

India-Iran bilateral relations and its implications on India's West Asia policy

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Abstract

This paper tries to explain the India's bilateral relation with Iran in nuanced manner. This relationship has dimensions of geostrategic and geopolitical on India's West Asia foreign Policy. In the sphere of globalization and increasing role of non state actors, India and Iran has outlined the prospects to overcome the emerging challenges at regional level as well as global level. This paper will also deal current scenario in West Asia. This relationship analysed from considering multiple theoretical perspectives like realist and social constructivist.

Keywords: bilateral, relations, West Asia, Iran, geostrategic, geopolitical

Introduction

Evolution of Bilateral Relations

The relationships between India and Iran have been based upon historical and cultural links. The Indian foreign policy is determined by various factors like external as well as internal. In the case of West Asian region internal factor like energy security, Diaspora and domestic political development have played very significant role in global politics. Their relations can analyse from realist and social constructivist perspectives.

The geostrategic importance of Iran has detrimental factor for Indian foreign policy elites. Because it will provide a gateway to India connecting through Central Asia, Russia, East European countries markets. It is located between Persian and Caspian Sea and second largest natural gas resources in the world

Geopolitics of Iran is also important to full filling India national interests in broad sense. The goals and objectives of Iranian foreign policies have been middle power, regional power. At global level, it has aspirations to become leader of Muslim world. Beside above India-Iran are connected by history cultures and demography India is home for 17 thousands Parsi community and India has 25 million Shia Muslim populations which second largest in the world after Iran.

The evolution India- Iran relations –after independence till 1970s, Iran was in Western camp, from 1979 to till 1989. The revolution of 1979 has created hopes in India. However relationships could not move it potentials because Iran wanted to be recognise as leader of Islamic world. Iran continued to support Pakistan over Kashmir issue (Mahaptara, 2008). Thus India relations with Iran throughout cold war were limited to commerce not strategically. Indian Prime Minister Man Mohan Singh reluctantly visited Iran to attend Non Alignment Movement (NAM) conference which held in 2012. India signed 12 agreements in diverse issues. Most important announcement was India's investment in Chahabar was pending since 2003. India has announced US\$500 million dollar and other achievements was trilateral and transit agreement including Afghanistan.

However there are many challenges on the path of strategic partnership first, Trump Administration changed approach toward Iran reduced scope for India. The growing axis Iran with Pakistan and dissatisfaction with India deliver deficit.

Iran has not offered to India Farzad B gas pipeline which discovered by Oil Natural Gas Limited company. Iran has said several times that the development of Chahabar is not exclusive to any country if Pakistan and China involve. So from Indian strategic perspective counter-productive it's wide national interests. As Iranian religious leader Ayatulla Khumeni has announced the plight of Kashmir which is also concern able to India status and recognition at international forums (Pasa, 2009) ^[13]. The recent trend in west Asian region are growing tensions between Iran and Saudi Arabia, Iran- Israel and USA-Iran further limit India's scope in context of Iranian case in particular. The result of this political development, India has reduced oil import from Iran. Thus crosscurrent of regional and global geopolitics always intersect Iran India relations

Evolutions and Prospects in India-Iran relations

In West Asian region, Iran is aspiring to regional power without bargaining with any external power. It is only country which is in without domination of United States of America. In pursuance Indian interests in long terms are determined by recent political developments regarding Israel Palestine issue (Pant 2008) ^[10], Saudi Arabia intervention in Lebanon and increasing relationship with Israel on multiple issues.

- India has liberalized its visa policy in 2015 with Iranian official. From geostrategic and geo-economics points of view, Iran can be determinate factor in to fulfilling India energy security requirements in the wake increasing the influence non state actors terrorist organisation like ISIS.
- In year 2015, Iranian Foreign Minister has visited to India to enhance cooperation in multiple areas as well as internationals forums IAEA.
- In the response to it, India's Minister of State for Petroleum and Natural Gas has visited to Iran to chasing our national interests in nuanced manner. It is agreed that

they will fasten the terms for development on the gas project Farzad B which is situated in the Persian Gulf that was discovered by Indian explorer ONGC. In the direction of enhancing their relations they have ruled up agreement of USD 20 billion in area of investment in oil & gas, fertiliser as well as in petrochemical.

- Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has visited to Iran the historic agreement on the Chabahar port was finalised contract for the for 10 years.
- There MoU by Indian Railways on services and financing \$1.6 billion, for Chabahar-Zahedan Railway line.

From the above analysis of the bilateral relation between India and Iran, we can conclude that they have common concerns like terrorism, climate change and WTO related shared issues. They have to go hand in hand at multiple spheres like Non Alignment Movement (NAM), UNO and IAEA etc. Thus, India bilateral relations with Iran explained in nuanced manner. It observed that their relationship has dimensions of geostrategic and geopolitical on India's West Asia foreign Policy. In the sphere of globalisation and increasing role of non state actors, India and Iran has outlined the prospects to overcome the emerging challenges at regional level as well as global level. The nature of his relationship can be categorised theoretical perspectives realist and social constructivists.

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