

CHANGING FOREIGN POLICY OF INDIA

Dr Sunita Ramdhan Gawai

(Assistant Professor)
Department of Political Science,
Elphinstone College, Mumbai
sunitarmgawai@gmail.com

Abstract

The basic principles of Indian foreign policy evolved along with India's freedom movement. The formal objectives of Indian foreign policy after independence were shown during the victorious independence movement itself. The influence of the British tradition on India's foreign policy in the pre-independence era is clearly affected. The first phase is from 1885 to 1947 i.e. the pre-independence era of India. It can be called the foreign policy of the Indian National Congress. In 1885, the Indian National Congress was formed in the British ruled. Hence, the Indian National Congress began to make observations and critically examine the British foreign and especially defense policy. The Indian National Congress opposed colonialism during World War I and criticized the authoritarian regimes that emerged from nations such as Italy and Germany after World War I. Before independence there was a consensus on certain things, such as opposition to race disputes, opposition to colonial disputes, opposition to arms race, peaceful relations with the world, non-aggression of other nations, these principles were derived from the idealistic and value-oriented thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Rabindranath Tagore, and also from India's historical years and influences. But at that time, the codification of such a specific foreign policy not took a place in India during this period. INC tried to raise alertness about the plight of India and other colonized states and to gain international support for the independence movement. Leaders of the freedom movement sought to promote India's interests on the international platform and improve the country's relations with other nations. No single political party or single leader has been credited with this since the post-independence period to till date. The main credit for the development of Indian foreign policy cannot be attributed to any certain political party or political leaders but has been a policy of inclusive development from its inception to till today.

Indian foreign policy can be understood by dividing it into some phases:

Phase I (1947-62): (Nehruvian Era)

This phase is called India's Cold War era foreign policy or Nehruvian foreign policy. Because he held the Foreign Office for almost 16 years from the post of Prime Minister in the post-independence period. Pandit Nehru played a major role in shaping the new foreign policy of independent India, hence he is known as the architect of India's foreign policy. This phase is notable by the formation of a bipolar world, led by the US and the USSR. In this phase, India's goals were to protect its sovereignty, rebuild its economy, and to maintain its unity and integrity in future. One of the first countries to be decolonized was India. As a result, it was only natural for India to take the lead in the mission for a more unbiased world order in Asia and Africa. In order to achieve this, India was influential in the foundation of the Non-Alignment Movement (NAM) 1961, which marked the zenith of Third-World solidarity. In 1962, India and China fought a brief border war over uncertain territory. The struggle lifted India's focus on military upgrading and the strengthening of planned alliances.

The second phase (1962-71): (Shasrti and Indira Gandhi Era)

In the 1962 war, India made realistic security and political decisions. In the interest of national security, it went beyond non-alignment, signing a now-forgotten defense agreement with the United States in 1964. External pressures on Kashmir (Tashkent agreement 1965) came from the United States and the United Kingdom. Both India and Pakistan agreed to withdraw all armed forces to pre-war positions, reestablish diplomatic relations, and discuss economic, refugee, and other issues as part of the Tashkent agreement. The agreement, however, did not include a no-war pact or any acknowledgment of Pakistan's aggression in Kashmir (as Pakistan was an ally of the US). As a result, India has begun to lean toward and close the Soviet Union.

The third phase (1971-91): Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi)

In the India-Pakistan war in 1971, India exposed extraordinary use of hard power when it liberated Bangladesh. Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation It was a treaty of friendship and cooperation between India and the Soviet Union. It was signed in the midst of the Indo-Pakistan War of 1971. The treaty confirmed the close political and financial bonds between the both states. It involved requirements for mutual security and assistance in case of an external threat to either country. In 1974 India conducted nuclear tests known as "Smiling Buddha," which made India the sixth country in the world to develop nuclear weapons and sparked international concern about the proliferation of nuclear weapons in South Asia. India also played a key role in the establishment of the SAARC in 1985, which sought to promote cooperation among the countries of South Asia. Further, the collapse of the USSR, India's close ally, and the economic crisis in 1991 compelled India to look

again at the first principles of both domestic and foreign policy. The combination of events as diverse as the Gulf War (1991-1992), the break-up of USSR (1991), long standing economic stagnation and domestic turbulence came together in 1991, creating a balance of payment crisis in India.

The fourth phase (1991-98): (P V Narsimha Rao, I K Gujral)

The main changes that resulted from the LPG reforms were increased emphasis on economic diplomacy. It resulted in opening up to foreign investment and trade, the government also focused on strengthening economic ties with other countries through trade agreements, investment deals, and other initiatives.

Gujral Doctrine: It was a set of five principles to guide the conduct of foreign relations with India's immediate neighbors in South Asia.

- Non-reciprocity with neighbors.
- Territory should not be used against the interest of another country.
- Non-interference in internal affairs.
- Respect each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty.
- Settle all disputes through peaceful bilateral negotiations.

Look East Policy: In 1991, India launched its "Look East" policy, which designed to strengthen economic and political ties with countries in Southeast Asia mainly. Apart from this the emergence of a unipolar world (led by the USA), encouraged India to change its approach to global affairs in this period. This quest for strategic autonomy was particularly attentive on securing its nuclear weapon option (Pokhran II 1998). This is a period where India reached out to engage the US, Israel and ASEAN countries more intensively.

This fifth phase (1998-2013): (Atalbihari Vajpeyi and Dr Manmohan Singh)

In this period, India progressively acquired the characteristics of a balancing power (against the rise of China). The Pokhran-II nuclear tests in 1998, led to international sanctions against India but also solidified India's status as a nuclear power. India and Pakistan engaged in a military conflict in the Kargil region of Jammu and Kashmir in 1999. The conflict ended with a ceasefire and the withdrawal of Pakistani forces from Indian territory. The visit of President Bill Clinton to India in 2000 marked a significant improvement in relations between the relations in India-US. It is imitated in the India-US nuclear deal (123 Agreement). At the same time, India could also make common cause with China on climate change and trade, and combine further ties with Russia while helping to way BRICS into a major global forum. The government of Dr Manmohan Sing pursued a "Look East" policy, which focused on strengthening ties with countries in Southeast Asia and the Asia-Pacific region. Through the India-ASEAN Free Trade Agreement in 2010, India signed a free trade agreement with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), which aimed to boost trade and investment between the two regions. In this era the government made a strong push for India to be given a permanent seat on the UN Security Council with veto power as part of its efforts to increase India's global influence with G4 nations.

The sixth phase (2013-until now): (Narendra Modi Era)

Since 2014, foreign affairs reveal one thing that the central government has given top priority to foreign policy. In this phase of transitional geopolitics, India's policy of non-alignment has turned into Multi Alignment and more energetic. Moreover, India is now more aware of its own capabilities and the expectations that the world has of India. That India is among the major economies of the world is one factor. The relevance of India's talent in creating and sustaining global technology, is also likely to grow in time. India has been able to assert itself beyond South Asia, through its approach towards the Indian Ocean Region and the extended neighborhood (Act East policy and Think West policy). Presently, it can be seen that the government has mainly aimed to achieve economic development of India through foreign policy. That is why Prime Minister Modi himself visited many countries and appealed to them to invest in India. At the same time, many innovative elements have appeared in the foreign policy of this government. There Modi government has no doubt left its unique imprint in a short period of time; it has made clear its objective of positioning India as a leading worldwide player.

Prime Minister's grip on foreign policy:

After Narendra Modi came to power, some changes have mainly been seen. Modi's foreign policy is attentive on cultivating relations with neighboring states in South Asia, engaging the extended neighborhood of Southeast Asia and also the major global powers. Prime Minister Narendra Modi brought about some fundamental changes in foreign policy. Such as,

- 1 Dynamic diversity in foreign policy with personal attention.
- 2 Brought certainty and assertiveness in foreign policy.
- 3 Above all, it created the ambition to dream grandly high in India. India has always been trying to strike a balance in international relations, The foreign policy objective that role should now provide leadership has been greatly enhanced by Modi's leadership. The realization that India has the potential to emerge as a leading power in the world is created during Modi's tenure. This is a very important feature of Modi's foreign policy.

Characteristics of Indian Foreign Policy in the Modi Era:

Systematically formulation of foreign policy:

In the Modi era, the development of Indian foreign policy seems to be taking place in five phases in a highly systematically manner. The first stage is South Asia, second phase with South East and Central Asia, the third phase is with European countries, the fourth is related to America and the fifth is related to Africa. Apart from this, efforts are being made to establish relations in the Modi era with countries which were not reached India to till today.

Prosperity:

Foreign policy is being used for economic development of India. Despite the economic ups and downs in India, foreign investment has been coming in and has been steadily increasing. India's rating in economic rankings continues to rise. Moody's World Bank and International Monetary Fund said that India's progress is going well. In short, India's foreign policy has been used in a good way in terms of prosperity. Today, this government has formulated a foreign policy with economic objectives at the center and an emphasis on 'Make in India' which focuses on India's industrial development. This government is trying to find out how the capital and technology of other countries can be useful for India's economic development.

Efforts to democratize the foreign policy:

It was very important to bring the foreign policy of the country out of Delhi. Foreign policy should reflect or represent the economic aspirations of the common man. Although this subject is in the Union list, due to the federal system in India, it is necessary to communicate with the states. In that regard, this government brought forward the concept of competitive and cooperative federalism. Therefore, it can be seen that every state is active in attracting foreign investment in last decade. For this, meetings of NRI Indians were also organized in states like Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh.

Cultural connection:

Narendra Modi initially tried to develop relations with Buddhist countries through cultural communication and activities. With proper planning to select Buddhist countries for visits, aim to visit religious sites, discuss with their religious leaders, invite them to India, organize special meetings with them, all these are reflecting a positive message about India among the Buddhist nations. Even recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi participated at the World Government Summit as "Guest of Honor" as well. The summit held in Dubai, UAE from 12th February to 14th February, 2024. PM Modi attended the summit at the invitation of Vice President of UAE, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum. In this visit, India and the UAE have signed 10 agreements to collaborate in areas such as energy, infrastructure, investments, and archive management. Similarly, India has also started trying to develop the relations with Islamic countries in the West through cultural connectivity.

The Group of Twenty (G20) is the premier forum for international economic cooperation. It plays an important role in shaping and strengthening global architecture and governance on all major international issues. India holds the Presidency of the G20 from 1 December 2022 to 30 November 2023.

Thus, looking at all these, India has been on a journey towards the highest dream and from a weak power center to Assertive Superpower center. Foreign policy results are not show immediate. So, the results of these things started today will be available in another 10 years. But after Pandit Nehru, Narendra Modi is the prime minister who gives the most importance to foreign policy. In developed nations, foreign policy is given much more importance, in that states the President visits and spends abroad, India had never done this in a traditional way. But Narendra Modi, like advanced countries, has himself visited foreign countries and tried to increase India's self-respect, prosperity and security by establishing relations with other countries.

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