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**MILITARY DIPLOMACY IN THE 21ST CENTURY:
A STUDY OF THE INDIAN EXPERIENCE**

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ABSTRACT

Military Diplomacy is the most important strategy for a nation as far as the running century is concern. The article is based on India's position in 21st century in the field of Military Diplomacy. The article is based on historical and analytical methods of research. Various reports, debates, discussions and critical reviews of various Military Diplomacy were intensely consulted. The article shows, how Military Diplomacy is changing the international relation in the present-day world.

INTRODUCTION

In the 21st century, military diplomacy is a more or less well-known idea when it comes to a nation-state's security. A nation-state has a natural tendency to grow and strive to feel more secure than other nations. Older people may be right when they say that the best way to overcome fear is to become stronger than others. This adage seems more accurate when applied to nation-states.

In order to preserve a power balance, which is more important in terms of a country's overall development, a contemporary welfare state constantly seeks to strengthen its national power and attempts to dominate other states, especially the adjacent ones. The country tries to use resources to achieve the intended aim of increased power as a result. However, it is a well-known fact that power knows no bounds. Nations maintain their foreign policies and diplomatic ties in order to increase their influence relative to others. It aids in their establishing their positions. However, the conventional approach to foreign affairs is no longer viable or very ineffective. Simply put, the ways in which we relate to foreigners have changed. To keep the balance of power and uphold their supremacy, nations employ a variety of tools.

Military diplomacy is a broad term that encompasses a wide range of activities that use the military to achieve foreign policy objectives. These activities can include:

- Bilateral and multilateral military exercises
- Military-to-military contacts and exchanges
- Defence trade and cooperation
- Peacekeeping operations
- Humanitarian assistance and disaster relief

Military Diplomacy In India

One of the key pillars of India's military diplomacy is its participation in bilateral and multilateral military exercises. India regularly conducts exercises with its neighbours, such as Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. India also conducts exercises with major powers such as the United States, Russia, France, and the United Kingdom. These exercises help to build trust and cooperation between India and its partners, and they also help to improve India's military capabilities.

Another important aspect of India's military diplomacy is its military-to-military contacts and exchanges. Indian military officers regularly visit other countries to meet with their counterparts and to learn about their militaries. India also engages in defence trade and cooperation with other countries. Defence trade and cooperation helps to strengthen India's military capabilities, and it also helps to build relationships with other countries.

India also engages in peacekeeping operations and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. India has a long history of participating in peacekeeping operations, and it is

currently one of the largest contributors of troops to UN peacekeeping missions. India also provides humanitarian assistance and disaster relief to countries affected by natural disasters and other humanitarian crises.

Origin

The origins of military diplomacy in India can be traced back to the ancient period. The Mauryan Empire (322-185 BCE) in that period, The Chola Empire (907-1310 CE) in Middle age have a lot of examples of Military Diplomacy.

In the modern period, India has continued to use military diplomacy as a tool of foreign policy. For example, India has participated in UN peacekeeping operations, conducted joint military exercises with other countries, and provided military assistance to friendly nations. India has also used its military to deter aggression from its neighbours, such as Pakistan.

In recent years, India's military diplomacy has become increasingly important as the country has sought to play a more active role in global affairs. India has been a key player in efforts to counter terrorism and piracy, and it has also been working to strengthen its ties with other countries in the Indian Ocean region. As India's military grows stronger, it is likely that its military diplomacy will become even more important in the years to come.

India's Position In 21st Century Military Diplomacy

India's position in 21st century military diplomacy is one of a rising power with a growing global footprint. The country has been actively engaged in military exercises and training with other countries, and has also been developing its own military capabilities. This has led to India being seen as a more credible and reliable partner in security matters.

One of the key drivers of India's growing military diplomacy has been its increasing economic and political clout. As India's economy has grown, it has become a more attractive partner for other countries. This has led to increased cooperation on a range of issues, including defence.

Another driver of India's military diplomacy has been its growing security concerns. India faces a number of security challenges, including terrorism, cross-border incursions, and maritime disputes. These challenges have led India to seek out partners who can help it to address them.

Features Of India's Military Diplomacy

Increased engagement with other countries: India has been actively engaged in military exercises and training with other countries, including the United States, Russia, France, and Japan. This has helped to build trust and cooperation between India and its partners.

- Development of own military capabilities: India has been investing in its own military capabilities, including its air force, navy, and army. This has made India a more credible

and reliable partner in security matters.

- Growing focus on maritime security: India is a maritime nation with a long coastline. In recent years, India has been focusing on maritime security in the Indian Ocean Region. This has included increasing cooperation with other countries in the region, as well as developing its own naval capabilities.
- Addressing security challenges: India faces a number of security challenges, including terrorism, cross-border incursions, and maritime disputes. India's military diplomacy has helped it to address these challenges by building trust and cooperation with other countries, and by developing its own military capabilities.

India's military diplomacy is an important part of its overall foreign policy. It helps India to build trust and cooperation with other countries, and it also helps India to protect its interests. In the 21st century, India's military diplomacy is likely to become even more important as the country becomes a more powerful and influential player on the global stage.

Merits/Demerits Of 21st Century India's Military Diplomacy

Merits

- Increased cooperation with other countries: India's military diplomacy has helped to increase cooperation with other countries in areas such as training, exercises, and joint operations. This cooperation has helped to improve India's military capabilities and has also helped to build trust and understanding between India and other countries.
- Enhanced security: India's military diplomacy has also helped to enhance India's security by deterring potential adversaries and by building partnerships with countries that share India's security interests.
- Promoted peace and stability: India's military diplomacy has also helped to promote peace and stability in the region by building trust and understanding between India and other countries. This has helped to reduce the risk of conflict and has made the region more secure.

Demerits

- Increased tensions with neighbours: India's military diplomacy has also led to increased tensions with some of its neighbours, such as Pakistan and China. This is because these countries see India's military build-up as a threat to their security.
- Increased military spending: India's military diplomacy has also led to increased military spending. This is because India needs to maintain a strong military in order to deter potential adversaries and to protect its interests.
- Risk of miscalculation: There is always the risk of miscalculation in any military operation. This is especially true when countries are working together for the first time. India's military diplomacy has increased the risk of miscalculation because it has involved India in more complex and risky operations.

Overall, India's military diplomacy has had both merits and demerits. The merits of India's military diplomacy include increased cooperation with other countries, enhanced security, and promoted peace and stability. The demerits of India's military diplomacy include increased tensions with neighbours, increased military spending, and risk of miscalculation.

Challenges

India's military diplomacy in the 21st century faces a number of challenges, including:

- A complex and changing security environment. India's security environment is becoming increasingly complex and challenging, with a number of potential threats from both traditional and non-traditional actors. This makes it

difficult to develop a coherent and effective military diplomacy strategy.

- A lack of resources. India's military budget is relatively small compared to other major powers, which limits its ability to engage in military diplomacy activities such as joint exercises, training, and humanitarian assistance.
- A lack of coordination between the military and civilian leadership. There is a lack of coordination between the Indian military and civilian leadership, which makes it difficult to develop a coherent and effective military diplomacy strategy.
- A lack of public support. There is a lack of public support for military diplomacy in India, which makes it difficult for the government to justify the costs of such activities.

Despite these challenges, India has made some progress in developing its military diplomacy in recent years. For example, India has increased its participation in joint exercises with other countries, and it has provided humanitarian assistance to countries in need. However, there is still much more that India can do to improve its military diplomacy capabilities.

Suggestions

Here are some suggestions for how India can address the challenges it faces in developing its military diplomacy:

- Develop a comprehensive and integrated security strategy. India needs to develop a comprehensive and integrated security strategy that considers the full range of threats it faces, both traditional and non-traditional. This will help to ensure that military diplomacy is used in a coordinated and effective way to achieve India's security objectives.
- Increase military spending. India needs to increase its military spending in order to improve its ability to engage in military diplomacy activities such as joint exercises, training, and humanitarian assistance. This will help to build India's military capabilities and its reputation as a responsible stakeholder in the global security community.
- Improve coordination between the military and civilian leadership. India needs to improve coordination between the military and civilian leadership in order to develop a coherent and effective military diplomacy strategy. This will help to ensure that military diplomacy is used in a way that is consistent with India's national interests.
- Build public support for military diplomacy. India needs to build public support for military diplomacy in order to justify the costs of such activities. This can be done by educating the public about the importance of military diplomacy and its role in promoting India's security and interests.

By addressing these challenges, India can develop its military diplomacy into a more effective tool for achieving its security objectives in the 21st century.

CONCLUSION

Military Diplomacy of India is ever changing and ever developing concept. Hope for the strong position of India in coming future.

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