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DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

Kalindi College, University of Delhi

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SAMVAD

FROM VISION TO VOICE

ANNUAL MAGAZINE | 2026

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""Man is by nature a political animal."

- Aristotle

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PRINCIPAL'S NOTE



Dear Students,

I feel happy to reach out to you through this annual magazine of the Department of Political Science. This publication reflects your intellectual curiosity, critical thinking, and engagement with the pressing issues of our time. In an increasingly complex world, the importance of strong and ethical leadership cannot be overstated. True leadership is not merely about authority, but about responsibility, empathy, and the courage to uphold justice and fairness in challenging circumstances.

As students of Political Science, you are in a meaningful position to reflect on the roots of conflicts and explore pathways toward their resolution. I encourage you to nurture continuous learning, inclusive thinking, and balanced decision-making. Qualities such as critical understanding, empathetic communication, adaptability, and integrity will help you engage with complex situations and guide others toward constructive outcomes.

At the same time, focus on your holistic growth. Academic excellence is important, but so are personal development, ethical values, emotional intelligence, and social awareness. Participate actively, engage in discussions, and remain committed to lifelong learning.

May this magazine serve as a platform for your ideas and aspirations. I wish you continued success in your academic journey and beyond.

With best wishes,

Principal

Kalindi College for Women

FROM THE TEACHERS IN CHARGE

Dear Students,

It gives me immense pleasure to address you through this year's annual magazine Samvad. As students of Political Science, you stand at a unique intersection of knowledge and responsibility, especially in a time when the world is witnessing multiple and complex global challenges. From geopolitical tensions to internal strife within nations, these developments remind us of the fragile nature of peace and the urgent need for thoughtful engagement and well informed leadership. In such a global climate, your role extends beyond academic excellence. You are future policymakers, scholars, and citizens who must critically analyze these conflicts while determined to contribute to solutions rooted in dialogue, coordination and cooperation. It is essential to understand that sustainable peace is not merely the absence of conflict, but the presence of equitable development, inclusive governance, and respect for human rights. In this responsibility of each one of us is vital.

I encourage you to embrace the principles of sustainable development and peace building in both your studies and actions. Engage yourself with diverse perspectives and keep questioning dominant narratives, and develop empathy alongside analytical rigor. The challenges of our time demand not only intellectual competence but also ethical commitment.

Let this magazine reflects your awareness, creativity, and vision for a more peaceful and sustainable society and world. May you continue to learn, question, and contribute meaningfully to society.

With best wishes,

Dr. Nivedita Giri and Dr. Nisha Bakshi

Teachers-in-Charge

Department of Political Science

ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT

The Department of Political Science came into being in 1967, beginning its journey with the B.A. (Pass) programme. The first batch, a close-knit group of about 80 students, embarked on this new academic path under the guidance of Dr. Saroj Pathak, the department's first teacher-in-charge, whose leadership shaped its early years.

The department is dedicated to nurturing an understanding of contemporary political, social, and economic realities. It emphasises the development of analytical and research skills, critical thinking, and informed engagement with political processes. The discipline offers students, i.e. its young women, a platform to develop leadership skills.

In line with the National Education Policy (NEP), the department offers a four-year undergraduate programme with a specialised, research-oriented curriculum. The programme opens doors for experiential learning and independent research, enabling students to connect theoretical knowledge with real-world applications and prepare for professional and academic pursuits in political science and related fields.

To further strengthen research skills, the department has established structured research guidelines for the 7th and 8th semesters. These guidelines support students in developing methodological rigour and analytical capabilities when engaging with socio-political topics.

Through these initiatives, the Department of Political Science continues to uphold its commitment not only to academic excellence but also to the holistic development of students as informed and socially responsible citizens.

TEAM POLITEIA



The Department of Political Science, known as Politeia, has been an integral part of my college journey over the past three years. It is more than just a department—it is a space that fosters learning, leadership, and growth.

In my first year, I served as a Media Representative, followed by Vice President in my second year, and now I am honored to be the President in my third year. It has truly been a privilege to serve my department and teachers throughout these years.

These roles came with challenges, but they also taught me valuable life lessons—about responsibility, teamwork, and leadership—that will stay with me forever.

Politeia is one of the largest and most vibrant departments of Kalindi College, University of Delhi. I have always wished to contribute to its recognition, and I hope future students will continue to carry forward this legacy.

I am deeply grateful to our supportive teachers, respected Principal ma'am, and the entire faculty. I also thank my amazing Politeia team members for making this journey so meaningful.

Best regards,

Harshvandini Sai

President

Politeia - Department of Political Science

YEAR IN RECAP

1. WORKSHOP ON 'RESEARCH METHODS IN POLITICS'
2. MOVIE SCREENING - 'GANDHI' BY RICHARD ATTENBOROUGH
3. ESSAY WRITING COMPETITION ON 'RELEVANCE OF GANDHIAN VALUES IN CONTEMPORARY TIMES'
4. POSTER MAKING COMPETITION ON 'RELEVANCE OF GANDHIAN VALUES IN CONTEMPORARY TIMES'
5. LECTURE ON 'YOUTH AND GOVERNANCE'
6. TALK ON 'WHY INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS ISN'T A GLOBAL DISCIPLINE'
7. BADGE CEREMONY
8. EXTEMPORE COMPETITION ON CONSTITUTION OF INDIA
9. VISIT TO DR. BR AMBEDKAR NATIONAL MEMORIAL
10. 'PREAMBLE PUZZLE' COMPETITION
11. INTER-COLLEGE DEBATE COMPETITION
12. INTER-COLLEGE QUIZ COMPETITION ON 'INDIAN POLITY'
13. LECTURE ON 'CONSTITUTION AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION'
14. REPUBLIC DAY CELEBRATION
15. MOVIE SCREENING - 'HAQ' BY SUPARN VERMA
16. SEMINAR ON 'AI IN INDUSTRY AND EVERYDAY LIFE'
17. POLISCON 2.0 - MODERN UNITED NATIONS
18. INTER-COLLEGE EXTEMPORE COMPETITION
19. INTER-COLLEGE QUIZ COMPETITION ON GEOPOLITICS
20. FAREWELL

STUDENT EDITORIAL

Our presence as young women in intellectual spaces is not incidental; it is the result of generations of resistance. We inherit this space because the women before us insisted on asking what they had been forbidden to know.

Political science, perhaps more than most disciplines, demands that we question power structures, even when they are invisible or normalised. It forces us to look beyond what is simply presented as the truth. It urges us not just to believe the voices presented, but also to ask for the ones strategically left out. It compels us to make space for the voices left in the margins.

As women, our scholarship is informed by such lived experiences of absence and erasure. It was not that long ago that higher education for women was unheard of so every time we read, analyse, or question, we take part in a long and continuing tradition of women refusing to stay silent. Every time we pen down our thoughts, we refuse to be merely recipients of established knowledge and instead become active contributors to it. Our words challenge assumptions, bring forth new perspectives, and insist upon nuance when the world demands certainty.

Samvad emerges from this very intellectual and political inheritance. It is a celebration of women who think, question, debate, and create meaning within and beyond the classroom. Through the voices gathered in these pages, we honour the intellectual courage, curiosity, and conviction that define both our discipline and our shared academic journey.

We express our sincere gratitude to the entire editorial team, whose vision and dedication brought this edition to life.

Furthermore, we are grateful to the Principal, Prof. Meena Charanda, for providing us with this wonderful opportunity under her meticulous guidance. We would also like to extend our heartfelt thanks to Dr. Nivedita Giri and Dr. Nisha Bakshi for their unwavering support, guidance, and understanding throughout the process, without which this magazine would not have come to life.

Deeksha Gupta

STUDENT SUBMISSIONS

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1.	Revisiting Nepal's Upheaval	Lipi Yadav
2.	iDEX - A Policy Brief	Deeksha Gupta
3.	Kautilya's Shadguna: Ancient Diplomacy in Modern World	Krishna Kumari & Gauri Sharma
4.	Inclusive Innovationd: How Disability-driven Innovations Improve All Lives	Suhana Tarannum
5.	The Dowry System	Garima Dubey
6.	Afhan Women Silenced Again: Taliban Rule Pushed Half the Nation Into Darkness	Lakshita
7.	The Last Kingdom	Vandela Muni & Hansika Reddy
8.	This Isn't War	Avni Chaudhary
9.	Airplanes	Bhavya Kanodia
10.	Empire	Ananyaa Vats
11.	Where She Goes	Ananyaa Vats
12.	The Muse of Forever	Deeksha Gupta

REVISITING NEPAL'S UPHEAVAL

Lipi Yadav

Today I come to you not to give you a black and white verdict but a very nuanced view of Nepal's democracy. So, this all dates back to a random nightly call with a friend, where we started discussing the recent violent upheaval in Nepal. We weighed some of the reasons why it seemed almost inevitable and also explored how things might have unfolded more systematically. Yet, this is a never-ending discussion, some people might say "what's done is done" just to call out the discussion and dive into some intriguing gossip sesh but here we are taking a pause not to deviate but only to reflect what this truly means and to some extent, to vent about what's brewing in our minds. I'd like to share a few hot takes from our conversation, alongside some predictions drawn from the little research I managed to do afterwards, mostly to satisfy my own intellectual cravings. As Aristotle reminds us, the more we know, the more we realize how much we don't know. So, based on what I currently understand, I will offer a few predictions. Just to clarify, these takes are very personal and if I get something wrong, I expect my readers to correct me. We are all humans in the process of learning and the process is all about questioning, debating, reflecting deeply and uncovering new insights.

What started as a casual late-night discussion made me see just how fast the unrest in Nepal captured global attention. Social media feeds were soon filled with images of burning streets, violent clashes and government toppling. The movement quickly dubbed the 'Gen Z Uprising,' drew attention from people everywhere: those politically aware, and even those who stumbled upon a single clip while doomscrolling, only to find themselves plunged into the depth of it. I won't go into all the details, anyone who clicked on this title already knows about this massive Gen Z revolution from South Asia. And all credit goes to this internet generation for making the world sit up and notice. Not getting distracted by the urge to write an even longer introduction or stuff in all my opinions before I even start, I want to get straight to the central question that brought me to blogging this in the first place: was this violence necessary or was it reckless and what does it mean for Nepal's future.

I have never shied away from admitting that I admire a good revolution. We cannot be naive enough to expect every revolution to be bloodless. It becomes very easy to

condemn violence when methods of retribution and justice are deliberately denied . But to understand such movements one must look at the whole picture. The global reaction to Nepal's turmoil made me reflect: at what point does protest become essential and when does it turn reckless?

A powerful, aware and engaged youth , one that values dialogue, conversation and restructuring while respecting the soul of the Constitution is crucial. History can shed some light. Let's take India, for instance, I believe our independence struggle succeeded because it had factions that included people like Bhagat Singh and Chandra Shekhar Azad, who did not shy away from violence, while also recognizing that the violence of the oppressed and the violence of the oppressor are two entirely different things. When one digs deeper into the technicalities, one begins to notice that , what we call violence by the oppressed is often not initiated by them instead it is a response.

If we only define violence as bloodshed and killings, while ignoring the systematic violence of discrimination, corruption and the denial of one's right to live with dignity, then we are missing the larger truth. Only because there is no bloodshed one does not recognize that sort of violence.

Coming back to India's struggle, we had a faction of brave people who chose non violence even in the face of massive exploitation by the British. Together, these parallel approaches made India's freedom movement unique and they paved the path for the mature democracy India stands as today, globally recognized as an example with the nature of the state remaining consistent since independence.

In contrast, if we look at Nepal since the 1950s, the country has never been able to hold its institutional structure firmly. The very nature of the state has shifted from one form to another repeatedly. And this brings me back to the thought: how this anarchic unrest has once again shaken the very foundations of democracy in Nepal dividing people into two blocs: pro-revolution and anti-revolution.

Sometimes, protest becomes necessary to challenge corruption and elite domination. I've already shared why I believe this movement was important taking example from India's freedom struggle and history itself shows us that radical movements though often costly have catalyzed essential systemic reforms.

To support this side, I came across an interview with Gen Z leaders from Nepal. They openly admitted that their generation lacks enough political experience and that they don't want to rule the state or discard the Constitution. What they want is leadership

from people with experience and knowledge, leaders who are not corrupt, depraved politicians like the ones who disappointed and betrayed the masses. All they look forward to is pushing the old cards out. Their demand is not to “sponge” the Constitution but to preserve it while ensuring that those in power finally start working according to it and take responsibility.

This perspective highlights a key point: protests often arise when citizens feel the system is failing them. When formal channels for dialogue, debate or reform are blocked, people take to the streets as a means of being heard. In Nepal's case, social media became that space, that forum for communication. And when even that was denied, burning the system down seemed inevitable. At its essence, these demonstrations are about pushing the existing system to act responsibly and uphold its promises to the people.

But here lies the tension, the point where pro-revolution energy collides with the anti-revolution critique. The uprising came with a staggering human cost. According to multiple reports around 70 people lost their lives and more than 21,000 were injured during the unrest, these numbers reflect the painful reality of such movements. Critics argue that while protests can be powerful tools for change but way they take a violent turn undermines their legitimacy. Beyond the toll on people, there was considerable damage to infrastructure and natural resources. The resulting instability also paints Nepal as a risky destination for foreign investments, hindering international funding and economic development initiatives. Also a culture of repeated institution disruption could normalize violence as a medium of political expression undermining the very foundation of democracy. Alternatives like negotiation, civil disobedience or international pressure are often cited as preferable paths, though these too have their limits in deeply unequal power structures.

Nepal has already witnessed attacks on media houses, ordinary employers fleeing for their lives and viral criticism pointing out that when the fury spills onto common people, the line between a movement and sheer violence begins to blur. In that moment, many felt the revolution had lost part of its moral ground. This brings us back to a difficult question: what happens next?

With the damage already done, the focus now shifts to accountability. The pressing need is for a faction which is experienced, constitutional and transparent to take responsibility for rebuilding. Still, it's important to acknowledge how easy it is to get swept up in a movement: mobs run on emotion, not rationality and conspiracy theories still surround parts of what unfolded. These unresolved questions only add to the

uncertainty about Nepal's democratic future. Yet, by examining historical patterns, leadership challenges and the perspectives of the youth, we can begin asking the questions that truly matter. It is in this ongoing dialogue between past and present, experience and aspiration, policy and people that Nepal may find a way forward.

iDEX (2018) - A POLICY BRIEF

Deeksha Gupta

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) is an initiative by the Government of India introduced to promote indigenous innovation and production in defence and aerospace sectors. It was launched by the Ministry of Defence in 2018 with the intention to make India self-reliant in these instrumental sectors by providing a platform for collaboration between different stakeholders such as start-ups, MSMEs, individual innovators, R&D institutes, and academia.

It has been instrumental in the promotion of indigenous defence technology and reduction of military reliance on foreign powers. However, funding and budget issues remain the largest challenge in implementation of this policy.

By improving institutional coordination, approval processes, as well as post-innovation support can significantly improve the effectiveness of iDEX. Doing this can not only exponentiate India's defence and aerospace capabilities, but also the overall strategic autonomy in the long term.

2. POLICY CONTEXT

Historically, India's defence sector has relied heavily on imports to meet its defence and aerospace requirements, both in terms of hardware and tech knowledge. This dependence on foreign suppliers left India vulnerable, with the potential to be abused.

The responsibility of Innova largely remained on under-funded government institutes, with little to no space for public sector R&D organisations.

Recently though, the Government of India has been working towards indigenous design & production and self-reliance in most sectors, via programmes such as Make in India and Atmanirbhar Bharat. These policies have attempted to utilise the private sector along with research institutions by creating a competitive and rewarding environment.

Innovation for Defence Excellence (iDEX) finds its place within the larger policy framework to fulfill the needs of the defence and aerospace sectors by utilising the capabilities of startups, MSMEs, and individual innovators.

Open challenges such as DISC and ADITI create a space for start-ups and MSME allows funding for individual projects, while research grants help further research institutes.

The policy focuses not just on large-scale producers but also smaller enterprises working in Artificial Intelligence, Cybersecurity, Drones, etc.

3. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Despite the positive intent, there are still challenges in operations that limit its effectiveness. It attracted new-age startups and innovators to the defence sector but most of them struggle in moving beyond the starting stages of product development. Furthermore, there are bureaucratic delays in approvals, testing, and commitments.

The slow and complex procurement process makes it hard for small enterprises to convert prototypes into commercially viable products. Lengthy evaluation procedures and timelines create uncertainty for startups, which can be discouraging or even unsustainable. As a result, many innovations never scale or are produced on a large scale.

The biggest challenge, however, by far is insufficient funding. Though a primary pillar of the initiative is to provide funding and grants to researchers, innovators, and enterprises, the budget allocation remains limited. Development of defence and aerospace technologies remains a very costly pursuit, often unsustainable or incompatible with other monetary needs of the state.

These challenges continue to hinder the optimal utilisation of Indian minds and capabilities via iDEX provisions. Timely Reforms are needed to utilise the policy to the best of its abilities.

3. POLICY OPTIONS

These Policy Options may help resolve certain challenges being faced by iDEX right now. These include:

- **Make Budget Allocation more sustainable**

The Ministry of Defence should provide iDEX with a long-term, large-scale budget, instead of short-term funding. This would allow certainty and room for technological projects lasting several years.

- **Increase in Grants**

At the moment, grants often fall short due to the very high costs of research, development, testing, and certifications. By providing financial support that actually reflects the financial results of developing advanced technology, iDEX can motivate many more innovators.

- **Approval Processes**

Streamlining approval processes for iDEX projects could make a difference by reducing bureaucratic delays between prototype and certification stages.

4. POLICY RECOMMENDATION AND IMPLEMENTATION SUGGESTIONS

Government of India should include a dedicated budget for Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) within the larger allocations of Ministry of Defence. It should be defined well in detail and be for several years at a time to reduce anxiety regarding funding in innovators and scholars. It would significantly reduce the challenge of successful prototypes not moving forward to becoming market products.

This could be done by the creation of a separate budget headed by a separate person, within the larger Military funding. Apart from that, planning should be done for multiple financial years at a time to allow certainty for individual innovators. Innovators and enterprises could be paid in installments, based on milestones achieved to promote check-ups on multiple stages and accountability. Furthermore, regular audits can ensure effective use of funding and grants.

5. CONCLUSION

Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) has provided a very important platform for indigenous innovation in India's defence and aerospace sectors. However, its long-term success depends on addressing the challenges being faced by it, whether they be institutional or financial.

By providing better mechanisms for financial support and implementation, iDEX can be more effective in advancing India's goal of self-reliance and strategic preparedness in defence. Timely and effective reforms right now can change the face of India in the foreseeable future when it comes to military and aerospace capabilities.

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KAUTILYA'S SHADGUNA SIDDHANT

ANCIENT DIPLOMACY IN MODERN WORLD

Krishna Kumari & Gauri Sharma

INTRODUCTION

In today's interconnected yet competitive world, international politics is driven more by pragmatic self-interest than by idealistic cooperation. Nations constantly navigate a complex web of alliances, rivalries, and strategic calculations—from the geopolitical contest in the Indo-Pacific to the shifting power dynamics of West Asia and Europe. Diplomacy has become a balancing act, where states pursue peace, confrontation, neutrality, or alliances based on changing circumstances and national interests.

This dynamic echo the ancient wisdom of Kautilya's Shadguna Siddhant (Sixfold Policy) from the Arthashastra, which outlines six strategic options—Sandhi (peace), Vighraha (war), Asana (neutrality), Yana (preparation for war), Samsraya (seeking alliance), and Dvaidhibhava (dual policy). Kautilya, the great strategist and advisor to Chandragupta Maurya, viewed these not as rigid rules but as adaptable tools for statecraft, depending on a ruler's strength and situation.

In the modern era, his insights remain remarkably relevant, especially in great power politics where deterrence and diplomacy coexist. By fusing moral foresight with political realism, Kautilya laid the intellectual foundation for strategic diplomacy—proving that while times and technologies change, prudence, adaptability, and foresight remain timeless principles of power politics.

SIX PRINCIPLES OF KAUTILYA'S FOREIGN POLICY

Kautilya gave six methods of foreign policy, known as Shadguna Siddhanta, to be used in mandalas to bring about the Vijigishu's progress and the decline of his enemies. The six Principles are as follows:

1. Sandhi (Peace)

Here Kautilya is talking about entering into an agreement with the other nation. Peace is to be used when the enemy and the conqueror are co-equal in strength, or are both declining or progressing at the same rate. The Vijigishu should make peace when he predicts achieving progress from his consolidation of such a nature that would enable him to outstrip and destroy his enemy, or when the confidence generated by the peace would bring him more revenue and less loss than waging a war. He may also make peace when he feels he may destroy the enemy's Saptanga or alienate his allies by secret means or when he needs time to recover from a calamity or subdue another enemy. Here peace for Kautilya, is not moral idealism but strategic convenience. For instance, Abraham Accord 2020 between Israel and Arab states reflects Kautilya's logic of strategic peace where old rival states collaborate for their mutual benefits in a geopolitical complexity.

2. Vighraha (War or open hostility)

According to Kautilya, War is not an option to be taken for granted but rather a crucial instrument or tool of statecraft when diplomatic means fail or the security of the state is at stake. If the Vijigishu and his army is strong enough to defeat his enemy, war becomes a justified means of eliminating threats and securing its position. This principle resonates with India's military Operations like the recent one Operation Sindoor against terrorism used by Pakistan.

3. Asana (Neutrality)

Often, the best diplomatic action is to do nothing and continue to consolidate your gains. The conqueror may take this way where neither he nor his enemy can harm each other, or when the enemy is too distracted by a calamity to act against him. It is also a prudent course where the enemies are fighting amongst each other, allowing them to be weakened while the conqueror increase his strength. This principle reflects in India's stance on Russia – Ukraine war, where India has maintained a neutral position while continuing to balance its economic and strategic ties with both Russia and the West.

4. Yana (Preparation for war)

Kautilya suggests that when war appears inevitable, a ruler should invest in strategic preparation rather than being a part of a war without prepared. This includes building

alliances modernizing military capabilities and securing economic stability. This creates pressure on the enemy due to the mobilization of force and the threat of war. NATO's troops mobilization near Eastern Europe and U.S and Japan's joint exercise in Indo Pacific region reflects deterrence through visible preparedness.

5. Samsraya (Alliances or seeking protecting policy)

When the conqueror feels his position to be insecure due to inability to attack the enemy or protect himself, he may by alliance seek the protection of strong king. He can exploit this opportunity to prevent his downfall and start progressing in strength, before eventually regaining his independence. Ukraine's dependence on NATO and EU reflects Samsraya in seeking protection and aid from powerful allies in middle of war with Russia.

6. Dvaidhibhava (Dual Policy)

It means simultaneously pursuing peace and conflicts with the same state or with more than one state on different fronts. For instance the US – China relationship is a synthesis of economic interdependence and geopolitical rivalry. Here Kautilya suggests that states can both compete and cooperate at the same time. This principle, this underlines the adaptive and complex nature of 21st century diplomacy.

ANALYSIS

World:

From a critical standpoint, Kautilya's Shadguna Siddhant offers a pragmatic yet morally ambivalent framework for interpreting global politics. Sandhi (peace), seen in diplomatic efforts like the Russia-Ukraine negotiations and the Abraham Accords, underscores how peace is often pursued for strategic convenience rather than genuine reconciliation. Vighraha (war) exposes the enduring realism in global relations, where power and security override humanitarian concerns—as evident in Western military aid to Ukraine or Israel's defence strategies. Asana (neutrality), reflected in India's and Switzerland's balanced postures, reveals how neutrality functions less as moral restraint and more as a calculated preservation of national interest. Yana (preparation) highlights the global arms buildup—from NATO's deterrence strategy to China's militarization—raising questions about the sustainability of perpetual preparedness. Samsraya (alliances), seen in QUAD, BRICS, and AUKUS, demonstrates that modern alliances often serve shifting power equations rather than collective ideals.

Finally, Dvaidhibhava (dual policy) exposes the paradox of global interdependence, where cooperation and rivalry coexist—as in U.S.–China relations. Thus, Kautilya's statecraft remains critically relevant, revealing that contemporary diplomacy continues to operate within the realist logic of interest, strategy, and survival.

India:

Kautilya's Shadguna Siddhant still provides a very useful way to understand how India manages its foreign relations today. Though it was written more than two thousand years ago, its ideas perfectly match the kind of diplomacy India practices in the modern world. Each part of Kautilya's sixfold policy can be seen in India's present-day actions and decisions.

The idea of Sandhi (peace) is seen in India's efforts to build friendly ties with its neighbours through SAARC, BIMSTEC, and other regional platforms. Vighraha (conflict) is reflected in operations like Operation Sindoor, showing India's readiness to act firmly to protect its national interests. Asana (neutrality) appears in India's balanced stand during the Russia–Ukraine war, where it avoided taking sides while focusing on its own priorities. Yana (preparation for war) is visible in India's defence modernization and growing presence in the Indo-Pacific. Samsraya (alliance) can be seen in partnerships like the QUAD, while Dvaidhibhava (dual policy) is shown in India's balanced relations with both the U.S. and Russia, or Israel and Palestine.

Domestic:

Kautilya's Shadguna Siddhant retains strong relevance in India's domestic governance today. The principle of Sandhi (peace) is reflected in cooperative federalism through bodies like NITI Aayog and the GST Council that promote dialogue and consensus. Yana (preparation) aligns with India's defence modernization, disaster readiness, and Atmanirbhar Bharat initiatives. Asana (neutrality) appears in the government's balanced approach toward sensitive regions like the Northeast and Jammu & Kashmir. Dvaidhibhava (dual policy) is evident in economic strategies balancing liberalization with welfare and protection of domestic industries. Samsraya (alliance) surfaces in Centre-State cooperation during crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, Kautilya's ancient statecraft continues to shape India's pragmatic and welfare-oriented governance.

CONCLUSION

In the era defined by multipolarity, technological disruption and transnational challenges, the principles of peace, war, neutrality, preparedness, alliance and dual policy serve as analytical tool for states to navigate uncertainty with strategic foresight. The Sadguna Siddhanta offers a lens through which policymakers can interpret shifts in alliances, the balance of power and diplomatic behaviour in regions such as the Indo Pacific, Eurasia and the Global South. Hence, here Kautilya emphasizes the essence of the strategic adaptability, guiding states to act according to circumstances.

INCLUSIVE INNOVATIONS

HOW DISABILITY-DRIVEN INNOVATION IMPROVES ALL LIVES

Suhana Tarannum

Imagine this: All the things necessary for disabled people have suddenly vanished, and you wake up in the morning and reach for your phone to ask your voice assistant, Alexa, about the weather, but all you get is silence. When you take out your phone to ask again, you see that your touchscreen phone has been replaced by a keypad phone. You press the buttons to put in your password and finally get to see the weather report. You know the time, then realise you are late for your flight back home. You remember having packed the night before, and when you grab your suitcase, you feel something is odd with it.....It's missing wheels!. You rush to the airport and reach it only to be faced with a large door that you have to open by yourself with all those heavy bags.. Because there is no such thing as an automatic sliding door. You finally go in, wondering why the day is already so hectic when it's only 8 in the morning. If this is how life without inventions useful to disabled people sounds like for abled people. Imagine how bad it would be for the differently abled? These creations, whose disappearance resulted in a "minor inconvenience" to you, could completely turn the trajectory of a disabled person's chances to live a decent life. And notice how these inventions, which were originally made for a different audience, gained a massive following by multiple people?. This article is aimed at helping you understand how creating an inclusive world for people with disabilities can also alter the course of life for the "abled" people.

and programs designed to benefit vulnerable groups, such as the disabled or people of color, often end up benefiting all." This effect applies to inventions as well. In fact, it is how the effect got its name. Curb cuts (gentle slopes or "graded ramps" from sidewalk to street) were originally designed for wheelchair users. But parents pushing strollers, travelers pulling wheeled suitcases, and workers delivering heavy loads have found them useful too. Hence the name of the effect.

- **TYPEWRITER:**

The older version of one of the now mostly used inventions in the world, The typewriter, is what evolved into our modern-day keyboard. The first electrically operated typewriter was made by Christopher Latham Sholes, an American newspaper editor and printer, who wanted to speed up the printing process. He also made the keyboard layout that is familiar today. After a few runs, he had to rearrange the order of the alphabet as the type basket would jam when he put them in the normal order. The rearranged keys in the upper row formed the order QWERTY, and this order exists to this day. Although its initial purpose was different, it emerged as a beacon of hope for people with Agraphia (losing the ability to write) and fine motor skill disorders. The typewriter blended efficiency with inclusivity, offering more than what it was intended to.

- **BENDING STRAWS:**

According to the Freedonia Group, the estimated number of straws used per day is 300 million in the U.S. Although the straight paper straw was a sensation when it was created, Joseph Friedman altered the design to make drinking straws bend in the middle. He came up with the idea when he noted his daughter's inability to enjoy her milkshake while using the straight ones.

- **AUTOMATIC SLIDING DOORS:**

Although it looks like a simple invention at first glance, when we think about it, it has a universal importance. For abled people, it may seem like just opening doors when you are carrying heavy loads. Whereas for people with motor nerve issues, it's not needing hands to open doors at all. For wheelchair users, it means they wouldn't have to ask someone for help for something as "normal" as opening a door. And their importance increased after COVID-19, which highlighted the need for touch-free design. It is an invention with universal importance. And the credit for this goes to Dee Horton and Lew Hewitt for making a small but useful change in our lives.

- **CLOSED CAPTIONS**

We all use captions to watch shows, and it has become the usual way of consuming information through media. All thanks to the efforts of Dr. Malcolm J. Norwood, a deaf physicist, regarded as the “Father of closed captioning” for his pivotal work in advocating and developing this technology, which made television accessible for deaf people and those hard-of-hearing. This technology also helped those learning a new language to understand the content and words used in foreign media. Captions are now widespread among all masses, ushering in an advancement in television.

- **ELECTRIC TOOTHBRUSHES:**

Market size predictions estimate the usage of about 131.43 million electric toothbrushes only in the U.S itself. Much of it is owed to factors like improvement in oral hygiene and prevalence of smart features. Dr. Phillippe-Guy Woog invented the Broxodent, the first electric toothbrush, in 1954 for patients with limited motor skills and orthodontic patients to maintain oral health. Since its release in the markets, it has become a common item in many households, demonstrating how innovations for people with disabilities can benefit a broader population.

THE RIPPLE EFFECT: HOW IT CHANGES EVERYTHING

What began as an effort to remove barriers for people with disabilities has now become something much bigger. By breaking barriers, we also unknowingly stepped into a world where things are easier for everyone. This is the ripple effect of inclusive innovation when designing for accessibility flows out of the box to benefit everyone, in unexpected ways. Inventions rooted in accessibility often become cornerstones for convenience. They focus on being usable rather than being exclusive. The ripple effect of disability driven inventions showcased the potential development we could have by investing in inclusive tech. The idea that these inventions are only for a certain group of people denies everyone the chance to live a better life. Research on disability oriented inventions and notable innovations has seen a rise in recent times. These inventions don't include disabled people with abled people; rather, they change the world made for the abled and make themselves the best of both worlds

THE BARRIERS WE STILL NEED TO BREAK:

While these inventions have transformed our lives for the better, the path to fully inclusive innovation is rather rocky. Many barriers still exist, stagnating the progress we have achieved so far. These challenges arise due to multiple factors, and understanding them is the first step to solving them.

- Many innovators still lack an understanding of disability experiences, which results in the creation of poorly made or exclusively made inventions. This defeats the goal of “complete inclusion”. Researching their experiences and asking opinions, requirements on the project would give them more information to work with. A thorough understanding is only possible when we engage in discussion with the people actually facing the problem we are trying to solve.
- Developing assistive technologies can be expensive and underfunded, especially in the early stages. This is also due to investors seeing it as a “niche” market with low units sold rather than a separate market of its own. Mainstream adoption is hence delayed.
- Lack of proper policy formulation in matters of assistive technology creation has delayed ensuring inclusivity.
- The market has not adapted itself to this sphere of trade and has yet to tap its potential.

DESIGNING FOR SOME, HELPING ALL

Disability-driven inventions show that by embracing inclusive innovations, we create a world that works for all. For some, it may be convenient, for others, assistive. But we all can agree that no matter the level of impact, it's always life-changing. These innovations not only make our lives easier but also connect us in a way we never thought of before. Working together to create a world like this doesn't seem so far-fetched anymore; it is possible and attainable. An inclusive world doesn't only mean giving disabled people assistive technology to “fit in” in a world made by abled people for abled people, but also connecting abled people.

THE DOWRY SYSTEM

Garima Dubey

The price at which the groom and his family are sold: In this system, the bride's family gives financial assets such as money or property to the groom's family at the time of marriage. This system is mainly prevalent in North-Central India. Don't worry that the groom's family themselves decide their price of selling. As this system is most prevalent

in specifically two states: UP & Bihar, the fun fact is that both these states have recorded high crime rates. What it means is that the impoverished person also demands the dowry?

According to this tradition, this system is to ensure that the bride is financially stable after marriage. What if the bride's family itself is not financially stable?? Still they manage the payment. And you can't even imagine how and what steps they have to take just for the sake of her daughter or to fulfill the demands of the groom's family.

Have you ever heard the true reasons for drinking poison by a bride and the reason for donating the liver of a father? Yes, there are such cases which are so true. A poor father who always wears a torn kurta and a dirty dhoti gifted his daughter colourful gifts, not having a surplus to feed their family but still has to pay the full money demanded by the groom's family.

You can check how many cases have been filed against the dowry system because of the loss of family members. And how many are not filed because of conservative thinking of some families, those who want to get their daughter married as soon as possible and also want to lighten their burden.

In the present, the dowry system has become a curse!!

Yes... You should also be against it. It is unfair to treat your daughter as a burden... It is unfair to marry her into such a greedy and emotionless family... It is just unfair to spend all the money on dowry rather than her studies!!!

AFGHAN WOMEN SILENCED AGAIN

TALIBAN RULE PUSHES HALF THE NATION INTO DARKNESS

Lakshita

The Taliban's return to power in Afghanistan in 2021 has revived one of the most oppression regimes for women in the modern history. Banned from attending schools beyond sixth grade and from attending universities, they are unable to even get the most basic access to education. Those who had been working as administrative staff in universities have seen their employment terminated and replaced by the male members of their family. Not only has their education been restricted, but their employment opportunities have also been curtailed. Women have been prohibited from working in international or domestic NGOs and have even been ordered to stay confined to their homes.

Women have been banned from playing sports and going to parks and gyms. They are forbidden from entering health centres or use public transport without a mahram (male relative). These restrictions have had a devastating impact on women's health, as female students are no longer allowed to study medicine and women are forbidden from being treated by male doctors, leaving them without access to adequate healthcare.

In addition, new decrees have prohibited women from speaking or showing their faces outside their house. In the province of Herat, the Taliban has banned female news anchors from appearing on television, claiming that their presence "provokes men". The Indian government's continued engagement with Taliban officials risks legitimizing a regime that systematically silences and oppresses Afghan women and minorities.

THE LAST KINGDOM

Vundela Muni & Hansika Reddy

In the 'JEWEL OF WESTERN INDIA' lies a kingdom like no other.

The GIR National Park, with its rivers and reservoir, is home to not just the great Sambar Deer, but also to a creature that has fascinated me since my childhood. I remember watching the National Geographic Channel, Discovery Channel and its documentaries along with my brother. They fascinated both of us, keeping us glued to the TV screen. They are the only channels in which we both are interested, unlike other

channels where we end up quarreling for the remote. I was always fascinated, confused, and excited about 'why lions were called kings' What made them so special? What power did they possess?

But that day when my brother and I sat together and started watching the documentary, like always, our mom interrupted us questioning our craziness for watching something too much for kids. But we two brats told our mom that we love the forest and adventures and that we don't get frightened as easily as she does. She then said that our father would be coming home by afternoon to check on our studies, but I had my story cooked up for everything, unlike my innocent brother, who by now panicked not about the lion in the forest but about the lion coming home.

But we continued watching anyway, as my brother and I are unstoppable no matter what came our way.

My curiosity turned into awe, as I watched the documentary .The story was:

Back in the days of the British Empire, the lions were hunted for sport, in their thirst for trophies, they had brought them to the brink of extinction. The kings of the forest—the Majestic Asiatic Lion—ruled from Sindh to Bihar, but by the early 1900s, their numbers had shrunk to only 15-20.

These speechless creatures, though wild, the heart of the ecosystem, were hunted for sport, for pride, for nothing more than a moment of human vanity. I felt their pain being wiped out, almost forgotten. But then a savior emerged: the Nawab of Junagadh. He banned the hunting of lions and this first step also led to declaring Gir as a wildlife sanctuary, giving the lions a safe home.

But that was only the beginning.

This sanctuary was more than just a home for lions; it was a battleground for survival. And not just for the lions, but for the Maldhari community, too. The Maldharis have lived in Gir for generations, raising their livestock in the same land where lions roam. Their main source of income was milk from their cattle. Yet, they never regarded the lions as enemies. Even when a lion killed one of their animals, they didn't retaliate, seeing it as part of nature's cycle, part of a higher law.

The Maldharis respected the lions, and in turn, the lions respected them. They don't harm the community even if they pass by each other.

From a mere 15 lions to over 674 today, the sanctuary stands as a beacon of hope and a living example of what can be achieved when we respect the natural world, especially when we RESPECT THE BORDERS.

Watching the majestic Asiatic lion's graceful stride, her pride in her walk, I was captivated by her regal presence. Each powerful step resonated with authority, as if the earth itself acknowledged her reign. In that moment, I felt a deep awe for this magnificent creature of the wild.

This was Gir—the last kingdom of the Majestic Asiatic lion. A place where man and beast walk together in harmony, where each respects the other's right to exist.

In Gir, every roar, every footstep in the wild tells a story—a story that continues to unfold.

As we finished watching the one-hour documentary, the lion came back to our home, and we, the little cubs, started explaining as quickly as possible about the adventure that we had just gone through, ensuring there would be no questions about studies. Then, we all sat together with the lioness for a wholesome meal.

This is about GIR: where the last roar still echoes. The wild is calling us. Will we answer?

THIS ISN'T WAR

Avni Chaudhary

Scarring is a book of images, hands holding it desperately wanting to let go, the pixels which are made to be fit into your midnight thoughts.

Filled with the mesmerising air. This is a consolation for the things that hurt and realisations which hit. It's not false, don't push it aside....so aside that your sea is forever lost crying for the sand of that shore. Either way whenever you find this book of yours, embrace the decay (beautiful decay) in your veins. See it as a warm yellow light on your bedside table, among people you read, over the pile of newspapers or even in your imaginary library.

It's not a war between you and you, it's reaching for yourself. It might click anywhere between scattered photographs and cracked paintings.

The pictures of moments, described through poetry and prose.

AIRPLANES

Bhavya Kanodia

Whenever I look up at the sky
I always see an airplane flying nearby
I would just wave at them
Like I knew all those people flying in it
Turns out I don't
I saw one today
And I started thinking
Where are you going?
What are you running away from?
Or what are you running towards?
Is it sad goodbye or just pleasant see you soon?
Or is it a wait for me my love? What will it be for me?
Maybe a mix of all
For now I'll just wave at all those people I don't know

EMPIRE

Ananyaa Vats

Lavender blooms rise like quiet monarchs, petals slicing through dusk with silken precision.

The wind does not pass; it kneels, circling their violet decree in reverent spirals.
Autumn's gold fades beneath their reign

Roses boast, daisies drift but lavender rules in silence. its beauty sharpened, deliberate, unforgettable.

I walk through their empire barefoot, dress trailing like spilled twilight, each step a soft command

The air hums with perfume and prophecy.

Power blooms here not loud, but lasting.

WHERE SHE GOES

Ananyaa Vats

If you ever wonder, "Where is she?" Find me at the beach, talking to the sea.

Wrestling with my thoughts, unraveling your lie they echo as the sun sets, how slowly time flies.

But today, my mind can bear no more I've been burning inside, yet you never heard my roar.

So carry your truths that my heart won't implore,

I don't believe in what you've said and I don't believe in what you swore.

Again I drifted into sleep's cruel sweep, only to stumble through dreams that made me weep.

It's time to choose a path, I'll take my feet Off to Lala Land, to talk to the sea.

And if you still wonder, "Where is she?" Find me at the beach.... talking to the sea.

THE MUSE OF FOREVER

Deeksha Gupta

Feel the soil beneath my skin.
Close my eyes, see where it had been.
Some thousand years ago,
so different from how I know.
But our feet feel the same still:
the same dirt, the same wild grass,
the same water boiling in the harsh sun.
I open my eyes and take it in.
The home I know, the home I see.
But beneath the shiny new covers,
I know it's the same still:
the same home that comes in my dreams,
tells me how it had been.

I see the change, and I see the light.
I hear little voices cackling in delight,
and I know there's a tomorrow I won't recognise.
But their hearts will always feel
what mine knows today.
A million moons from now,
splashing cool water on their faces,
burning desert sand beneath their feet:
the same mud, the same trees,
the same dirt, the same leaves,
different idols and different scriptures,
but the muse remains still.

A million moons from now:
the wisdom of old and the hunger of tomorrow.
The children pave their way,
but in them, they carry the forefathers.
Yesterday, so different from today and tomorrow.
A million rising suns,
a million different moons,
but it won't ever set,
hasn't for thousands, won't for even longer.
Because the scriptures change,
but the muse remains,
for today and tomorrow.

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