CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Espionage has been defined as the art of spying with specific motives. It has been euphemistically designated as the “second oldest profession of the world” and its importance has been emphasized by statesmen and strategists globally.

Ancient civilizations of India, China, Egypt, Babylon, Assyria and Greece have all delved into the intricacies of this profession. However, history illustrates that the Ancient Indians gained exceptional expertise in this secret art and valued it as an indispensable tool of governance and statecraft.

Secret agents were lauded as the “eyes of the king” by popular poets and erudite thinkers like Bharavi (चारचक्षूष: राजान:;) and Somadevasuri (स्वपरमण्डलकार्यकार्यावलोकने चाराङ्कार्णि शिलितिनामा).¹ Māgha finds the art of spying as important to the principles of statecraft as the Paspaśābhāṣya is to the science of Grammar.² Varuṇa, the Vedic god, finds special mention in the Rgveda as the forerunner of modern spies.³ The profound praise and fondness showered on the spies as trusted aides of Vedic Gods by
our Rishis and seers endorse the ancient Vedas as the genesis of Espionage. Furthermore, numerous ancient literary treatises like the Rāmāyaṇa, the Mahābhārata, the Purāṇas, the Manusmṛti, the Jātakas, the Śukranītisāra, the Yājñavalkyasmṛti, the Kāmandakīya-nītisāra, the Nītisutra, the Yuktikalpataru, Tamil Sangam literature and even literary works like Pratijñā-Yaugandharāyaṇa, Mudrārākṣasa etc. have all appreciated and upheld the practical utility of Espionage.

Most importantly, Kauṭīlya or Viṣṇugupta, the political advisor of Candragupta Maurya of the Mauryan dynasty (Fourth century B.C.) made a systematic codification of all scattered information in his magnum-opus, the ARTHĀṢĀSTRA and propounded a unique concept of Espionage which anticipated modern intelligence systems by several centuries and can be usefully emulated even today.

Commending the unfailing efficacy of stratagem, Kauṭīlya observes that an archer may or may not hit the target by throwing an arrow, but by throwing diplomatic talent one can slay even a foetus in its mother’s womb.

एकं हन्यात्त्र वा हन्यादिषुः किशानो धनुष्पताः ।
In fact, Kautilya used Espionage to bring down the tyrannical Nanda rulers and establish Candragupta Maurya as the Supreme Emperor of India, a land hitherto split into numerous petty and warring kingdoms. Espionage also enabled Kautilya to mastermind the retreat of Alexander the Great, the mighty invader from Greece. Shivaji, the Marathi ruler, is said to have studied this book in order to plan and defeat the Mighty Mughals.

The Kautiliya Arthaśāstra is a masterpiece of political thought, a repository of economic theories and management principles, and a thought-provoking stand on social ethics and moral values. It has been deemed as the brightest flower of Indian political wisdom and statecraft. Understandably, therefore, it has gained popularity and esteem worldwide. In the Arthaśāstra, Kautilya deals extensively with Espionage as a vital tool of Governance and Empire-building. His shrewd observations and razor-sharp acumen in employing secret agents, deputing them at strategic locations and monitoring their activities to extract maximum information for diplomatic manoeuvres are amazing.
Although eminent scholars are pursuing research on the Secret Services of Kautilya, it is often opined that his attitude towards Espionage as a tool for dominating the Power-Politics of the region was largely self-oriented, unscrupulous and inhumane. However, deeper study reveals that the author of the Arthaśāstra, a statesman par excellence, actually aimed at unifying the vast South-Asian region to build an invincible Empire that could ensure Welfare-Economics for the masses with Secret Service as the strongest weapon of Peace.

**Meaning of Espionage**

*Espionage* is the purposeful act of securing information about a country, an individual or a group for the benefit of the agency that engages in espionage. Espionage is practiced in spheres of military, political, and diplomatic affairs and for detection of crimes. Of late, Espionage is also practiced in the corporate sector. The Business Dictionary mentions commercial espionage as the secret gathering of information regarding the rival company’s new products and practices. *Counter-Espionage* is to prevent the foreign spies from gathering secret information of the host country, group or individual. At the core of all these clandestine operations is the *Spy*, the person who secretly watches and examines the
actions of other individuals or organizations and gathers information on them, usually to gain an advantage. The objective of all Espionage is the acquisition of Intelligence which is used to strengthen the status of the individual or organization that sponsors it. Such Intelligence can be defined as “raw information processed into finished analysis.” Intelligence is produced only after basic (raw) information has been analyzed. In modern parlance, the whole apparatus of intelligence thus includes: collectors (spies and agents), researchers, compilers, evaluators, relatours, estimators, writers, disseminators and a host of technicians with all their gadgets, communications systems, libraries, laboratories, files, training academies. On the counter-spying side, there are the spy-catchers, language-interpreters, censors, code-makers and breakers, loyalty checkers, and plant-security experts with accessories and equipment. The focal point is, of course, the human being who is the spy. The total Intelligence-apparatus towers over the lone secret operative like an inverted pyramid.

**Etymology** - Recorded in Europe since 1793, the word Espionage was derived from French espionnage, from Middle French espionner (“to spy”), from Old French espion (“spy”), itself probably from a Germanic source (akin to Old High German spehon
“spy”), possibly via the Italian spionne (from spia). The word Spy has its origin in the Middle English spien, an aphetic variant of earlier espien "to espy", from Old French espier "to spy" (espie "a spy") of Germanic origin, from Frankish spehōn "to spy", from Proto-Germanic speh- ("to see, look") from Proto-Indo-European spek- ("to look"). It is akin to Old High German spehōn, spehōn "to scout, look out for, spy" (German spähen "to spy"), Middle Dutch spien "to spy". It is amazingly similar to its Indo-European cousin, the Sanskrit word for spy, ‘Spaśa’. The first mention of “Spaśa”, appears as early as in the Rgveda’s 1st Mandala, where Varuṇa, the powerful Vedic God is depicted as resplendent in a golden robe with his spies seated around him.

M. Monier Williams explains its origin from व्पस; only occurring in perfect tense paspaśe (पस्पशे), participle paspaśāna (पस्पशान), and aorist aspashta (अस्पष्ट) meaning - to see, to behold, perceive or espy in the Rgveda; Causative spāśayati (स्पाशयति) in the Apastamba Srautasūtra and spasayate (स्पाशयते) in the Rgveda meaning to make clear, show; to perceive or observe. Raja Radhakanta Deva in the Šabdakalpadruma says that the noun Spaśa
(masculine) means one who looks or beholds, a watcher, spy, or a messenger.

The importance of the institution of spying in the business of statecraft and polity in ancient India can be gauged from the numerous epithets assigned to Spies as per their allotted duties such as: प्रजिधि:, चार:, गृठचार:, गृठचारी (न), गृठपुरुष:, गृठगति:, गुपचार:, गुपतगति:, गुपतदृश:, मन्त्रगृह:, चर:, सूचक:, देशापेक्षा:, रहस्यानुसारी (न), पिशून:, बयाहिवर्ण:, चारानारित:, कापटिक:, अविरह:, प्रतिष्क:, प्रतिष्कः:, प्रतिष्कः:, स्पजः:, उदास्थित:, हेरिक:, अनिरह:, वनगृह:.

The Babylon.com English Dictionary defines Espionage as a practice of obtaining information about an organization or
a society that is considered secret or confidential without the permission of the holder of the information. Unlike other forms of intelligence work, espionage involves accessing the place where the desired information is stored, or accessing the people who know the information and will divulge it through some kind of subterfuge. It also can be used as a general term to describe spying activities.

The inherent streak of curiosity and the basic urge for self-protection and survival must have prompted the need for spying in ancient times. Right through the Palaeolithic, Neolithic, Iron and Copper ages, human beings have used weapons not only for hunting, but also for defense against animals and fellow humans. Survival, again, depended not only on the quality of weaponry and its usage, but also on the knowledge of the behavior of the adversary, when, where and how the enemy could strike. So to help groups to survive, some amongst them were entrusted with the gathering of such information. This was the earliest form of Espionage.

With the augmentation of family, social and political life, spying became a necessity for civilized man to cope with intricate interactions and evolved into an important instrument of state administration.
Espionage in Ancient India

Archaeological excavations prove the existence of espionage even during the Harappa Culture. The existence of ‘palaces’ with ancient foundations of substantial swords showing that some of the people were well-armed, of watchmen’s quarters at Mahenjodaro and of ancient fort-walls at Sind, suggests a class whose duty was to protect the people\textsuperscript{16}. Dr. Mortimer Wheeler points out that “a regimented block of cells discovered at Mahenjodaro might be regarded variously as a priest’s college with an adjacent temple and as a police station\textsuperscript{17}

In the $\text{Rgveda}$, the king’s eagerness to protect his subjects from external aggressions and to maintain internal peace, law and order is evident in an ardent prayer in which a king implores the mighty Vedic God Indra to make him, the king, the protector of his people, their true guardian.

$\text{कुविद् माम् गोपम् कर्से जनस्य कुविद् राजानम्}$ \textsuperscript{18}

Meaning thereby- O impetuous one, will you not make me the guardian of the people? O Maghavan, will you not make me their ruler?
Vigilance and intelligence-gathering as essential adjuncts of such benevolent administration and espionage as an important tool for accomplishing it are also frequently mentioned.

The seventh Mandala of the Rgveda enumerates the duties of spies clearly. These spies were employed to collect information regarding movement of inimical tribal settlements, guard the lawful citizens, detect criminal activities and protect the crop in fields.

ṣपशो दशाते ओषधिपु विक्ष्वधायतो अनिमिषं दक्षमाणा ॥ 19

The Aryans believed that when Varuṇa’s spies were sent on a mission, they were committed and attentive, surveying the two world halves that were well-formed and fashioned. Four notable epithets used for the spies were: a) Wise, b) Holy, c) Skilled in sacrifices and d) the furtherance of the praise songs of the prudent.

ऋतावान: कथो यज्ञीरा: प्रचेतसो य इष्यन्ति मन्म ॥ 20

This also indicates that Vedic spies were strictly Brāhmaṇs, who enjoyed the faith and respect of the common people. However, references in Buddhist Jātaka Literature and the Kauṭiliya Arthaśāstra suggest that increase in the size of settlements required
an organized system of spies on a larger scale and so the bar of caste and class was gradually given up. The rising discontent towards the cumbersome rituals, bloody sacrifices and divisive attitude of Brahmanism may also have contributed to this shift in social preferences.

Gradually, Kingdoms developed into empires. Occupations like cattle-rearing and hunting were steadily giving way to more complex practices of agriculture, weaving, pottery, metallurgy, trade etc. The Rgvedic seer had glorified cattle as a symbol of wealth and power. Hence, the desire for possession of cattle, considered ‘the sum of all good’\(^2\), was a cause of many a conflict. Gradually, the acquisition of cultivable land gained priority over cattle-theft. The Aryan tribes had spread over the regions from Kabul to the Upper Ganges and had built up small kingdoms under hereditary kings. Due to internecine strife, many weaker tribes were absorbed by their more powerful neighbours. Consequently, the power, wealth and territory of the conquering tribes increased. Larger compact kingdoms and stately cities came into existence. The political and cultural sway of the Aryans extended further east and then south, often clashing with the aborigines called Dravids. They gradually conquered the fertile plains of Northern India watered by the
Yamuna, The Upper Ganges and the Sadānīra (the Rāpti or the Gandhaka). The more adventurous royal campaigns penetrated into the Vindhya forests and made inroads into the Deccan. With the amalgamation of tribes and acquisition of new territories, political units swelled in size and strength. Paramount or universal sovereignty became the royal objective to be pursued vigorously by annexations and military exploits.

Such aggressiveness and aggrandizement necessitated an efficient espionage-mechanism as its support system. Even in home affairs, the functions and activities of the ruler and the ruled were becoming more complicated and comprehensive. The efficiency of administration depended on the ability of several departments, their officials and the nature of co-ordination through inter-departmental communications. New challenges and hindrances had surfaced. Theft, murder, burglary, arson, corruption, subversion, insurgency and other threats to socio-economic and political life were growing. The seditious and criminal elements needed to be monitored, tracked and eliminated. So, naturally, the need for a stronger espionage network developed.

In the period of later Saṁhitas, Brāhmaṇas, Āranyakas and Upaniṣads, the System of Espionage prevailed. The Taittiriya
Samhita included “courier” in the list of Ratnins (jewels) of the king’s entourage. The Satapatha Brāhmaṇa enlisted the “Palagala” (courier), forerunner of the Dūta (sasanahara), in the list of Ratninanihavimshi i.e. ‘jewels’. With the increase of power of the King, he required more and more honest and efficient secret agents to enable him to protect his people from all internal and external danger.

In the Epic period, the institution of espionage occupied a very important place in administration and war. The Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata mention many practical applications of spying. For the protection of subjects which was considered their primary duty, kings employed spies to gather information of his own kingdom as well as about foreign states. The latter part of the sixth century B.C. saw the rise of the Sixteen Mahajanapadas, amongst whom Avanti, Vatsya, Kosala and Kasi came to the limelight of political history. In the struggle for overlordship among the rulers of these countries, spies were extensively used. A Jataka story narrates how the secret agents of Prasenjit, king of Kosala, came to learn about the tactics to win over a battle from the conversation of two Buddhist monks at Jetavana. Espionage reached a high level of excellence under the Mauryas. Contemporary Greek accounts of Megasthenes, Strabo,
Diodorus and Arrian, as well as indigenous sources like the Arthaśāstra of Kauṭilya, establish that espionage was systematically harnessed in all spheres of social, political, economic and cultural activities. The Sungas capitalized on the weaknesses in administration of Asoka’s successors. The decline of espionage-mechanism enabled Pushyamitra Sunga to kill the last Mauryan ruler Brihadratha and establish a vast empire. The ample references to spying in the Purāṇas and the Dharmaśāstras reflect that espionage continued, albeit in varying degrees, during the rule of the Kanvas, the Satavahanas, the Chetas and the Guptas.

Numerous treatises of Ancient India refer to the intricacies of contemporary espionage systems and serve as important literary sources. Famous archeological relics like the Rock Edicts of Asoka also highlight their importance in administration and political stability. Given the characteristic secrecy associated with espionage operations, the tireless activities of secret agents could seldom find pride of place in Royal Inscriptions which were official gazettes. Nevertheless, the Asokan Rock Edict IV mentions the Prativedakas whose duty was to keep the king abreast of the affairs of the people at all times, ‘whether I am eating, or am in the harem or in the inner chamber or in the cattle-shed, or on horseback, or in the garden.’
These Prativedakas as their name suggests, were evidently the spies or informers, who were employed in large numbers to report to the king all that they could gather about the happenings in and around the country.

Espionage in other Ancient Civilizations

Sun Tzu and Ancient Chinese Espionage

With regard to the recorded chronicles dedicated to this age-old craft, Richard Deacon in ‘A History of the Chinese Secret Service’ states the PING FA or ‘Principles Of War’ written by Sun Tzu as the earliest known treatise on War and Espionage. A profound thinker of Ancient China (510 B.C.), Sun Tzu wrote his treatise on Military strategy when Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, and Torah were taking firm roots elsewhere. The central premise of his doctrine was: Winning or losing depends on artful strategy, not military brawn. In a chapter called ‘Employment of Secret agents’ in the English Translation by Sam Griffith, Sun Tzu clearly mentions five kinds of agents: native, inside, double, expendable and living. ‘Native’ and ‘Inside’ agents are similar to what we call ‘agents in place’. ‘Double’ is an enemy agent who has been captured, turned around and sent back where he came from as an agent of his captors. ‘Expendable agents’ are agents through whom false information is
leaked to the enemy. They are expendable because the enemy will probably kill them when they find out their information was faulty. ‘Living’ agents are those who penetrate the enemy lines, get information and manage to get back alive.

All these agents were employed simultaneously in the pattern of a “Divine Skein”. The analogy is to a fish net consisting of many strands all joined to a single cord. The central premise of his teachings is: ‘Winning or losing depends on artful strategy, not military brawn.’ Sun Tzu also comments on counter-intelligence, on psychological warfare, on deception, on security, on fabricators, and many other crafts of intelligence. Allen Dulles emphasized that Sun Tzu’s book was a favourite of powerful leaders like Mao Tse-tung and is required reading for Chinese Communist tacticians. Till date, the Chinese military take pride in Sun Tzu and seek to execute his discerning teachings, which may be summarized as:

a) Cretins or foolish persons must be watched carefully. Victory comes from cold blooded tactics, not vulgar warrings. If you want to win, first think it out and plan thereby.

b) Psycho your opponent out: make him err and then instantly defeat him. Victory also comes from knowing one’s own weaknesses. The tortoise won not because he learnt to run faster than the hare or
persisted while the hare slept, but because he fooled the hare into underestimating his rival, slackening his defenses and becoming complacent.

c) War entails great loss of life and resources of the state. Hostile armies often face each other for years but in vain. Spies can turn tables and help in gaining victory by acquiring information of enemy’s strategy and warring conditions.

d) An artful conflict manager rides chaos to victory.

e) War leads the road to either safety or ruin, so it should be studied diligently. The five threads to the warp of its texture are: the ethnic (making people one with the ruler), heaven (divining the right moment to act), Earth (knowledge of the terrain, ability to assess distances and time to cover them), leadership and material (morale of officers, drill, discipline of men and supplies given to them). 

Espionage in Ancient Israel

Although the Ancient Indians and Chinese dominated the espionage scenario, spying was practiced with varying degrees of skill in other lands too. In an attempt to reconnoitre the situation in the Promised Land, Israelite Joshua (Josh.2) sent two men into Jericho to ‘spy secretly’. Rahab the harlot concealed them in her house and got them safely out of the city with their intelligence. The
Israelites conquered Jericho and utterly destroyed it and its people expect that Rahab and her family were saved. Thus, the concept of a ‘Safe House’ was born and the tradition that those who help the intelligence process should be recompensed was upheld. The Holy Bible mentions the sending of 12 spies by Moses. The team included women also.

Espionage in Ancient Egypt

Egyptian hieroglyphs reveal the presence of court spies, as do papyri describing ancient Egypt's extensive military and slave trade operations. Early Egyptian pharaohs employed agents of espionage to find out disloyal subjects and to locate tribes that could be conquered and enslaved. From 1,000 B.C. onwards, Egyptian espionage operations focused on foreign intelligence about the political and military strength of rivals Greece and Rome. The use of written messages necessitated the development of codes, disguised writing, trick inks, and hidden compartments in clothing to his communications. Egyptian spies developed the extensive use of poisons, including toxins derived from plants and snakes, to carry-out assassinations or acts of sabotage.

King Thutmosis III sent a guide, Captain Thute, aided by his underworld connections, succeeded in smuggling 200 heavily-armed
soldiers into the besieged city of Jaffa. The soldiers were sewn into flour sacks and, thus camouflaged as a shipment of flour, were loaded on ships bound for the besieged city.

Espionage of Ancient Romans

Rome's most famous case of espionage and intrigue culminated in the assassination of Julius Caesar on March 15, 44 B.C. Although Caesar was warned that the German Chief, Ariovistus, with the help of local Romans like Brutus, had plotted to murder him, he ignored this vital lead and fell into the death-trap. Tiberius also disapproved of espionage and limited it to using money to sow disunity in the German lands of Arminius.

The Ancient Syrians

King Rameses of Egypt was betrayed by the guide Paker whom he fully trusted. During Rameses' campaign against the Syrians, Paker brought two enemy soldiers to Rameses, pretending that the two were Syrian-deserters. These soldiers deliberately passed around false information to the enemy, as a result, Egyptians framed faulty strategy and their battle-wagons were ambushed by the Syrians and destroyed.

The Ancient Greeks
Secret messages were communicated with light signals or Heliographs. Always well-informed of enemy activities, when the Greeks were betrayed by the spy Ephiates, Leonidas learned of the betrayal from a deserter in time to send the major part of his army away. The early Greeks relied on deception as a primary means of achieving surprise attacks on their enemies. Greek literature from antiquity celebrated its intelligence and espionage exploits. The legendary incident of the Trojan horse, a wooden structure given to the city of Troy as gift, but which contained several hundred Greek soldiers seeking safe entrance into the heavily fortified rival city, became the symbol of Grecian intelligence prowess. The most farsighted contribution of the ancient Greek intelligence community, however, was its creation of a complex and efficient means of communication between cities. Couriers delivered messages between cities, but important messages were also relayed between a series of outposts or towers using semaphore, a form of communication that utilized signals to convey messages

**Alexander the Great**

Alexander could practice economic espionage and financial manipulation deftly. He destroyed enemy currencies, successfully breaking down the Persian double standard and converting gold and
silver simply into commodities. He also introduced Postal Espionage to detect disloyal elements in his army. A cipher device for secret communication, consisting of scrolls wrapped around baton-like cylinders or staffs was used. Nevertheless, Alexander’s best efforts at espionage could hardly match those of Kauṭilya, his historic retreat from his military advances towards India being ample proof of this.

Kauṭilya and Kauṭiliya Arthasastra

While the epics, Rāmāyaṇa and Mahābhārata; the Purāṇas like Kālīka, Agni; the texts on polity like Manusamhitā, Yāgñavalkyasmṛti e.t.c, all dwell extensively on the utility and need of Spying, the most authoritative and organized work on the subject is, undoubtedly, THE ARTHASAŚTRA OF KAUTOТИYA.

The authorship of the the Arthasastra is attributed to the scholarly preceptor, Kauṭilya. Born in Circa 400 B.C. at Canaka near the confluence of the rivers Kabul and Sind, dearly known to his parents as Viṣṇugupta, he became famous as Čanakya. He was born to ‘Kutala gotra, hence, came to be known as Kauṭilya. A dark, learned orthodox Brahmin highly versed in politics and public administration, Kauṭilya served the Nanda King of Magadha (modern Bihar), but on being unjustly insulted by King Dhana.
Nanda, vowed to annihilate the Nandas and raise Candragupta Maurya as the Supreme Emperor of India.\textsuperscript{31}

Adhering to Kautilyan strategies and tenets, Candragupta Maurya utilized the general disaffection and strife prevalent in the Nanda Empire to come to the forefront.\textsuperscript{32} Together, they collected an army with the help of treasure found underground in the Vindhya forest. After overthrowing the Macedonian rule in the North-west and the Punjab, Chandragupta directed his arms against Magadha. The Nanda King was defeated in an engagement that involved both stratagem and slaughter. Chandragupta ascended the throne in 323 BC and gradually expanded and consolidated his rule. His Empire stretched to the North along the natural boundaries of the Himalayas, and to the east stretching into what is now Assam. To the West, it reached beyond modern Pakistan and included Baluchistan in Persia and significant portions of what is now Afghanistan, including the modern Herat and Kandahar provinces. Accounts of historians like Megasthenes and Arrian depict him as both a successful conqueror and a great administrator.\textsuperscript{33} Megasthenes was impressed by the extremely efficient espionage-network which ensured proper control over the administrative machinery.
Chandragupta’s son, Emperor Bindusara, further expanded the Empire into India's central and southern regions excluding a small portion of unexplored tribal and forested regions near Kalinga, an empire situated by the Bay of Bengal. The fact that they were able to conquer and maintain such a huge empire during the times when there was no technology and negligible communication networks, speaks volumes about their political and military abilities.

With a population of fifty million people, the Mauryan Empire was geographically larger than the Mughal Empire 2000 years later and even larger than the British Empire in India. This is the reason why Chandragupta is famous as ‘Cakravartin’ in India, which means an all-powerful monarch “whose chariot wheels turn freely” or “whose travels are unobstructed.” Kautilya had a major role to play in Mauryan ascendancy as he was the one who helped Chandragupta raise an army against the ruling Nanda dynasty and he was his chief advisor. The political acumen of Kautilya coupled with Chandragupta’s leadership and military skills, led to the formation of this mighty empire.

The Kauṭiliya Arthasastra is a monumental treatise on Arthasastra by Cāṇakya. It is the greatest Indian treatise on the art of government and public administration, the duties of the king,
ministers and officials and the art of diplomacy and statecraft. There is a school of thought which questions the attribution of the authorship of The Arthasastra on Kautilya simply because Megasthenes, the Greek ambassador, does not mention him in his travelogues. In spite of such divergences, there can be no doubt here as the text in question refers to Kautilya, the author, as the savior and preceptor of Candraguta who overthrew the Nandas. Before presenting his theories on polity, diplomacy and governance, Kautilya quotes with reverence the opinions of Manu, Uśanas, Brhaspati, Bharadwaja, Vatavyādhi, Viśalāksha, Piśuna, Kaunapadanta, Parāsara and others and humbly calls his own work a compendium of their views and his interpretations. In reality, Kautilya far outshone his predecessors in clarity of thought and richness of content and presented to the world a complete manual on practical administration and political thought. Many subsequent works on polity like the Kāmandakīyanītisāra, the Yuktikalpataru and the Nitivākyāṁṛta broadly uphold the views of Kautilya, with certain variations. The praise showered on Kautilya’s diplomatic foresight and worldly wisdom is evident from these famous lines, though grudgingly uttered by his arch-rival, Rākṣasa, from The Mudrārākṣasa of Viśākhadutta:
"The mine of all śāstras, as the ocean is of jewels, with whose merits we are not sufficiently pleased, being jealous!" Rākṣasa was a former minister of the Nanda rulers to whom he still pledged loyalty despite their destruction manipulated by Kauṭilya and Candragupta. He made several attempts to liquidate Candragupta, subvert his forces and overthrow Mauryan rule but in vain. Contrary to this, Kauṭilya, through his schemes and spies, could compel Rākṣasa finally to surrender and serve the Mauryan king.

Kāmandaka, the author of the Kāmandakīyaṇītisāra also eulogizes him profusely. Of this great statesman, Kāmandaka says, "To him who alone shone like a streak of lightning and before the thunderbolt of whose witchcraft the rich mountain-like Nandas fell down, root and branch, who alone with the power of diplomacy like Indra with his thunderbolt, bestowed the earth on Candragupta, the moon among men, who churned the nectar of the science of polity from the ocean of political science – to him, the wise and Brahma-like Viṣṇugupta, we make salutation."
The Arthasastra begins with guidelines on the grooming and education of young princes and proceeds to the appointment of ministers, organization and functioning of various state departments, including the setting up of a secret service. It then prescribes a code of civil and criminal law. In the matter of foreign relations, it presents the ideal of a ‘vijigisu’ (one who aims to be a world-conqueror) aptly dealing with foreign states, whether friendly or inimical, in order to achieve his goal.

While the Mahābhārata teaches Politics as a part of moral training, the Arthasastra serves as a practical guide to statecraft. Its main concern is the social well-being and material prosperity of the state, its citizens and the king through good governance and
functional economics. It comprises fifteen Books (Adhikaraṇaśas),
each containing smaller chapters (Adhyāyas). In another manner, the
Adhikaraṇaśas are divided into smaller sections or Prakaraṇas. Thus
the whole work has one hundred and fifty Adhyāyas or one hundred
and eighty Prakaraṇas. Book I discusses the various problems
connected with Kingship. It discusses the training of the king,
appointment of ministers and other officers of the state, the daily
routine to be ideally followed by the ruler and so on. Book II gives
an exhaustive picture of civil administration. Vital issues like
settlement on unoccupied land, building a fort, laying out the capital
are discussed. Book III and IV deal with civil and criminal law.
Book V deals with the duties and responsibilities of the followers
and retainers of the king. Miscellaneous in character, it deals with
emergency measures in kingship, steps to be taken against seditious
persons and lays down scales of salaries for state servants. It advises
the chief minister on ensuring continuity of rule on the demise of the
ruling monarch. Book VI deals with the nature and functions of the
seven Prakritis or Constituents of state and the Rajamaṇḍala or
Circle of kings. Book VII deals with the six measures of foreign
policy. The various means of outwitting rival forces by stratagem or
force are discussed. Book VIII is concerned with Vyasanās or
calamities, shortcomings or weaknesses affecting the various Prakrtis. Book IX deals with preparations for war and necessary precautions involved. Book X deals with the strategies and modes of fighting, the camping of the army, its march ahead, and so on. Book XI explains how the vijigīṣu or would-be conqueror should subjugate Śaṁghas or independent oligarchical principalities. Book XII shows how a weak king, when threatened by a stronger king, can frustrate the latter's moves and overcome him. Book XIII deals with the conquest of the enemy's fortified capital by subterfuge or by fighting. It also describes how the conquered territory must be governed. Book XIV describes secret remedies and occult practices used for eliminating enemies or traitors. Finally, Book XV defines and illustrates the thirty-two Tantrayuktis or methods of teaching a subject. Thus the first five books deal with Tantra or internal administration of the state, while the next eight deal with Avāpa or relations with neighbouring states, while the last two Books are of independent character.

The significant aspects or highlights of political, social and economic stability deliberated upon in the Arthaśāstra may broadly be outlined as:
a) The original state of anarchy and the origin of the king and government. b) The concept of the State, Prakritis, the territorial divisions etc. c) Various forms of Government-Republican and monarchial. d) Popular assemblies in monarchy- limits to king’s authority. e) Royal consecration and powers of king and feudatories. f) Public administration and designation and functions of administrative officers g) Public Finance, various forms of revenue, principles of taxation, tolls and levies, pay and emoluments. h) Judicial administration- civil, criminal and personal laws, Police, Espionage i) Foreign policy, functions of emissaries. j) Principles of aggression, treaty and neutrality k) Military organization. The form of the work is said to be the combination of Sūtra and Bhāṣya.

Kauṭilya begins his Arthaśāstra by paying obeisance to his worthy predecessors in the craft of polity: Manu, Uśanas, Bṛhaspati, Bhāradwaja, Vaṭavyadhi, Viśālakṣa, Piśuṇa, Kaunapadanta, Parāśara, Bāhudantaputra, Ambhiyas, Kātyāyana, Kaninka, Dirghacarāyana, Ghotamukha, Kinjalka, Piśunaputra and others. Five different schools of political thought – those of Brhaspati, Uśana, Prācetas Manu, Parāsara and Ambhi- are mentioned by him, including his own opinions on their theories. Evidently, Kauṭilya did not start any new system of governance, but he did begin a new
direction in political thought by giving to the world what we now call Realism. Roger Boesche in his book on Kauṭilya calls him “The First Great Political Realist.” Advocating the predominance of reason over blind faith, he stressed the value of human endeavor in the acquisition of the four goals of life. He made a clear distinction between religion and politics and did not evaluate political problems in terms of religious thought. Condemning use of vague sidereal astrology by kings, he depended on reasoning (Anvikṣakī). Wealth, opined Kauṭilya, deserts one who constantly relies on stars of luck. Wealth itself and not the stars of the sky guide a man to reach his fortune.

नक्षत्रतमति पृच्छन्ति बालमर्थौं तिर्तर्तेषु।
अर्थो हर्षस्य नक्षत्रं किं करिष्णन्ति तारकः॥ 38

He urged that history was not the outcome of the vengeance of the supernatural but the expression of human intelligence. A supporter of benevolently monarchy, he stressed on Discipline and Honesty as basic requisites of material and spiritual progress, the goals of society. He wanted the king to speed up the moral and material welfare of his subjects by properly constituted administrative machinery. Dānda or the royal sceptre was needed to
inflict strong punishments on criminals, traitors and anti-socials. With its help, the king must arrest any anarchy in the state and ensure smooth working of administration. Kautilya is easily one of the most famous Indian political thinkers who participated in the social and political revolutions of his age for collective welfare of the common man. He visualized an empire that was well-knit, prosperous, secular, crime-free and built on the timeless Vedic tenets of harmony, equality, compassion, and honesty. Kautilya believed that people, among whom the bounds of the Aryan rule of life are fixed, among whom the varnas and the stages of life are securely established and who are guarded by the three Vedas, prosper, do not perish.

He identified the necessary requisites for this: a sound code of civil and criminal law, an impartial judiciary, liberal private property rights, strong infrastructure, incentive mechanisms to ensure efficient and honest officials, and a faithful military. His masterpiece, the Kauṭiliya Arthaśāstra, contains his profound insights on this power-index of growth and well-being.
Artha is regarded as one of the Trivarga or three goals of human existence, the other two being Dharma and Kama. According to Kautilya, Artha is the most important of the three, the other two being dependent on it:

अर्थ एव प्रधान इति कौटिल्यः। अर्थमूलो हि धर्मकामाभिति। ⁴⁰

Caṅkya’s definition of Artha stands thus: मनुष्याणां वृत्तिर्थः,
मनुष्यवती भूमिरित्यर्थः। तस्या: पृथिव्या लाभपालनोपायः शास्त्रमर्थशास्त्रमिति। ⁴¹

Artha is the sustenance or livelihood (vṛttiḥ) of men; in other words, it means ‘the earth inhabited by men.’ “Arthaśāstra is the science which is the means of the acquisition and protection of the earth.”

Thus in his first sutra, Kautiliya says: This single (treatise of the) Science of Politics has been prepared mostly by bringing together (the teaching of) as many treatises on the Science of Politics as have been composed by ancient teachers for the acquisition and protection of the earth.

पृथिव्या लाभे पालने च यावन्यर्थशास्त्राणि पूर्वाचार्यः प्रस्थापितानि
प्रायश्चतानि संहङ्गतामिदमर्थशास्त्रं कृतम्। ⁴²

The Kautiliya Arthaśāstra seeks the means for the overall well-being of mankind, inclusive of its economic, social and political security. Such collective well-being was possible only
through the assistance of the state. Hence, adhering to the tenets of Arthasastra became the most essential function of statecraft. Besides promoting the welfare of the portion of the earth in its jurisdiction and safeguarding its inhabitants, the acquisition of new territory and protection of this acquired population also became its duty.

Thus, the Arthasastra deals with state affairs in the internal as well as the external spheres, i.e., it encompasses politics, sociology, administration and justice, crime and punishment, defense, offence and warfare strategies, espionage and counter-espionage network in a categorical and authoritative manner.

Many writers like Manu, Brhaspati, Nārada, Parāśara etc. had dealt with Arthaniti (socio-economic policy), Daṇḍaniti (judicial system and politics) and Videsniti (foreign policy) before Kauṭilya. They deserve praise for their efforts but it was Kauṭilya who developed a purposeful and comprehensive framework of guidelines of Good Governance.

Despite deliberating extensively on polity and statecraft, Kauṭilya, in his Arthasastra, has not mentioned a single event contemporaneous to himself or his protégé, Candragupta. It appears, therefore, that the principles of diplomacy and kingship he laid down were for the use of rulers in general, not of any particular
reader. It is also possible that he penned down these theories much before his active political life, maybe in Taxila when he taught at the university there. A verse in the colophon of the Arthaśāstra however, suggests that the said treatise was composed by one who regenerated the earth that was under the control of the Nanda kings.

येन शास्त्रोऽवश्येन शास्त्रं च नन्दराजगता च भूः ।
अर्थर्षोद्भूतान्वयते तेन शास्त्रामिदं कृतम् ॥ ४३

So it may have been composed in Pataliputra immediately after his bringing down the Nandas from power or maybe after his retirement from Prime-ministership of the Mauryan Empire.

The comprehensiveness of the Arthaśāstra had a double aspect. Internally it sought to comprehend and enhance the whole economic and social life and externally it aimed at the sovereignty of the whole of India. The advanced technique of statecraft is evident from the fact that Kauṭilya directed the state officers to record the usage of regions, villages, castes and families in voluminous registers. To Kauṭilya, sovereignty was inherent in the unity and organization of state. A staunch believer in the harmonious blending of might and wisdom, Kauṭilya proclaimed that the end of justice should be the happiness of the common man,
who was the main prop of the state which was actuated by moral and ethical standards. Pursuing successful economic policies through productive enterprises was also needed to empower the state treasury or Kosha. A king with a depleted treasury eats into the very vitality of the citizens and the country. अल्पकोशो हि राजा पौरजनापदानेव ग्रस्ते ।

At the same time, a king who impoverishes his own people or angers them by unjust exactions will also lose their loyalty.

क्षीण: प्रकृतयो लोभं लुब्ध्या यान्ति विरागताम्।

विरंकता यान्त्यमित्रं वा भर्तारं घानति व स्वयम्॥

A balance should, thus, be ensured between the welfare of the people and augmenting the resources of the state.

This would presuppose two things- maintenance of law and order and adequate administrative machinery. Conquest and acquisition of new territory was also required to enhance the national exchequer. The safeguarding of existing territory from enemies, both within and without, was also vital.

Scholars are prone to compare Kautilya’s views with political thinkers of the Western World. Greek philosophers like Aristotle (The Politics) and Plato (The Republic) have deliberated on Man
and State with respect to their own lands but the very purpose of their writings on politics are different from those of Kauṭilya. Whereas Kauṭilya focuses on how best to practically administer the state, with all its attendant lacunae and laxities, Aristotle and Plato are more concerned with the realization of the highest good of man in an ideal state. Although Kauṭilya also aims at public welfare through efficient statecraft, his practical realism distinguishes him from Aristotle and Plato’s idealism.

Kauṭilya’s comparison with Bismarck also cannot gain ground because Bismarck was an out and out politician, while Kauṭilya, a Brahmin academician of repute, practiced Real Politics in tandem with theories taught in the annals of polity. ‘Adhyāpāna’, being one of his many duties, Kauṭilya was both a Professor and a practical statesman, a phenomenon cherished and valued in India since days of yore.

Another comparison is with Machiavelli (1516 AD), the author of The Prince. Some scholars call Kauṭilya the ‘Indian Machiavelli’. While Kauṭilya does not refer to any actual political situation faced by him during his practice of statecraft, Machiavelli repeatedly turns to historical incidents for confirmation of his observations. Nevertheless, there is considerable similarity in the
standpoints of Kauṭilya and Machiavelli. The main dicta of
Machiavellism, as reflected from The Prince, can be seen as i) the
enemy, actual or potential, must be crushed at all costs and by all
means like force, fraud etc. with the end justifying the means ii) the
manner in which a person behaves as a servant of the state must be
different from that in which he appears as an individual interacting
with other individuals 47 iii) Reasons of state must prevail over
religious sentiments and iv) There can be no limit to absolute
sovereignty.48 It is argued that these principles are also at the basis
of the Kauṭilyan teachings. In order to achieve their goals, the
relentless candour, sobriety and harshness recommended on need by
both these statesmen has also led to comparisons and criticism over
possible violation of human rights, very much like that faced for
punitive police and military action against insurgents or terrorists by
our security forces in the present scenario.

It must be kept in mind that both Kauṭilya and Machiavelli
had a noble end in view, the Yogakṣema and Rakaṇa of the
subjects. In achieving this end, all political schools will justify even
harsh or revolting means, even to serve as deterrents, if necessary.
However, the Arthaśāstra clearly lays down that such means are to
be used only against traitors and enemies of the state and not against law-abiding citizens.

एवं दुष्क्रियाधर्मिकेषु च वर्तेत, नेतरेषु। ⁴⁹

On a similar note, Machiavelli writes, “It cannot be called talent to slay fellow-citizens, to deceive friends, to be without faith, without mercy and without religion; such methods may gain empire but no glory.”⁵⁰ In fact, Bacon praises Machiavelli for saying openly and without hypocrisy what is actually practiced, albeit secretly, by all statesmen who value the ultimate interests of man as part of the State. ⁵¹ In today’s world of proxy-wars, guerilla warfare, relentless insurgency and senseless terrorism, this approach has gained even greater relevance and public support.

Home administration in ancient Indian polity was termed ‘Tantra’ and Foreign policy was called ‘Avapa’. Among the theories of state-craft were the well-known theories of i) the seven elements of the state (Saptarājyaṅga or Saptaprakriti) ii) the eighteen high officials (Aṣṭādasa Tīrtha) iii) the six military policies (Saḍguṇya) iv) the four diplomatic policies(upaya) v) the five parts of action (paṇca karmāṇga), and the circle of twelve kings (dvādasarājāmaṇḍala). For the optimum execution of these theories,

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Kautilya has uninhibitedly put forth a remarkably well-planned Secret-service network collating earlier concepts and incorporating his own clear policies.

In the world of political hegemony and empire-building, where loyalties had to be constantly monitored and opinions continuously changing, such planning of vital intelligence even without adequate news-connectivity is indeed thought-provoking and inspiring.

Vigilance in administration must be protected by concealed tests of loyalty and constant screening of administrative personnel, says Kautilya.

अमात्यानुप्राधानिः सङ्कोचवेल । KA, 1.10.1

These tests are necessary to the grant of suitable assignments to administrative personnel. Those who pass all the tests of loyalty and integrity should be established as ministers.

सर्वोधानानुप्राधानः मन्त्रिनः कृत्यः । KA, 1.10.14

T N Ramaswamy\textsuperscript{52} is of the opinion that in a monarchial setup, as in a democracy, there are certain dangers which should be carefully warded off. Royal irresponsibility may be caused by lack of information on vital issues: this arises out of ignorance of
ascertainable facts. The second danger arises from certain brands of knowledge arising from faulty evaluation of observed facts and trends. The third danger arises from inferential errors and delays. The fourth danger arises from imprecision arising from faulty organization of intelligence services. These dangers have to be minimized by multiplicity of intelligence sources.

Kautilya emphasized on the need for kings to arrange multiple sources of intelligence. Drawing from the spying exploits of Vedic Deities, he insists that the rulers will have to be like Indra who had a council of ministers consisting of a thousand sages, who were a thousand expert sources of information and counsel, earning Indra the epithet, the Thousand-eyed one. *इन्द्रस्य हि मन्त्रिपरिषद्दृष्टिर् सहस्रम्। स तत्त्वस्य। तस्मादिं द्वयक्ष्मः सहस्राक्षमाहुः* । 53

Such an approach explains the emphasis on an intricate and widely diffused espionage network as propounded by Kautilya. Out of the total 150 chapters of the Arthasastra, Kautilya has referred to spying in 50 chapters, of which 9 chapters are exclusively devoted to Espionage, i.e, chapters no: 1/11, 1/12, 2/35, 4/4, 4/5, 12/2, 12/4, 3/3, 14/3.
Historical evidence of planned espionage during the Mauryas in the Arthaśāstra tradition is to be found in the contemporary accounts of Greek historians like Megasthenes, Strabo, Diodorus and Arrian and the Asokan Pillar Edict IV. Megasthenes came to the court of Candragupta as an ambassador of Seleucus, a general of Alexander. He stayed in India from about 305 B.C. to 297 B.C. and wrote prolifically on Mauryan administration and society. Strabo (63 B.C. to 19 A.D.), Diodorus (60 B.C. to 36 A.D.) and Arrian (mid 2nd century A.D.) also wrote on Mauryan rule. Dikshitar uncovers corroboration of Kautilyan Espionage from these accounts. Megasthenes called the spies or ‘reporters’ the eyes and ears of the executive government. They were the overseers entrusted the task of watching and reporting all happenings to the king. So influential were these spies that he considered them a special class of society. The Arrian of Chinnock refers to Overseers (Episkopoi) and Strabo refers to Ephori (Inspectors) who overlook or supertendent all goings-on and report in private to the king. The Junagarh Inscription calls them Rashtriya or Pradeshtri. The Asokan Pillar Edict IV mentions ‘Purūṣas’ who knew the mind of the king. They inspected offices to watch the loyalty of public servants and maintained contact with common people so as to study their reaction to governmental
policies. It also mentions the ‘Prativedakas’ who were posted in remote areas and like modern-day journalists reported the attitude of border-states. These ‘Puruṣas’ and ‘Prativedakas’ of Asoka thus followed the tradition of Kautilya’s ‘Guḍhapuruṣas’.  

Necessity of making the study

The need for Espionage is at its peak today. The collapse of the Soviet Union, the Gulf wars, the terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11, 2004, the strike at our own citadel of democracy, the Indian Parliament, the Kargil war, and the numerous proxy-wars being carried out every day have brought intelligence issues to the forefront of all diplomatic affairs. Intelligence agencies are working overtime to smell terror before it strikes.

Despite talks on Nuclear Disarmament and the end of the Cold War, it is an indubitable fact that, as in Kautilya’s times, nations still harbor distrust towards each other. They still pursue selfish interests and nurture imperialistic or fundamentalist urges. The Gulf Wars, the terrorist attacks on the U.S. World Trade Centre or the Parliament of India are cases in point. With the unlimited Frankenstein-like powers of atomic weaponry, forces driven by religious fanaticism, colonialism or just insensate hatred have entered a dangerous race to acquire more and more nuclear strength,
even at the cost of depleting financial security. Cumulatively, they
blatantly ignore ‘world opinion’ and threaten the very existence of
humanity. The power of well-meaning Intelligence groups like those
which detected nuclear weaponry in Saddam’s Iraq or Bin Laden’s
Taliban is our only hope to check this Armageddon.

As long as men believe in war, hate and distrust each other
and live selfishly, espionage shall remain an indispensible adjunct to
statecraft. As the saying goes, ‘You may not be interested in War,
but war is interested in you.’ Intelligence, harnessed by strong
espionage systems, is exclusive information that helps shape
decision-making by governments or corporate-houses to sense
potential threats and grab opportunities. As D C Pathak, former
Director, IB and Member, National Security Advisory Board,
obsvses, “We are transiting from the Information Age to the Age of
Intelligence.”

No stone is being left unturned. Major intelligence
establishments are being supported from Washington DC to
Moscow, London to Israel and beyond. Agencies like RAW, ISI,
KGB, CIA, or MOSSAD are only the tips of the iceberg.

On the domestic front, however, the scene is quiet dismal.
The global economic slowdown has hit India hard, as a sizeable
portion of our talented workforce is engaged in information
technology, export, stocks and shares. Corruption and scams have
already eaten into our economic fabric. Prices of basic amenities are
rocketing. Terrorism and cyber-crime has affected investments,
tourism and the banking sector. Counterfeit currency has upset
demand-supply ratio and increased inflation. Secessionist forces are
constantly raising senseless demands for autonomy, statehood,
liberation or economic barricades causing irreparable harm to public
life and property. Insurgency and dirty politics are out to destabilize
our fundamental unity and the threat of civil war is looming large.
Nosy neighbours like China, Pakistan or Bangladesh are constantly
interfering into our matters. In other words, our Yogakṣema and
Rakṣaṇa are in a state of jeopardy and national security is at stake.

The security of a nation can be threatened in three ways. The
first way is a straight-forward external threat from another nation or
group of nations, i.e. an outright military campaign. Considering
India’s enhanced nuclear and military capabilities, this possibility
may appear distant but cannot be ruled out. The second category of
threat is internal, one arising out of communal, caste, linguistic,
ethnic and organized criminal elements. Underdevelopment and
Unemployment fan the fire of discontent and the resultant tensions
and violence disrupt good governance, which is essential for sustained economic, social and cultural progress of a nation. The third category of threat is where the external and internal factors interact with each other. In this, an adversary nation instigates various dissidents and anti-national elements of the target country to foment trouble and halt progress. India has been the brunt of this lethal third threat-category for quite some years. In the immediate vicinity, China, Pakistan, and even the ingrate Bangladesh have been surreptitiously bleeding India through a thousand cuts, fatiguing her defense through constant involvement in counter-insurgency and anti-terrorism. Vested interests of global adversaries are providing the necessary logistics and fire-power. Today, a country which wants to disrupt a neighbor does not resort to open war; it arms the dissidents in that country, corrupts its politicians and inflames tension. This is Proxy-War.

India, urgently, needs a vigilant yet benevolent regime, backed by optimal intelligence and economic self-sufficiency, possibly as envisaged by Kautilya, to regenerate its former stature.

Certain opinions expressed by our statesmen, political theorists and former heads of intelligence in recent years are pertinent here:
1. On 04-10-2007, the then Union Home Minister, Shivraj Patil, while inaugurating a conference of DGPs and IGPs in New Delhi, commented, “Development and strengthening of intelligence agencies should receive first priority in any plan for combating crime and terrorism. No weapon or device is going to be as useful as intelligence can be to control and contain crimes, violence and terrorism. Our intelligence agencies of states are unfit to fight terror. This situation is hitting the investment scenario and economic health of the nation.” The situation remains much the same till date.

2. Maj. Gen. V.K. Singh in his book, ‘India’s External Intelligence’, discusses several lacunae in our espionage system and calls for accountability, transparency and ethos. Parliamentary oversight is necessary. He says that although Signals and Electronic Intelligence (TECHINT) have reached high levels of sophistication, the Human Intelligence (HUMINT) needed for its proper analysis is unsatisfactory and this is dangerous.

**HUMINT**, a syllabic abbreviation of the words **HUMan INTelligence**, refers to intelligence gathering by means of interpersonal contact, as opposed to the more technical intelligence
gathering disciplines such as SIGINT, IMINT and MASINT. The NATO defines HUMINT as "a category of intelligence derived from information collected and provided by human sources." Typical HUMINT activities consist of interrogations and conversations with persons having access to pertinent information. The manner in which HUMINT operations are conducted is dictated by both official protocol and the nature of the source of the information. Sources may be neutral, friendly, or hostile, and may or may not be aware of their involvement in the collection of information. HUMINT also includes the final analysis of processed information by the end user, the head of the organization that seeks the intelligence.

Although great expectations have been placed on modern technology in gathering Intelligence (TECHINT), the Human Factor (HUMINT) with its capacity to measure, monitor, evaluate and analyze still holds the key to success. HUMINT collectors must have the appropriate personal qualities, zeal and the flair for leadership to succeed. Apart from sound technical knowledge, intelligence personnel must have keen insight, sharp acumen and infinite presence of mind to foresee impending strikes and forewarn in time. Good grounding in social sciences, foreign languages and
geographical understanding of strategic locations are of paramount importance.

3. Erik J. Dahl of Tufts University, Massachusetts, harbors similar opinions. He recommends better HUMINT to support military planning and operations and calls for guards against uncoordinated intelligence and threat assessment. Most importantly, he stresses upon more focused imagination to anticipate operational and tactical intentions and innovations of the enemy.

4. Robert A. Sayre Jr. is also of the opinion that HUMINT should remain a key component of an intelligence system, as it can cue and be cued by the other disciplines and combine with them to be more effective than any of them would be by itself. Also, the Army is involved in low and mid-intensity campaigns around the world and Army doctrine for these types of operations identifies the importance of HUMINT in their conduct. Army leadership has expressed dissatisfaction with the current state of Army HUMINT and stated that it needs improvement. To make such an improvement, principles of HUMINT are necessary so that the HUMINT
system and its components, including the individual HUMINT collectors, may be properly designed or trained.

Interestingly, some of the reforms they suggest in sharpening HUMINT and many more are already present in the ARTHASASTRA of KAUTILYA. As early as in the fourth century B.C., Kautilya underscored the need for correct and precise information for running the affairs of the state and raised thoroughbred professionals suited and trained for acquisition and evaluation of such intelligence. Canakya’s imagination, prescience and prudence in anticipating the enemy’s tactics is also amazingly accurate. Hence, an in-depth study of espionage as found here shall unravel new dimensions. Most importantly, renewed interest in this Heritage Treatise shall enhance ethos and pride within our Intelligence Agencies much like the ancient work, The Ping Fa of the Chinese sage SunTzu, does to their nation.

An interesting finding is that while both Pakistan’s Intelligence agencies and academicians have conducted extensive research on Kautilya’s espionage strategies, RAW’s think-tanks have mostly ignored him or are oblivious of his worth. According to Mr. Jamna Das Aktar, author of ‘Pak Espionage in India’, Pakistan takes pride in possessing Takshashila as Kautilya’s homeland, and shows
eagerness in drawing from his expertise. An army officer, namely, N A Rizvi, whom Mr. Akhtar met in 1949, and who went on to become Deputy Director of Intelligence of Pakistan in 1958, sported a copy of the Arthashastra on his desk, openly proclaimed his admiration for Kautilya and might certainly have employed the teachings of Kautilya to further the interests of his country. On the contrary, Maj. Gen. V K Singh in his book, ‘India’s External Intelligence’ categorically claims that RAW is modeled on the CIA and the Mossad, and is silent about Kautilya’s significance here.

Strangely enough, even prominent western researchers like Allen Dulles, while discussing “The Historical Setting” of espionage in his work, have ignored Kautilya which appears to be a deliberate attempt to undermine India’s confidence in her commendable indigenous capabilities in this area. Vigorous search found only one Western scholar to have recognized and recorded Kautilya’s contribution to Espionage, albeit very briefly. However, Adda B Bozeman in his book, Strategic Intelligence and statecraft, erroneously confuses him with Manu, the author of Manusamhita. Thus he says: Kautiliya Arthashastra tells us that only Divine surveillance can assure the deft management of cosmic and earthy affairs of state.
Considering the exemplary acumen and foresight of Kautilyan Espionage, a shift in emphasis seems necessary. The need to study Kautiliyan Espionage and State-craft are even more essential today, strengthened by which India’s military, diplomatic and economic prowess can itself serve as both deterrent and destroyer of secessionist forces. Moreover, Kauṭilya enhances India’s national pride, ethos and self-esteem, so important for her march into the 21st century.

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35 येन शास्त्रं च शास्त्रं च नदराजनगता च भू:।

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