Indians. The failure of the first war of Independence of 1857 also exhibits a lack of strategy if not courage on the part of the natives against the Company's rule.

This section highlights the strategic expertise of the Europeans, particularly the British who not only managed to subdue the natives in their own homeland despite being hugely outnumbered, but also managed to restrict other European powers such as the Portuguese and the French to certain regions only. The arrival of the Europeans in India highlighted the lack of a strategic planning, whereas regimes changed in the subcontinent rarely did they engage in a proper administration and unification of the kingdoms. Unlike Germany and Italy which asserted their project of unification, the Indian kings were complacent in their kingdoms and never looked forward to increasing their hold over the subcontinent. Constant bickering and disunity was an important factor for their subjugation. Also in the later years, the inability to keep up with the European challenge in terms of weaponry and battle strategies severely impacted the prospects for India. the Europeans were not only a formidable naval power, but they also depended on the use of guns and canons to a large extent. Although by then the use of gunpowder was substantial in India, they could not strategise it effectively which led to defeats after defeats. Also the natives could never consolidate their kingdoms to fight under one banner to defeat the Europeans and to prevent them from expanding further. No doubt the first war of independence was important in terms of national unity and the courage exhibited was unparalleled but the defeat of the native forces again highlight misplaced priorities and disunity among the natives. The British policy of divide and rule also exhibits the political fortitude which the natives lacked.

Therefore, during this period one may notice a paradigm shift in which the gradual takeover of the Indian subcontinent exhibited a supremacy in European strategic thought and warfare in which the natives were found wanting.

Check your Progress - II
Answer the following:

- (a) Apart from European invasions what other internal factor caused the failure of the Mughal Empire?

- (b) How did the difference between an offensive and defensive strategy prove to be an advantage for the Europeans?

- (c) Did technological superiority enable the Europeans to have a distinct advantage?

- (d) Which rifle did the British use to devastating effect?

- (e) The British Naval supremacy played a key role in forming British rule in India. agree or disagree?

3.4 CONCLUDING THE STRATEGIC CULTURE OF MEDIEVAL INDIA

Of course when it comes to the strategic culture of medieval India, one may not be able to paint a rosy picture due to the fact that the subcontinent faced defeats after defeats from invading forces and were unable to extend their reach any further. However, that does not mean that the natives lacked a strategic culture at all, for certainly there were kingdoms that valiantly resisted the might of the invaders only to either become outnumbered or they could not sustain their campaigns. Resistance offered by the Marathas to the various rulers in the Rajputana province and even in the Northeast part of India highlight that the natives did not get subjugated without putting up a valiant fight. Even the war of independence and the small pockets of resistance exhibits the curious tendencies of the natives to fight for their land and honour only to fall to the might of the British Empire.

The primary issue that arises when we discuss the concerns related to the strategic culture of medieval India is the lack of accessing the real events that caused a complete change in the subcontinent. Indeed, historians have painstakingly documented most of the events, but is up to the research scholars to draw out conclusions despite falling prey to the pretentious and embedded self-glorification that is all too common. While much of the earlier history of the subcontinent is replete with references to great thinkers such as Chanakya and his thoughts, little has been done to actually put them into practice. As one may believe, we seldom learn from history. When it comes to offering a solemn commentary on the medieval strategic culture of India (the subcontinent), one has to accept that the empires crumbled before the invaders due to either petty or well-grounded reasons. When it came to chivalry and bravery on the battlefield the natives excelled, but when it came to planning and fortitude or the aptitude to even make a prognosis regarding the future, then the natives lacked a lot.

The invaders prior to the British who after years of conquest gradually acclimatised to the subcontinent and its behaviour and accepted it as their own homeland and even ruled with much grandeur excelling in art and culture and even in terms of administration were good, failed to understand that India being a rich nation was vulnerable to plundering attacks by outsiders. They who had themselves invaded the subcontinent only to usurp it from the natives forgot one simple thing that it is easy to attack and go on the offensive with the option of falling back if defeated to one's safe spot, but if defeated in a defensive battle that very safe spot is also denied to them. Thus they forgot that when they had invaded the subcontinent they faced large armies, well-organised and even under able leadership only to see disunity, petty squabbles among princes and kings and the lack of strategic planning. Somehow when the British too arrived

along with other European nations with evil intentions, they too had become complacent regarding the defence of their own empires which they had wrested and built on the blood of the natives.

Secondly, the native armies did not invest in upgradation of their military hardware, or tactics and even in terms of strategic thinking they were more than ever casual believing that the homeland advantage and the large number of armies would be sufficient enough to provide a deterrence to invading forces. Cruelly as history repeats itself the natives prior to the coming of the Arab and Turco invaders had the same thought. The inherent belief in superiority, homeland advantage, massing large armies and fighting a defensive battle led to the gradual declination of the Indian empires.

Regarding strategy, the natives did not have a clear thought to offer first line of defence. When it came to defending the seas they had little to offer and as a result of which the Europeans had it quite easy drawing up to the coastline of India and setting up defensive posts. While the Europeans were determined to find new sea routes, they depended on strong navies for the purpose while the native rulers did not focus any attention on the seas.

Constant infighting and rivalries within the subcontinent and failing administration also made it very difficult to offer a strong resistance to the invading Europeans. In fact it must be borne in mind that the Europeans came in small numbers and without sufficient strength, but amazingly they took over the entire subcontinent and ruled with an iron fist. The strategic failures cannot be seen only from the military point of view alone, one must also take into account the administrative failure of these kingdoms that were divided and differed on many accounts. Indeed weak administration and failure on the part of the Indian empires to tactically understand the Europeans did a lot of damage.

Check your Progress - III

Answer the following:

- (a) How did internal fragmentation and disunity lead to the fall of the subcontinent?

- (b) Mention one critical advantage that the Europeans had over the natives?

(c) Which was the last major uprising against the British rule in India?

(d) The British used diplomacy skilfully to crush any rebellion. Agree or disagree?

(e) Military upgrades were not a part of the Indian strategic thought. Agree or disagree.

3.5 LET US SUM UP

To understand the strategic culture in medieval India we may find it to be not very persuasive and adaptive in nature. The failure stems from various factors such as the inability to contain a strategic thought that would enable in the defence of the subcontinent, refusal to modernise the armed forces, petty infighting and the inability of the kingdoms to deter the foreign invaders. The fact that they did not focus on the maintenance of navies made things even more difficult for the natives to defend themselves. Unfortunately, the native rulers did not understand the evil intentions of the Europeans as they came disguised as traders and gradually took over the entire subcontinent, and even the first war of independence which was fought bravely by the natives did not bear much fruits due to the same issues that plagued the native rulers since centuries.

3.6 KEY WORDS

Foothold	Stronghold, strong-point
Coherent	Decisive
Fragmented	Divided
Cementing	Firm
Militia	Ardme Civilians
Confederacy	Small groups working for a common cause
Pillage	to Loot
Embittered	Upset

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Answers

Check Your Progress - I

- (a) India was known for its extreme amount of riches and wealth and therefore it was frequently targeted for plundering.
- (b) The lack of contingency or alternative plans did not allow the native armies to switch tactics in case they were on the verge of defeat against the invading armies and therefore could not take any other step to salvage the situation.
- (c) The fact that the native population did not rise up in popular rebellion or form militias to launch covert warfare against the invaders allowed the invaders to easily conquer the territories.
- (d) Mughals
- (e) Ghoris

Check Your Progress - II

- (a) Massive rebellions against the Mughal Empire weakened it and costed them a lot in their fight against the British.
- (b) The Europeans were on the offensive and as a result of which they were more decisive and had a proper strategy to execute in addition to that they had nothing to lose, the natives on the other hand were on the defensive and had no proper plans to battle and hence when they lost, they lost everything.
- (c) Technological advantage certainly proved to be decisive in nature as not only did it help the Europeans to fight the natives easily but also could defeat them without much difficulty.
- (d) Lee Enfield Rifle.
- (e) Agree.

Check Your Progress - III

- (a) Internal fragmentation and disunity was one of the key reasons for the defeat of the native armies as they could not offer a united defence against the invading Europeans
- (b) The Europeans had a proper and strong navy which was a critical advantage over the natives.
- (c) The First War of Independence in 1857 was the last major uprising against the British in India.
- (d) Agree
- (e) Agree

UNIT : 4**INDIA'S STRATEGIC THOUGHT-
MODERN****:: STRUCTURE::****4.0 Objectives****4.1 Introduction****4.2 Consolidation of the British empire in India****4.3 Post-Independence Strategic Thought****4.4 Post-Independence Diplomacy and Strategy****4.5 Let Us Sum Up****4.6 Keywords****4.7 Suggested Books****Answers**

4.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit we shall:

- Attain a basic understanding of how the British consolidated their rule in India and strategized their hold
- Understand and evaluate post-Independence strategic thought of India
- Understand the post-Independence diplomatic moves of India

On completing this unit, you should be able to:

- Understand the British strategic thought in India
- Understand the post-Independence Indian strategic thought
- Understand the post-Independence diplomacy and strategy of India

4.1 INTRODUCTION

On discussing the modern strategic thought some time should be given to the consolidation of the British Empire as after the formation of it, the British drew up various strategies to defend their colony (India) from outside forces in addition to mobilising Indian troops for their wars and expeditions. British strategists particularly considered India to be the prime colony, the defence of which was paramount to them. The Post-

Independence scenario did not deviate much from the British strategic thought as India by then had faced a bloody partition and inherited a fractured and weak nation which had to be united. Also the regime had to defend itself from a hostile Pakistan and later on the PRC. During this phase, the nascent Republic also had to charter through the paths of diplomacy forming alliances and choosing to stay out of unnecessary conflict. This phase perhaps is the most important phase when it comes to strategy, as it still influences our way of thinking even in the contemporary times.

4.2 CONSOLIDATION OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE IN INDIA

The British had come as traders and emerged victorious and consolidated their empire over a period of time. Through wars and crafty diplomacy the British managed to not only subdued far superior native rulers but also managed to carve one of the largest empires on earth and prized India as their most important colony. Obviously as news of India reached far and wide there were competitors who wanted to oust the British and impose their own rule over the region, but the master strategic activities of the British and their skill with fortitude ensured that the British stronghold over India never waned.

The British at first realised that they could not initially win over India by force as they were grossly outnumbered, in fact a handful of Englishmen had arrived in India to negotiate for trading rights with the Mughals and other local rulers. They also realised that in the pursuit of doing so they were not alone. The French, Portuguese and the Dutch all rival states of Britain were also there to take their share of the fame. Although the Spanish, Dutch, French and the Portuguese had colonies in the rest of the world the mere size and wealth of India made it a much coveted possession. The British had already defeated the French in Europe and focussed on building their navy and thus the naval supremacy that the British enjoyed ensured that they sailed in unchallenged to India and could decimate all the other European opposition with ease. No wonder the French and the Portuguese were restricted to small pockets in India. If one delves again into history one may able to witness the difference between the Hispanic and the British strategy of colonising a region. Whereas the Hispanics were more interested in spreading their religion and engaged in brutal and bloody wars with the natives often to the point of completely destroying native populations, the British started slowly and gradually consolidated their position without engaging in unnecessary wars. The British were more profit oriented and were initially happy with trading with the native kingdoms. Although all these colonial powers were motivated by profits and the same colonial lenses that gave them an impetus to look down upon the others as uncivilised, the British did not pursue such a policy with heavy handedness instead using persuasion, diplomacy and wars to gradually consolidate their hold over India.

Primarily the strategy of the British was to cleverly interfere in the political affairs of the local rulers, pitting kings against kings in order to gain political benefits out of it. It also engaged in a vicious propaganda and explained their position as that of a saviour for the native people. As soon as they observed the acute political disunity and pervading crisis in the subcontinent they took advantage of such inefficiency and strangled the subcontinent. Additionally the British were also careful to engage in limited conflicts with the kings by which they ensured that in the defence of a warring native empire the others do not offer their support. Thus by dividing the rulers in the subcontinent they had the privilege of warring with a selected group of kingdoms at their own convenience without combatting with all of them one go.

The establishment and the further recruitment of natives as soldiers despite the Englishmen being hugely outnumbered also exhibited a fact that the natives were more than happy to serve the company albeit disgruntled they were. The political fallacy of the native kingdoms and their poor administration emboldened the British which then began to take advantage of the situation and also ensured that they could forego their promises of a free and fair trade. Further wars such as the Battle of Plassey and the Battle of Buxar and other wars with the Marathas, the Nawabs and the Mughals finally sealed the fate of the native kings. From being rulers they were now reduced to the position of vassals.

The British even though they had unified the nation into one administrative unit ensured that they never fought a series of battles against all the kings, indeed they offered token autonomy to many kings in return for allegiance and acceptance of British suzerainty. Further expeditions in Afghanistan and as far as Myanmar and Tibet also ensured that the British managed to gradually hold on to the empire in India.

If one observes the British strategy it followed a ring-fence defence which were in a sense overlapping defensive circles while defending the heartland which was India. It made peace with Tibet and Nepal and offered autonomy to the Kingdom of Bhutan, it maintained a wary watch over Afghanistan and also ensured that the seas were a privy of the British knowing very well that any other foreign invader could use the sea route to enter India and thus usurp them. Politically too the British used a complex legal and administrative mechanism to stifle out dissent and ensure that their hold over India becomes even stronger as time passes. Further wars in Europe also ensured that the Indian troops in the British Indian army fought for the empire without a hitch. Thus the British ingrained a strategic process of avoiding unnecessary wars, offering autonomy in exchange of accepting British supremacy while simultaneously decimating those kingdoms who resisted them. They also ensured that they defended the empire from all the fronts especially from other possible invaders and could thus manage to stay in power for so long without any visible challenge to their rule in India.

Check your Progress - I
Answer the following:

- (a) How did the British manage to subdue other European competitors in India?

- (b) Outline the difference in terms of strategy in comparison the Hispanic nations.

- (c) How did the British strategically view wars in India?

- (d) Mention the Battle that decisively consolidated British rule in India

- (e) Which British personality was decisive in driving a wedge between the natives for prospering British rule in India?

4.3 POST-INDEPENDENCE STRATEGIC THOUGHT IN INDIA

Post-Independence India had to develop its own strategic thought not only to defend itself from external enemies, but to also ensure that the entire Republic was united under one banner. India inherited a fractured territory with princely states dotting the entire map, the partition was an additional blow to the dream of a unified subcontinent but as it was a harsh reality there was no choice but to accept it. On the other hand, economically too India was weak and could not pose a serious challenge to the world. The Cold War had just set in which caused political ripples in the entire international arena which also meant that both the United States and the Soviet Union were looking for allies and the Indian leaders realised that they would very soon have to choose either of them.

The situation was quite grim in those days, economically too India had been so greatly exploited by the British administration that it had nothing to boast of. Rampant poverty, inflation and a weak industrial setting coupled with food shortages ensured that India would be weak for quite some time. At this juncture it required careful planning and forethought to tide over the situation till it gradually improved.

Right after independence, India went on a spree under the able leadership of Sardar Vallabhai Patel to unify the princely states and amalgamate them within the Republic, this was done to ensure that the entire territory of India became unified under one banner. Contestations were made over Junagadh, Hyderabad and Kashmir. While the Indian leadership skilfully managed to ensure the absorption of Junagadh, Hyderabad and other princely states, Kashmir became a problem which caused the first Indo-Pak war of 1947-1948. Very soon more wars would be fought over Kashmir which also saw the emergence of terrorism and insurgency in the late 1980s. Additionally, India also had to fight the Chinese in 1962 and therefore it realised that even the northern neighbour had no good intentions.

If one attempts to understand the strategic thought of post-Independence India it can be summed up in the process of recovery, gradual consolidation and overpowering or checking its foes. Although critics point out the failure of the Indian leadership on various occasions one must also take into account the situation at hand when the economy was weak and militarily too India was not a strong power to reckon with. Primarily on the military front India had to not only contest Pakistan and the PRC, it also had to take into account various insurgent groups in the North-East, hostile Left-Wing terrorists as well as other small insurgent groups. India also had to win over its neighbours and engage them positively without letting rival states get a grip over them. Apart from revitalising the economy, the Indian strategic thought had to take a two

pronged approach to counter external threats emanating from rival neighbouring states, extend its sphere of influence to other neighbouring states, engage in multilateral and global diplomacy and also neutralise internal threats.

The first aspect of a grand strategy was recovery, India had to recover from the mess left behind by the British as certainly the British had defended its 'colony' as colonial masters preventing it from being captured by hostile powers but certainly the British administration did not have any benign intentions for India. The partition and its divide and rule policy is a classic example of the British attempt to weaken India. By recovery, the then Indian leadership had to at first recover from the horrors of the partition, revitalise the stagnant economy and to engage in a vigorous process of diplomacy with its neighbours to secure itself in the neighbourhood. In doing so it would entrench itself firmly in the region and after which the process of nation rebuilding and consolidation would become easier.

In the process of gradual consolidation, the idea was to ramp up the defence of the nation in addition to working on the economy. India by then had realised that Pakistan would be a lifelong foe and it had to be wary of its designs. Budgetary constraints would however ensure that the amount of funds allotted to the defence sector would be minimal. In addition to that a lot of focus was laid on rebuilding the economy which was vital for an overall stronger defence. On the other hand its disastrous face-off with the PRC in 1962 shattered the myth that India need not worry about its northern neighbour. India's war with the PRC also made the establishment realise that it had to take up defence and strategic planning quite seriously.

In the latter phases, India began to face multiple challenges from home-grown terrorism in Kashmir, in the Northeast and Left-Wing terrorism in certain regions in eastern and southern India. As a result of which the notion of internal security challenges gained much more momentum in our strategic thought and planning. Also as time passed on India realised that in order to overpower its unfriendly neighbours such as the PRC and Pakistan it required to keep good relations with the remaining neighbours. This to some extent did pay off as India maintains genuine and cordial relations with its other neighbours. Although India has decisively defeated Pakistan in wars many times, strategically speaking it has not let its guard down.

The primary focus of India's strategy post-Independence has been to keep a check on its foes in the neighbourhood and to bolster its defence, but it has also changed to the point that India also looks beyond its immediate neighbourhood and has engaged in various bilateral, multilateral and global diplomatic manoeuvres with other states. As a result of which, India's strategy has evolved from just basic defence and economic recovery to more engagement on a global and multilateral

forum which not only makes India a dominant global players but is also a pragmatic strategic choice of power projection.

Check your Progress - II

Answer the following:

- (a) Mention some of the issues that India inherited during independence?

- (b) Which were the three princely states whose integration with India caused considerable problems?

- (c) Mention some of the internal troubles that India faced

- (d) After which war did India view the PRC as a serious threat

- (e) In which year was the first Indo-Pak war fought?

4.4 POST-INDEPENDENCE DIPLOMACY AND STRATEGY

When it comes to strategic thought, one of the primary areas is bolstering the defence of the state, keeping its enemies checked and at

bay and also to counter them whenever required. However on a longer note, strategic thought should also include diplomatic moves, the art of fighting without fighting, engaging in back-channel discussions to avoid wars and yet gain out of it and also to engage in serious power projection and to emerge as a global power. If we examine the strategic choices of major powers in the world, then we can safely conclude that not only do they engage in small or major wars, not only do they maintain a credible defence force and even may have nuclear weapons but they also ensure that they project their power sufficiently and also emerge as a critical global player. Diplomacy is thus one of the key areas that need to be focussed whenever it comes to the concept of strategic thought. As by the means of diplomacy a lot can be gained without incurring losses.

India has always had a very vibrant diplomatic notion since the days of the independence. Its leaders realised that need that apart from increasing the defence awareness and preparedness it also needs to engage in diplomatic moves with its neighbours and other world powers so as to exhibit its benign nature and project its power. India has always followed a neighbourhood first policy when it attempted to engage in diplomatic moves with its neighbours such as Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and even the PRC. Although its relationship with Pakistan was embittered right from the beginning due to the latter's belligerent nature, nevertheless it tried to make its intention regarding peaceful relationship clear. By doing so it managed to buy some critical time and could also prepare for the future. Relationship with the remaining neighbours were good and amicable.

With the PRC however there was a strategic mistake as India was over enthusiastic about it and also clamoured for its international recognition and inclusion within the United Nations, however the bonhomie with the PRC did not last long as it was visibly irritated by India's positive response towards the Tibetans and which later on caused a war with India. India at that time realised that defence preparedness was quite important especially when it came to double-faced neighbours like the PRC. Despite that again in 1987 onwards India managed to restore some diplomatic relationship with the PRC.

India also managed to sidestep the entire controversy regarding the Cold War initially by forming the Non-Aligned Movement which saw huge participation however again this did not last long as India gradually realised that it needed allies in order to defend itself. This realisation came in the war with Pakistan in 1965 and also in 1971 in both the occasions where India decisively defeated Pakistan. However during these wars India gradually realised the futility of the Non-Aligned Movement and gradually became closer to the Soviet Union which again helped India in terms of military hardware, technology and investments. India's diplomatic moves saw huge changes over a period of time as after the 1971 war its relationship with the Soviet Union became even closer. In the post-Cold War scenario India has a much vibrant diplomacy as it

has now engaged other areas such as the European Union, the Asean as well as far as Latin America and Africa.

During this phase India has gradually managed to look away from being locked in the neighbourhood and has moved to engage with other states in far off areas. Even in terms of global diplomacy and in a multilateral setting India has often taken the lead in terms of discussion on the Climate Change, Solar Alliance as well as on disarmament.

If we are to evaluate the diplomatic moves of India then it is very interesting that strategically India focussed on a two pronged approach. At first it tried to focus on the neighbourhood while improving its economy and defence, while in the later half it started to even move towards the rest of the world and engage them. The primary part deals with the process of consolidation in the neighbourhood as any good strategic thought will obviously ask to emphasise on the neighbourhood. The presence of too many hostile powers in the neighbourhood can compromise on national security and jeopardise the ambitions of the state. One classic example is the presence of an ever belligerent Pakistan which has no doubt been a drain on our resources, and also that India had to fight multiple wars with it not to mention terrorism that is sponsored by it. However as the age old dictum goes that one may not be able to change its neighbours and therefore the only solution for India was to not only keep Pakistan in check in a military and economic way but also to ensure that it could outshine Pakistan when it came to diplomacy. In this context one has to admit that when it comes to diplomatic conflicts with Pakistan India has a decisive upper hand, a payoff of the age old strategy that India inculcated ever since its independence.

In a similar accord its diplomatic moves with the PRC suffered considerable setbacks but in the end India did gain some experience in handling nations such as the PRC which would not stay away from its treacherous policies ever. India trusted the PRC to a great extent often clamouring for it however it was backstabbed by it in a decisive war in 1962, a shock that would take years to recover. However, after this episode it managed to overcome the shock and started to look at the PRC in a more wary manner.

The second aspect was to gradually come out of the neighbourhood and attempt to make better relations with the rest of the world. India not only engaged the rest of the world in fruitful multilateral diplomacy but also gradually became global power in many multilateral settings. It has become a strong voice in the international forums such as the UN and has often taken many principle positions on pressing issues. India has also made good relations with the Southeast Asian states ostensibly to counter the PRC which is a bully in the region as well as maintained relations with both the United States and Russia carefully balancing in this aspect. Apart from that India's relation with the EU as well as other regions have also borne fruits.

In this regard one may safely conclude that India has not only managed to downsize Pakistan but it has also neutralised its diplomatic efforts to continuously harp on the Kashmir issue. On many global fronts it has made a lot of progress which is a result of its years of experienced and careful diplomatic planning. Thus when it comes to strategic thought one has to understand that it should not only entail defence and military preparedness but indeed diplomacy plays a very important role in the formation of an effective and long term strategy. Today if India is considered to be a global power then credit must be given to its able leadership and diplomacy which has earned it accolades from the rest of the world.

Check your Progress - III

Answer the following:

(a) What was India's neighbourhood first policy?

(b) What was the policy of Non-Alignment?

(c) Mention one event in which India's diplomatic efforts failed?

(d) With which country did India sign a friendship treaty in 1950?

(e) India is concerned about the gradual Chinese takeover of which island neighbour?

4.5 LET US SUM UP

When it comes to India's post-Independence strategy one has to understand that it followed an approach that was most suitable for the times. Despite inhering a fractured territory and facing the partition it managed to not only keep Pakistan at bay and despite having issues with the PRC it managed to become more aware of the situation and started to take countermeasures rapidly. India followed the smart policy of not only revitalising the economy and engaging in upgradation of its defence but also managed to keep its neighbours close to itself as well as engage with the rest of the world in fruitful diplomatic moves which proved to be beneficial in the long run. Critics often point out that India's diplomacy is lacklustre and has not borne much fruits but on the contrary India has managed to maintain good relations with almost all of the world while critically ensuring that Pakistan does not get the same diplomatic privilege that it gets. On the other hand it must also ensure that it can gradually counter the PRC which is now proving to be a much more diplomatic and military hassle for India.

4.6 KEYWORDS

▪ Hispanic	People of Spanish and Portuguese origin
▪ Strangled	Choked
▪ Hitch	Hesitation
▪ Grim	Sad, dangerous
▪ Entrench	Position
▪ Belligerent	Aggressive
▪ Clamoured	Campaigned
▪ Sidestep	Avoid

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Answers

Check your Progress - I

- (a) The British had a stronger navy and had already defeated European powers such as France in Europe and as such they had a head start over them in India. In terms of colonialism they proved to be smarter and stronger in terms of strategic planning and execution and hence could subdue them in India.
- (b) The Hispanic nations were more religious in orientation and as such they focussed more on religious conversions rather than on trade, in addition to which they also engaged in unwanted wars with the natives which costed them a lot, the British on the other hand focussed more on trade, winning over allies and fought only very strategically important wars which saved them a lot of resources enabling them to consolidate their hold over India.
- (c) The British viewed wars as important but rather focussed on diplomatic moves and dividing the kings and pitting them against them one another. As such they did not need to fight too many wars with the natives.
- (d) Battle of Plassey.
- (e) Lord Clive

Check your Progress – II

- (a) India inherited a fractured state with a lot of independent princely states that had to be integrated within the state, additionally the economy was very weak and the partition also caused a lot of problems not to mention the creation of Pakistan which became a diplomatic and military issue for India.
- (b) Kashmir, Junagadh and Hyderabad were the three major princely states, the integration of which was of considerable concern.
- (c) Later on some of the troubles that India faced were, Left-Wing terrorism, separatist movements in Northeast and terrorism sponsored by Pakistan in Kashmir.
- (d) 1962 war
- (e) 1948

Check your Progress - III

- (a) The Neighbourhood First policy entailed that India should focus more on creating and maintaining friends in the neighbourhood so as to have less diplomatic troubles and to prevent falling them under the influence of enemy states.
- (b) During the Cold War, India and many other third world states refused to join either bloc of the United States or the Soviet Union and thus remained neutral. This was the Non-Aligned Policy.
- (c) India diplomatically failed in understanding the motives of the PRC which started a war with India in 1962.
- (d) Nepal
- (e) Sri Lanka

UNIT: 5

CONTEMPORARY DISCOURSE ON INDIA'S STRATEGIC THOUGHT

:: STRUCTURE::

5.0 Objectives

5.1 Introduction

5.2 Concerns with the Neighbourhood

5.3 Internal Security Challenges

5.4 Non-traditional Security Threats in India

5.5 Let Us Sum Up

5.6 Keywords

5.7 Suggested Books

Answers

5.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit we shall:

- Attain a basic understanding of how India faces its challenges in the neighbourhood
- Understand how internal security challenges affect India
- Understand the non-traditional threats faced by India

On completing this unit, you should be able to:

- Understand the challenges in the neighbourhood
- Understand the internal security threats
- Understand the non-traditional threats faced by India.

5.1 INTRODUCTION

When it comes to contemporary security challenges faced by India, a lot of them are indeed inherited due to either policy failures or due to the condition of the subcontinent itself. For instance, its failure to counter PRC has affected its position in the neighbourhood but the fact that India has been able to counter Pakistan effectively also speaks volume about India's diplomatic and military efforts. Contemporary challenges grew exponentially after the end of the Cold War in which India had to face a lot of issues that were previously unheard of. The first issue that India faced in the contemporary times was in the neighbourhood which

entails that India had to ensure that its neighbourhood is safe and sound and these states do not switch sides and support external adversaries. In addition to that India will always have to be careful of its two main adversaries which are Pakistan and the PRC. Internal security challenges are also replete in India for instance Left-wing terrorism has wreaked havoc in India in addition to terrorism in the Northeast and Kashmir which are sponsored by foreign elements. Also issues such as infiltration from Bangladesh and infiltration of terrorists among the civilian population are also causes of concern. Finally India also faces a slew of non-traditional threats which range from cyber threats to environmental threats which add a completely new dimension to the security challenges faced by India.

5.2 CONCERNS WITH THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

Right after independence India had to be contented with the fact that a rival state Pakistan was created with its two parts, East and West Pakistan. After fighting wars with Pakistan especially in 1971 which caused the independence of East Pakistan (Bangladesh) India had to be on its guard as its neighbourhood was volatile. To give a brief overview, India not only had to test Pakistan which always engaged in bloody conflicts with India it also had to take into account the political turmoil that was going on in Nepal that ultimately culminated in the end of the Nepalese Monarch and the creation of a democracy which gradually became friendly to the PRC. Bhutan has a strong relation with India but the PRC also eyes the small kingdom and the creation of Bangladesh did offer India some respite but certain anti-Indian elements in the state of Bangladesh also causes considerable issues for India. India's involvement in the Sri Lankan Civil War did not go down well with the separatist LTTE and the Sri Lankan government which caused considerable tensions between the two. Extending a bit beyond India also had to keep the Maldives friendly as well as observe the situation in Afghanistan. Towards the east states such as Myanmar which has its own internal issues and the other Southeast Asian states are also important for the Republic.

Strategically speaking, nothing is more significant than the neighbourhood for any state for if the neighbourhood is replete with hostile states then no state can even dream of venturing beyond and attaining the position of a superpower. That is the main reason why states that aim to enjoy such a coveted status always try to ensure that the neighbourhood is friendly in nature. For instance during the Cold War the Americans ensured that the entire Latin American region does not fall prey to Communism and even went to the point of organising military coups or intervened directly in order to create friendly regimes. The same

strategy was followed by the Soviet Union. In the same accord India has always focussed on the neighbourhood first and then has dreamt of extending its reach beyond it.

Currently the biggest obstacle to peace and stability in the neighbourhood stems from the activities of Pakistan and the PRC both which try to choke India in the region either through proxy wars, terrorism or by trying to win over regimes that are friendly to India. The challenges faced by these two states are also different. Whereas Pakistan engages in wanton acts of terrorism and tries to harm India by low intensity warfare, propaganda and through financial terrorism the PRC on the other hand refuses to recognise territories such as Arunachal Pradesh and Ladakh as parts of India, it also engages in refusal to recognise the international borders between the two and always seeks to keep India in a position of discomfort. Additionally the PRC has also engaged in maintaining its position in states such as Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Maldives and has also made significant overtures to Bangladesh and Afghanistan to encircle India and to keep it in a difficult state. Not to mention the fact that the PRC has excellent relation with Pakistan knowing very well that supporting Pakistan will help it in its aim to keep India checked.

When we compare the neighbourhood it resembles a chessboard where different pieces move in a strategic way with a central objective in mind. In this case the main objective of the PRC is to keep India checked and that of Pakistan is to harp on anti-India sentiments to target its superiority. After defeating Pakistan many times, Islamabad engaged in a vicious series of proxy warfare, terrorism as well as supporting home-grown terrorist elements to internally destabilise India knowing very well that it would not be able to defeat India in a conventional warfare due to huge disparity in power. The fact that both the PRC and Pakistan possess nuclear weapons also complicate the situation.

Regarding the possession of nuclear weapons India though it has a minimum credible deterrence it also has to be content with the fact that Pakistan frequently engages in a nuclear blackmail whenever India decides to retaliate against Pakistan sponsored terrorism. Even though India decisively defeated its western neighbour in 1971 it has to now engage in low intensity conflict with it such as in 1999 when the war was fought under the shadow of a nuclear umbrella. Also the possession of nuclear weapons complicate the situation in the region greatly.

When it comes to the Chinese designs the strategy has been a bit hazy as it lacks the political will and the means to engage the Chinese directly. Unfortunately the String of Pearls policy by the Chinese to encircle India and to keep it away from the Southeast Asian region has become a headache for India. As a result of which at times India has been found wanting in terms of formulating strategy in terms of countering the PRC. Furthermore, the fact that of late there are undesirable elements that have tried to destabilise Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka are causes for

concerns in the region. Additionally India also has to ensure that these neighbouring states are not influenced by PRC or Pakistan in its nefarious designs.

When it comes to the neighbourhood the challenges are a lot but of late India has managed to wean away these states to some extent with its excellent diplomacy and has faced considerable successes with Afghanistan which has also put a lot of pressure on Pakistan. In addition to that, India's diplomatic overtures towards its smaller neighbours has also earned it accolades which will go in a long way in cementing the relationship between India and these small states thus checking the PRC.

Check your Progress - I

Answer the following:

- (a) Which war was known as the Bangladesh Liberation War?

- (b) Which separatist group was involved in Sri Lanka in the civil war?

- (c) Define Proxy warfare.

- (d) Mention the guerrilla fighters that were instrumental in the Bangladesh Liberation war.

- (e) Mention one terrorist outfit that is sponsored by Pakistan.

5.3 INTERNAL SECURITY CHALLENGES

Apart from contestations in the neighbourhood there are a lot of internal security challenges which India has to deal with. As said even by strategic historians the first step is to enable its activity in the neighbourhood but the most important thing is to also ensure that the internal security is well maintained. As the world progresses into the future there are newer forms of conflicts which keep even bigger states on its toes. These issues are faced by major powers which may range from political instability in the states to interference by foreign powers. Therefore in the case of India too there are a lot of internal security issues with which India has to engage in a long drawn conflict. The importance of these issues cannot be neglected as it may cause a lot of issues later on if left untreated.

Starting with one of the most important issue, terrorism sponsored by Pakistan and the PRC is one of the most pressing issue that India has to face since a long time and in the contemporary times it has also assumed alarming proportions that cannot be ignored. Primarily India faces the greatest challenge in terms of terrorism in Kashmir where the Pakistani forces are constantly in a move to sponsor the disgruntled population through ideological indoctrination, smuggling and arming terrorists to engage the Indian forces in a small scale low intensity warfare. This perfectly fits according to Pakistan's agenda of targeting India in such a manner knowing very well that it may not be able to defeat India in terms of a conventional warfare. The issue with terrorism in Kashmir is not only that it has become a Pakistani proxy but it also eludes peace in the region. Although the region was once a hub for tourism and it was known for its natural beauty due to terrorism the place has seen a lot of conflict over the years. Therefore when it comes to internal security terrorism in Kashmir is one of the foremost issue.

On the other hand Left-Wing terrorism is another issue that requires a lot of attention. It started in the province of Bengal due to the issue of land redistribution and poverty. Successive governments could not live up their populist rhetoric and as a result of which dissatisfaction with the government led to the formation of left wing parties that exhorted people to overthrow the government in an armed rebellion. The main groups such as the Peoples' War Group and the Maoist Communist Centre espouse the ideas of Chinese leader Mao and seek to emulate him and overthrow the government. The problem that arises here is that there are many who have genuine grievances but by taking up a violent position against the Indian government not only are they jeopardising the security of the state, but are also causing a deficiency in terms of overall

human development in the region. Infamously known as the red corridor, states such as West Bengal, Jharkhand, Bihar and Andhra Pradesh are certain areas where the Left Wing groups are most active. The response from the government has been a mixture of flushing out these Maoists and neutralising them and also offering them a chance to surrender and rehabilitation. However these Maoists also depend a lot on the racket of extortion and illegal extraction of resources as well as arms trade and smuggling to fund their cause.

Another aspect of terrorism is militancy in the Northeast region of India which has had serious repercussions for the Indian Union. The partition of India left it in a very serious condition in which unification of the territories was a huge challenge. Prior to the inclusion of the Northeast region in India there were demands for independence and which provided a sufficient cause for the starting of militancy in the region. This has more to do with ethnicity than with religion and ideology. Even though there is infighting among many of these factions they remain united in their cause for complete cessation from the Indian Union. Even here till the 1970s the Chinese openly supported these groups which again caused a lot of trouble for the government. However of late there have been some improvements in the region and the tendency of militancy has significantly gone down over the period of years. Although the situation has improved to a great extent, the fact that militancy still remains in some pockets is a cause for concern for India.

When it comes to dealing with such internal issues one has to bear in mind that the strategies are completely different. When it comes to dealing with external aggression then the strategy depends on the strength of the enemy its logistics and also the geographical area. Battle tactics are widely different but when it comes to dealing with internal security issues then one has to bear in mind that the civilian population may end up as a collateral damage. In addition to that there are certain clandestine agents who academically support such terrorists and would not hesitate to make it into a huge issue if the government reacts with a heavy hand. The nature of causalities are also quite high in such conflicts as they are mostly covert in nature and therefore adequate intelligence and careful planning is required. Such issues also offer enemy states a chance to exploit them for their own cause.

Check your Progress - II
Answer the following:

- (a) Describe Pakistan's strategy of a proxy warfare against India

(b) Mention two Left-Wing terror groups in India.

(c) Explain how fighting internal security issues is different from fighting against an external enemy?

(d) After which war did Pakistan change its tactics against India?

(e) Which organisation is given the task of combatting Maoists?

5.4 NON-TRADITIONAL SECURITY THREATS IN INDIA

Of course in the present times nothing can be more important than non-traditional security threats that are affecting almost every nation in the world. While prior to the Cold War these concepts were sidestepped and were considered to be unimportant in nature, however with the changing circumstances these issues have become more important and serious thought is being given to them by world leaders. While the sharp dichotomy between traditional and non-traditional security is well known, the issues that are faced in India has become more prominent in the contemporary times. One of the first things that need to be considered is that there is a need for holistic solutions to overcome these issues. Some of the challenges range from Food security to cyber security. India has a growing population that will take time to stabilise and as such the growing population requires food. Already many people in India suffer from lack of access to adequate and nutritious food and since food is the basics for health this is an important issue. One must also understand that

the requirement for more food puts additional pressure on land and its other subsidiary resources which requires careful planning to manage.

Another issue that plagues India is deforestation and pollution in addition to climate change. These environmental disasters are quite important to note as they may affect the nation even in the future. Already a lot of polluted cities are present in India and one has to take note of this issue. Additionally climate change also affects India which also affects agriculture in turn. As India grows economically and that too at an exponential rate it is therefore very important for India to invest in cleaner and greener technology so as to enable the economic growth as well as take care of the degenerating environment.

Related to clean technology and climate issues access to energy and energy security also features prominently on the list of non-traditional threats to India security. Again as a growing economic the demand for energy is quite important for India and as a result of which it has to now look beyond its means to access to a continuous and uninterrupted supply of energy. Additionally the nation must also invest in alternative and renewable forms of energy which may help in the longer run.

Another concern that is quite important to note is public health and the stopping the spread of infectious diseases. Being a tropical country India is replete with diseases that are dangerous, highly infectious and may cause a terrible health hazard. Already the country has grappled a lot with the Wuhan virus crisis which has put a lot of strain on our already stretched resources and in this regard the governments at the states and the centre have to ensure that our health infrastructure remains in prime condition to tackle such issues even in the near future. Regarding this one may also have to take into account the threats posed by natural disasters which are another cause for worry. India already has a huge geographical spans and as a result of which it is prone to different types of natural disasters which range from earthquakes in the Himalayan region to floods in the plains and cyclones in the coastal region. Natural disasters can hardly be predicted and the response has to be quick enough to prevent large scale damage.

Illegal migration especially from Bangladesh is another cause for concern as this not only causes extreme strain on our resources but can also blow up out of proportions and become a bilateral issue between the two states. These illegal migrants may also join militant groups and engage in other anti-state activities which may also jeopardise our national security. In addition to illegal migration drug and commodities smuggling are also two other issues that particularly permeate our national security and must be seen seriously.

Other issues which are of prime importance are organised crime, extreme poverty, nuclear security, threat from clandestine and weapons of

mass destruction, economic security, cyber security, religious extremism and fundamentalism. Obviously prior to the Cold War these issues did not feature prominently on our national security agenda, however of late these issues find their own prominence due to the fact that mitigating such issues take considerable amount of time as well as dedication of personnel and natural resources. When it comes to poverty and economic security then the challenges of a huge and growing population also comes to light and in this regard there has to be perfect coordination between the centre and the states to ensure equal distribution of resources and wealth so as to mitigate the crisis. Domestically too, the fact that India is home to many religions and beliefs also makes it an easy target for religious fundamentalism which can actually spell concerns for national security as foreign powers may easily tap into such sentiments to serve their own purpose. Other issues such as cyber security are also of paramount importance as it may be exploited by enemy agents for their purpose.

In short, there has been a change in terms of threat perception when it comes to understanding the nature of threats that a state like India may face and therefore even the strategy to deal with such threats needs to be revamped.

Check your Progress - III

Answer the following:

- (a) Since when did non-traditional security issues attain prominence in India?

- (b) Mention a few non-traditional security issues in india

- (c) Mention a few issues that comes up when dealing with non-traditional security threats in India.

- (d) Of late cyber security issues have been taken up quite security by the Government of India. Agree or disagree.

- (e) Mention the neighbouring state with which India has a long standing issue of illegal migration.

5.5 LET US SUM UP

When it comes to contemporary national security issues and strategic thought then it evolved from the British administered notion of defending the region from external attacks. Indeed in the first decades of independence India created a proper national security assessment plan that was gradually put into action in order to counter external threats that were plaguing the area. Threats such as terrorism and other non-traditional threats achieved their prominence after the end of the Cold War. However, prior to that India had to think pragmatically about the external threats that were imminent. As a result of which a large amount of time was spent on countering these threats. Internal security challenges also are quite prominent in our doctrines which can be more threatening as the enemy can disguise itself or blend within the population making things even more difficult. Therefore in the contemporary times, when it comes to national security the threats are divided into external threats, internal threats and non-traditional threats all which are important and require different steps and strategies to counter.

5.6 KEYWORDS

Paramount	Significant
Revamped	Reshaped
Dichotomy	Division
Collateral	to oneself as well
Populist	popular projects for the people
Wean	Lure
Exponentially	Greatly
Eludes	evades

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Answers

Check your Progress - I

- (a) The War of 1971 between India and Pakistan was known as the Bangladesh Liberation War.
- (b) The LTTE was involved in the Sri Lankan Civil War.
- (c) Proxy warfare is when an enemy state provokes or engages non-state actors such as terrorist to carry out sabotage, clandestine operations of military nature to deal damage to another nation without actually involving its regular troops.
- (d) Mukti Bahini
- (e) Laskhar-e-Toiba

Check your Progress - II

- (a) Pakistan’s strategy to keep India engaged in a proxy war is to ensure that India is always occupied in fighting terrorists, that the Kashmir issue becomes more prominent and there may be international intervention and also to continue harassing India through such small conflicts without incurring much damage.
- (b) Two Left Wing terror groups are the Peoples’ War Group and the Maoist Communist Center.
- (c) When fighting against an external enemy the number of troops the types of weapons and other factors are more or less well known, the enemy is also well known and therefore calculations can be made regarding the battle strategy however when fighting internal enemies the enemy is hidden and their strength is difficult to gauge and hence it becomes more difficult. Also the civilian casualties may spike up
- (d) 1971 war
- (e) The CRPF

Check your Progress - III

- (a) After the end of the Cold War Non-Traditional security issues became more prominent in India.
- (b) Some non-traditional security issues are climate change, illegal immigration, cyber security and natural disasters.
- (c) Dealing with non-traditional security issues are not easy as a lot of resources and personnel need to be dedicated for this, apart from that these issues are quite wide and have varying range and therefore it is at times difficult to enumerate them besides some of

these issues are more or less permanent in nature and cannot be mitigated completely.

(d) Agree

(e) Bangladesh

યુનિવર્સિટી ગીત

સ્વાધ્યાય: પરમં તપ:

સ્વાધ્યાય: પરમં તપ:

સ્વાધ્યાય: પરમં તપ:

શિક્ષણ, સંસ્કૃતિ, સદ્ભાવ, દિવ્યબોધનું ધામ
ડૉ. બાબાસાહેબ આંબેડકર ઓપન યુનિવર્સિટી નામ;
સૌને સૌની પાંખ મળે, ને સૌને સૌનું આભ,
દશે દિશામાં સ્મિત વહે હો દશે દિશે શુભ-લાભ.

અભણ રહી અજ્ઞાનના શાને, અંધકારને પીવો ?
કહે બુદ્ધ આંબેડકર કહે, તું થા તારો દીવો;
શારદીય અજવાળા પહોંચ્યાં ગુર્જર ગામે ગામ
ધ્રુવ તારકની જેમ ઝળહળે એકલવ્યની શાન.

સરસ્વતીના મયૂર તમારે ફળિયે આવી ગહેકે
અંધકારને હડસેલીને ઉજાસના ફૂલ મહેકે;
બંધન નહીં કો સ્થાન સમયના જવું ન ઘરથી દૂર
ઘર આવી મા હરે શારદા દૈન્ય તિમિરના પૂર.

સંસ્કારોની સુગંધ મહેકે, મન મંદિરને ધામે
સુખની ટપાલ પહોંચે સૌને પોતાને સરનામે;
સમાજ કેરે દરિયે હાંકી શિક્ષણ કેરું વહાણ,
આવો કરીયે આપણ સૌ
ભવ્ય રાષ્ટ્ર નિર્માણ...
દિવ્ય રાષ્ટ્ર નિર્માણ...
ભવ્ય રાષ્ટ્ર નિર્માણ

