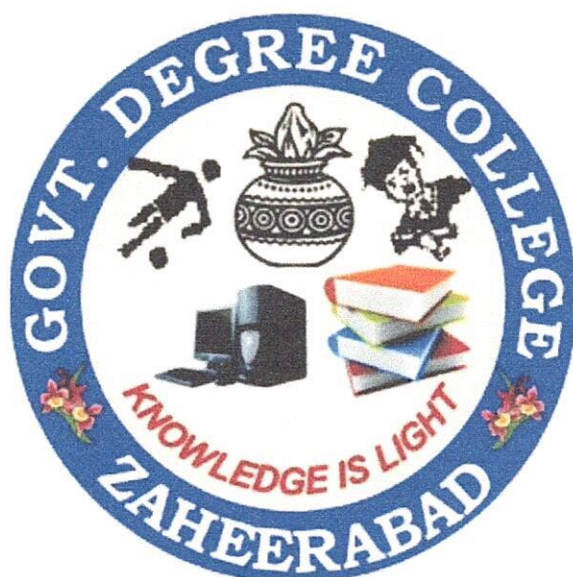


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Study Project On
INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY

By " Students" of B.A IIIrd Year

Under Supervision

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INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY

BASIC DETERMINANTS OF INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY

Introduction

The foreign policy of a country is the sum total of the principles, interests and objectives which it seeks to promote through its relations with other countries. It is also "for influencing and changing the behaviour of other states" and for 'adjusting' its own "activities to the international environment". So, "the conduct and formulation of foreign policy is governed by the interplay of numerous determinants, institutions, processes and personalities".

The basic determinants of India's foreign policy are:

- Political Tradition and philosophical basis
- Geography
- National Interest
- International Milieu

Political Tradition and Philosophical basis:

The history of Indian foreign policy is short but active. It was after the establishment of Indian National Congress that the politicization of the people and formulation of policy orientation had its origin. After the World War I the Indians led by Congress started taking more active interest in foreign affairs. In 1920 the Congress sent a message of sympathy to the Irish people who were struggling for their independence. In 1921 the AICC at its Delhi meeting adopted a complete resolution on foreign policy and affirmed India's desire to establish friendly and peaceful relations with others. The Calcutta Conference of 1928 directed the All India Congress Committee (AICC) to open a foreign department for developing contacts and organizing the anti-imperialist movement of the dependent people. Nehru came to head this department and became the director of the foreign policy of Congress. It was this experience that made him to act with precision and efficiency. So Nehru could rightly be called the 'architect' of independent India's

foreign policy. However the historic declarations of the Congress were very fundamental in providing roots to the attitudes of anti-Cold War, anti-imperialism, anti-racialism, antipower politics and peaceful relationships.

The philosophical basis of Indian foreign policy includes an account of such moral ideals and values of India. Mutual love and faith in national and international peace and friendship with other countries are regarded as possible and practical values by India. In one of his characteristic expositions on foreign policy Nehru was of the opinion that there were several schools of thought on foreign affairs. There was, first of all, the Indian school which talked about negotiation through strength. Since this was also likely to be reciprocated by the other party, there was in effect the possibility of a stalemate. The school of 'learned confusion' talked learnedly of international affairs, but never got out of its confused state of mind. Finally, there was the school of ignorant confusion. India's foreign policy belonged to none of these schools of thought. "It was clear, simple and straight forward policy which, of course, benefited her but which equally sought to promote the cause of world peace. It might not be full of wisdom, but was simple and innocuous". The cultural-philosophical foundations of India's foreign policy are, in fact, quite conspicuous. India has been the seat of a hoary civilization and a meeting place of great cultures. In view of such a cultural-philosophical tradition and its reflection on the personality of Nehru, the chief architect of independent India's foreign and domestic policies carry attention. It is but natural that India should prefer the golden mean or the middle way between the two competing international ideologies of the day-Western liberal democracy and Russian egalitarianism. Indeed as the then vice-president of India, Dr. Radhakrishnan said: "India is profoundly convinced that power politics at any time meant misery to mankind in a shrinking world, with disaster to humanity".

Geography:

Geography is the foremost determinant of Indian foreign policy. The prediction that Lord Curzon made in 1903 has proved to be true. He observed, "The geographical position of India would more and more push it into the forefront of International affairs. Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru too was fully conscious of the geographical importance of India. On 17th March 1950, in a speech in the Indian Parliament, he observed, "We are in a strategic part of Asia, set in the centre of Indian Ocean, with intimate past and present connection with West Asia, South-Ent Asia and Far Eastern Asia. Even if we could we would not want to ignore this fact." Himalayas and the Indian Ocean are determining factors of India's security. To begin with, the Himalayas was considered to be natural security guard for India.

However, in the fifties and sixties it led to a new security orientation in Indian foreign policy. To defend Himalayas came to determine India's security and defence needs and consequently her relations with other nations. It is a determining factor of Sino- Indian relations. Similarly, being the largest littoral state of the Indian Ocean area with approximately 3500 km of coastal boundary, Indian security needs a strong and modernized navy as well as an end to the superpower rivalry in Indian Ocean. India's strong opposition to superpower naval bases in the Indian Ocean particularly to the American decision to develop Diego Garcia as a strong US. Naval base is governed by India's geographical position. However, the topographical nature of its long sea coast has not been very helpful for developing ports and naval facilities. India's strategic location has placed it within easy reach of many sensitive areas including China, South-East Asia, West and East Africa.

National Interest:

A country's foreign policy, also called the foreign relations policy, consists of self-interest strategies chosen by the state to safeguard its national interests and to achieve its goals within international relations milieu. There has been a tremendous growth in politico-intellectual interest in interpreting Indian foreign policy. On the one hand, journals and newspapers are overflowing with analyses of India's international activism, and on the other, we find a rise in institutions or 'think-tanks' specializing in it, both within India and abroad. However, it can be effectively contended that there is rarely any novelty in the approaches taken by these intellectuals, institutions and politicians on the issue. Most of them are restricted to producing permutation and combination of preconceived and ill-defined notions of "national interests", "security interests", "terrorism", "pre-emptive measures" etc. Even progressive and 'counter-hegemonic' discourses are unable to go beyond conceiving the Indian policies as those of a 'comprador' third world ruling class, submitting to external pressures. This leads to analyses limiting themselves to mere tautological descriptions of the policies, differently in tone and of course in humanist tenor, but rarely disputing on the basic foundations of policy-making, that informs even the rightist jingoism and centrist pragmatism. The indigenous corporate capitalist interests (immaterial of the adjectives we might choose to characterize them) today frame the agenda for the Indian state in the international scenario, whether pro-US or otherwise. These interests are formidably conscious and mature, as can be seen from the way the Indian state and capital combines their various strategies – a militarist combination with the US-Israel nexus, supposedly "progressive" alliance with various "third world" powers in WTO, independent oil dealings with varied forces, investments in oil fields, offer of lines of credit to developing countries in Africa and Tsunami affected countries,

pipeline diplomacy and readiness to militarily-politically support all these. We cannot simply isolate one aspect of the Indian capitalist interests and generalize it to grasp their hydra-like nature. Competition and collaboration are inherent in the capitalist political economy.

International Mileu:

The broad currents of international politics at any given point of time have direct bearing on foreign policies. The difficulty in conducting the foreign policy arises because states do not have sure means of controlling the behaviour of other states. During the inter-war period (1919-39), the quest for French security, followed by the rise of Fascism in Italy and Nazism in Germany and militarism in Japan had their impact on foreign policies. The US changed its policy towards the Soviet Union and recognised it because, in 1933, Hitler's emergence in Germany posed a threat to the world order created after the War. The Japanese aggression in Manchuria (China) in 1931 provided a common threat to USA as well as USSR in the Far East. The two Powers gave up their hostility. The Cold War era (1945-90) has determined in a big way the foreign policy of most countries. The fear of nuclearised United States brought the countries of Eastern Europe under the control of the Soviet Union, with the result that all those countries adopted socialism and came under the Russian wings. The entire policy of containment of communism adopted by the US was evident in its setting up of NATO, SEATO and such other military alliances/arrangements. India's efforts in expounding the policy of nonalignment was directly a response to this emerging polarisation in the international environment. The Cold War was the defining characteristic of world politics for nearly 45 years. Arms race, especially in the nuclear field, typically represented the height of suspicion and the impending disaster. India's policy to take up nuclear disarmament emanated from the imminent and perpetual threat to human civilisation if those weapons were to be accidentally or deliberately used. Related to nuclear field, India's successful testing in 1998 of nuclear weapons was justified as a necessary response to the fast changing international environment that sought to dismiss the demand for nuclear disarmament and sanctify the inequitable hierarchy between the nuclear weapon powers and non-nuclear weapon powers. After the sudden end of the Cold War followed by the disintegration of the Soviet Union, India's foreign policy underwent appreciable shifts on numerous counts—lack of enthusiasm towards the non-aligned movement, eagerness to accommodate the American concerns, resumption of full diplomatic ties with Israel, emphasis on economic aspects of relations with Europe, Southeast Asia and even South Asia. Again, in the postcold war era, the increasing sensitivity in international quarters to

the issues of terrorism and human rights (along with the widely spread claims of self-determination) impelled necessary adjustments in India's foreign policy. During the 1990s, the critical observers of India's foreign policy have noted the government's preoccupation with the question of Jammu and Kashmir in its contacts with major countries and in global forums. The 11th September 2001 terrorist attacks on American targets in New York and Washington Presented new opportunities to India to push its anti-terrorist foreign policy with greater conviction.

Conclusion:

The multifarious objectives of India's foreign policy achieve a blend of national and international interests. India has sought to achieve its security and socio-economic advancement while at the same time working for peace, freedom, progress and justice to all nations and peoples. Nonalignment, adherence to peaceful procedures for settlement of differences, support to the initiatives for disarmament, and active participation in international bodies constituted notable principles that flow from the objectives of the country's foreign policy. As elaborated, among several determinants of foreign policy, the relevance of factors like India's geographical size, location, its historical experiences and traditions, the state of economy, the nature of political institutions and structure, and the personality of the country's leadership have played significant role in shaping the country's policy with countries in its neighbourhood and outside. Moreover, the impact of the changing international environment—be it the cold war politics, or the post-cold war trends—too is something not to be missed while understanding shifts in our foreign policy. All in all, India seems to have done pretty well in formulating and implementing a foreign policy behind which the nation stood united and which projected the country as a peace loving, mature, democratic, and law abiding country in the realm of world.

Every sovereign country has its foreign policy. India too has one. Foreign policy refers to the sum total of principles, interests and objectives which a country promotes while interacting with other countries. Even though there are certain basic features of a foreign policy it is not a fixed concept. The thrust of foreign policy keeps on changing according to changing international conditions. India's foreign policy is shaped by several factors including its history, culture, geography and economy. Our Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, gave a definite shape to the country's foreign policy.

Objectives:

After studying this lesson, you will be able to

I identify the basic principles of India's foreign policy;

I explain the meaning and significance of non-alignment;

I analyze the relevance of non-alignment in the post cold war period;

I explain the major concerns in India's foreign policy in the post cold war period;

I recognize India's contribution to UN efforts for peace and disarmament;

I explain India's participation in UN peace keeping and its claim for a permanent seat in the Security Council.

Preservation of national interest, achievement of world peace, disarmament, independence

for Afro-Asian nations have been important objectives of India's foreign policy. These

objectives are sought to be achieved through some principles viz. Panchsheel; nonalignment;

anti-colonialism, anti-imperialism, anti-racism, and strengthening the UN. It would be befitting to expand these principles.

Panchsheel

Nehru was a believer in world peace. He understood the linkage between peace for

India and the World development and survival of mankind. He had seen the destruction caused by the two world wars and therefore realized that for the progress of a nation a long spell of peace was needed. In its absence social and economic priorities relating to development tend to

get pushed to the background. The production of nuclear weapons strengthened Nehru's faith in the peaceful philosophy even more. Hence he gave utmost importance to world peace in his policy planning. India's desired peaceful and friendly relations with all countries, particularly the big powers and the neighbouring nations, while signing an agreement with China, on April 28, 1954, India advocated adherence to five guiding principles known as Panchsheel for the conduct of bilateral relations. It includes the following:

I Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty.

I Mutual non-aggression

I Mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs

I Equality and mutual benefit

I Peaceful co-existence.

The Panchsheel agreement enumerates best the principles of peaceful co-existence with neighbours. It is an important component of India's foreign policy.

Non-alignment:

Non-alignment has been regarded as the most important feature of India's foreign policy.

Non alignment aimed to maintain national independence in foreign affairs by not joining any military alliance formed by the USA and Soviet Union in the aftermath of the Second World War. Non-alignment was neither neutrality nor non-involvement nor isolationism. It was a dynamic concept which meant not committing to any military bloc but taking an independent stand on international issues according to the merits of each case. The policy of non-alignment won many supporters in the developing countries as it provided an opportunity to them for protecting their sovereignty as also retaining their freedom of action during the tension ridden cold war period. India played an important role in forging the non-aligned movement (NAM). The concept of NAM emerged through a gradual process. Nehru took the initiative to convene the Asian Relations Conference in New Delhi in 1947. Later on a Conference, of 29 countries of Asia and Africa was held in Bandung (Indonesia) in 1955. This was the first gathering of its kind which pledged to work together for colonial liberation, peace, cultural, economic and political cooperation. Bandung to Belgrade in 1961 where the first NAM conference was held was a logical process to project an alternative to cold war bloc politics and assertion of newly independent countries of their independent and sovereign rights. Cold War was intense rivalry between USA and Soviet Union without fighting a direct war to attract allies in Africa, Asia and Latin America. It started soon after the Second World War and continued for forty five years. These

two big countries became two opposite poles known as East and West. The world politics revolved around these two poles. Thus the world became *bipolar*.

Among the non-aligned, Nehru had evolved special relationship with President Tito of Yugoslavia and Nasser of Egypt. These three are regarded as the founding fathers of the Non-Aligned Movement. The non-aligned movement was a group of the newly independent states who refused to accept the dictates of the former colonial masters and decided to

India's Foreign Policy

act according to their own judgement on issues of international concern. Non-aligned **India and the World** movement is anti-imperialist in approach. India as the prime architect of non-alignment and as one of the leading members of the non-aligned movement has taken an active part in its growth. The Non-Aligned Movement is providing all member states, regardless of size and importance, an opportunity to participate in global decision making and world politics. India hosted the Seventh NAM Summit at New Delhi in 1983. India hoped NAM take up the cause of development, disarmament and the Palestine question. Since NAM was a product of the cold war scenario and the bipolar world, many scholars have questioned the relevance of NAM after the end of cold war and demise of the Soviet Union. However, even in the present scenario NAM has a significant role to play, First, with the disintegration of Soviet Union, the world faces threat from unipolar world. The NAM can act as a check against US dominance. Secondly the developed (North) and developing (South) world are divided over several economic issues. The NAM remains a very relevant forum for third world countries to engage the developed nations in a productive dialogue. Moreover, the NAM can prove to be powerful instrument for South-South cooperation. Such a thing is essential if the third world countries are to increase their bargaining power vis-a-vis the developed world. India continues to take active part in the non-aligned movement even after the end of cold war. Finally, the developing countries united under the forum of NAM have to fight for the reform of UN and change it according to the requirements of 21st century.

Anti Imperialism, Anti Racism, Anti Colonialism:

India has always opposed colonialism and racism. Whenever any injustice happened, India raised her voice, for instance in favour of Indonesia's nationality fighting the Dutch colonialism in 1947, against South Africa's illegal occupation of Namibia and the infamous apartheid policy in South Africa India fully supported inclusion of communist China in the United Nations.

Strengthening of UN:

India has always viewed UN as a vehicle for peace and for peaceful change in world politics. Apart from this, India has always expected UN to actively involve countries to moderate their differences through talks or negotiations. Further, India has advocated active role for UN in development effort of Third World countries. India has pleaded for a common united front of the third world countries in the UN. It believes that the nonaligned world by virtue of its massive number could play a constructive and meaningful role in the UN by stopping the superpowers from using this world body for their own designs. As early as 1950 India linked the reduction of armaments with the larger goal of development.

The UN has in fact played a key role in preserving world peace by helping in the decolonization process, by providing humanitarian and developmental assistance and through peacekeeping. Decolonization – refers to achievement of independence from colonial rule. After the Second World War many colonies of achieved freedom in Asia and Africa.

The end of cold war in 1989 has brought about significant changes in the international scene and hence new policy problems for the various states in the developing world including India. The new situation is made by greater uncertainty and complexity. For India, disintegration of the Soviet Union has meant uncertainty on several aspects viz. supply of weapons system, supply of spare parts, diplomatic support on Kashmir and other politico-strategic issues in and outside the United Nations and as a counter weight to US in South Asia. During the last one decade and a half international politics has undergone major changes. The cold war has ended, the world has become unipolar, a number of states have disintegrated, cold war military blocs have lost their significance, some such blocs have dissolved and new regional economic blocs are shaping up. Globalisation has given rise to new set of problems such as terrorism, money laundering, proliferation of weapons, global warming etc. These problems are not endemic to any region but affect all the countries to some extent or the other. This has forced many nation states which were hitherto enemies to cooperate with each other to solve problems which are universal in nature. In this changed international scenario it has become imperative for UN to restructure and reform itself if it is to effectively respond to emerging challenges. Militancy in Kashmir has emerged as the foremost challenge to our foreign policy. Pakistan and the Western countries

blamed India for violating human rights and denial of rights to self determination. Gradually, India brought the situation under control. Because of the Kashmir dispute, India's relations with Pakistan sharply deteriorated. India accused Pakistan of fanning trouble through cross border terrorism in Kashmir and other parts of our country. India conducted nuclear weapon tests in 1998, followed by Pakistan's tests. Pakistan resorted to further mischief by secretly sending its soldiers into Kargil in **India and the World** order to cut off the Kashmir valley from the rest of India. India handled the challenge firmly and effectively. Now engaging Pakistan in a constructive and composite dialogue process remains a challenge to India's foreign policy, because there is a great deal of push from the United States. Spread of terrorism to corners beyond Kashmir is a challenge as well as opportunity for our foreign policy now a days. India is interested in forging anti-terrorism coalition with as many countries as possible. Keeping old friendship and looking for new friendships is another challenge for our foreign policy after the cold war has ended. For example, India is interested in strengthening its relations without damaging its relations with Arab countries. Similarly, India's foreign policy is tackling new tasks like deepening economic and security cooperation with the United States, while at the same time opposing unilateral actions against Iraq and Yugoslavia. Finally, India is realizing the growing importance of economic aspects of foreign policy. Hence, it is trying to establish a new basis for its relations with neighbouring countries in South Asia, China and the South East Asian countries.

India's Contribution to UN Efforts for Peace and Disarmament:

The United Nations which came into being on Oct. 24, 1945 has been the most important international organization since the Second World War. The formal basis for UN activities is the UN charter. The UN has a vital role in world affairs. For more than fifty years UN has helped to manage relations between states and regulate a broad range of international activities. It has worked to protect the security of people and promote peace and development. One way in which UN has contributed to world peace is by taking up the cause of disarmament India has also contributed immensely to UN's disarmament efforts. Disarmament is limitation, reduction and possible elimination of dangerous (like nuclear) weapons.

India's participation in UN peacekeeping India and the World:

India's history of participation in UN peacekeeping operations is a long one. India's contribution has been described as excellent by many political observers. In

UN. India's contribution has been acknowledged by members of the international communities. Peace keeping stands for prevention, containment and termination of hostilities between or within states through the non offensive activities of multinational forces of soldiers, police and civilian people sent unto the authority of the United Nations with the consent of the countries concerned. Peacekeeping nations changed in its scope and nature according to needs of a conflict situation. India has taken part in 35 of UN peacekeeping operations in four continents. Its most significant contribution has been to peace and stability in Africa and Asia. Presently India is ranked as the largest troop contributor to UN. The saga of India's role in UN peace keeping began with the establishment of the United Nation's Emergency Force (UNEF) in the Gaza strip and the Sinai in 1956 after Israeli war against Egypt ended. The Congo in Africa benefitted significantly from troop presence. India's contributed to keep unity and integrity of that history in 1960s. After the end of cold war, India's contribution to UN peacekeeping remains significant equally, if not more, military personal at the request of the United Nations Secretary General to Angola, Cambodia, Somalia, El Salvador and Sierra Leone etc. Many of these countries were victims of chaos caused by civil wars. No government machinery collapsed or was discredited. India sent not just troops, but police, doctors, engineers and administrators.

India and the World:

As you already know, the efficiency of peace maintenance in the world depends on the effectiveness of the Security Council but the Council has suffered in this regard due to its outdated, unchanged membership. Presently the permanent membership of the Security Council is confined to US, Russia, Great Britain, France and China. However, such composition of the Security Council does not take into account the current global power configuration which has changed since the days when these countries were inducted as permanent members. Since India has emerged as the fourth fastest growing economy and also because of the leadership it has provided in all international fora, its contribution to UN peacekeeping, its track record in espousing the cause of the third world, India has a strong case for a permanent seat in the Security Council. We are getting support from many friendly countries. A final decision on the matter is likely to take some time, because of its complexity.

India has followed certain basic principles in the conduct of its foreign policy from which it has not deviated much. In fact some of its basic features such as non-alignment still remain significant and relevant. The proof of the durability of some decades old principles lie in the efforts of India and China to revive the fifty year old Panchsheel as the basis of bilateral relations. India has contributed significantly

to UN efforts for peace and disarmament and to UN peacekeeping operations. Even as India is poised to become an economic superpower in the coming times, it always has and in future too will take necessary steps to further its national interest in every respect i.e. political, strategic and economic terms.

AFTER eight years of independence India's foreign policy still gives rise to grave doubts in the Western mind. The reason for this is the acceptance of old definitions rather than an appreciation of the country's background and its human aspirations. The word "neutrality" as applied to India's foreign policy has little meaning. Like a hundred other oft-repeated words it has become blunted with use, and can be related to India only in the context of her past and present policies. What does neutrality--or, as we prefer to call it, non-alignment--mean and why does India follow this path?

As in dress, there are fashions in political outlook and behavior and the individual who wears last year's model at a gathering is regarded not only as eccentric but something approaching a freak. India, it would seem, has entered the elegant international drawing room in old clothes and is an embarrassing misfit among those already assembled there. Why does she continue to embarrass the leaders of society when they have pointed out to her that she would be far more acceptable if she were fashionably in step with them?

In our assessment of the world situation, we, like other nations, find ourselves confronted by two alternatives. One is the belief that peace can be maintained by building up military might and held in balance by an armaments race. The other is the view that it can be preserved only by peaceful means, that the armaments race endangers its preservation, and that no stone must be left unturned to lessen the tensions that exist in the world. To us it seems logical that the latter is the surer way to safeguard the peace. Our approach to peace might then be called "neutrality" if such a nebulous word can be used to define a policy which since its inception in an independent India has been both active and dynamic. In essence our neutrality is the un jaundiced outlook we choose to apply to all international issues, believing.