

INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY

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Abstract:

In this paper, a review is taken of the world Politics & India. It includes review of India's Foreign policy. The politics, economy & security issues in the country, reflects in the in foreign policy. India's role in World politics is important. Paper reviews India's Foreign policy in two steps. First includes Nehru Era. Second starts with end of cold of war & rise of Globalization. Paper reviews foreign policy of India under the different Prime Minister. It also puts critique of Indian foreign policy.

Key Words:

India, Bangla Desh, Terrorism, Big Brother, Shri Lanka,

Introduction

Today we are living in globalized world. No nation can separate itself from other nations. Every Nation is dependent on other nation for its necessities. Foreign policy is important subject in this context. International Governmental Organizations & International Non-Governmental Organizations makes impact on Foreign Policies of different nations. Political parties, pressure groups, media, think tanks shape foreign policy of a nation. In Indian context foreign policy can be divided in two parts – Cold War period & Post-cold war period. Economic aspect of foreign policy can be divided in two parts – Pre Globalization Era & Post Globalization Era.

• Concept of Foreign policy –

Foreign policy is a set of principles followed by a nation for securing its national interest in its relations with other nations.

• Elements of Foreign policy in general –

It includes –

1. Size of Nation
2. Geographical place
3. Economic development of a Nation
4. Culture & History of Nation
5. Social Structure
6. Governmental structure
7. Leadership
8. Ideology
9. Diplomacy
10. World Public opinion

11. Technology

12. Changes in External environment

13. International Alliances

14. International Treaties

• Determinants of India's Foreign policy specifically –

1. Geographical factors –

A) The Himalays

B) Indian Ocean

C) Location of India –

Himalayan Mountain ranges limits to a very large extent India's trade with Northern Neighbors. The Arabian Sea, Bay of Bengal and Indian Ocean favors the oceanic trade.

2. Man-made boundaries –

India has large man made boundaries with Pakistan & Bangladesh. This has been source of tension with these countries.

3. Economic Development-

A) The issue of securing Economic Development

B) India's dependence upon economically developed nations.

4. Historical Legacy of Indian Foreign Policy-

India has experienced the exploitation from British. So India's foreign policy is committed to fight colonialism.

5. Domestic factor –

A) Foreign policy of ruling political party

B) Interest groups

6. Ideology –

In earlier years' Indian foreign policy was influenced by Gandhism, Democratic Socialism and Internationalism.

7. Personality factor –

Leader, statesman and diplomats imprint their values on foreign policy. Pandit Nehru, Lal Bahadur Shastri, Indira Gandhi, Narsimha Rao, Atalbihari Vajpayee, Indrakumar Gujral, Manmohan Sing played key role in the implementation of India's Foreign Policy.

8. International factors-

A) Super Power Rivalry

B) International economic system

C) United Nation

D) Major world issues

• Main principles of India' Foreign policy can be discussed in following way –

1. Non Alignment

2. Opposition to Imperialism, colonialism and neo colonialism
3. Opposition to Racial discrimination
4. Opposition to Discriminatory International regimes
5. Opposition to hegemonistic policies
6. Purity of Means
7. Panchsheel
8. Support for United Nations
9. Support to world peace
10. Solidarity with African continent
11. Friendship with neighboring countries
12. Independent foreign policy
13. Support for disarmament
14. Independent Nuclear Policy

• **India's Foreign Policy – Pre Cold war period –**

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru Era –

India's Foreign Policy – Pre Cold war period was based on some ideals. It was created in Nehru era. In true sense Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was creator of Indian foreign policy. He was spoke person of India on international forum. Main objective of foreign policy is to protect the national interests. Nehruvian foreign policy was based on national interest as well as values. It was based on defense & economic development. Nehru increased India's relations with Secular & Scientifically developed nations. Nehru did not took the narrow approach in view of India but he considered interests of Asian Continent.

India leaded the foreign policies of newly independent nations of third world. Indian foreign policy opposed the racism. India always supported South-South dialogue. We opposed arm race. On international level we didn't supported Military Blocks & polarization of world.

Lal Bahaddur Shastri Period –

Under the leadership India won the war with Pakistan in the year 1965. He continued Nehru legacy in foreign policy.

Indira Gandhi Period –

Indira Gandhi was strong actor in International politics. She tried to strengthen relation with U.S.A. without compromising our national interests. She solved Bangla Desh issue brilliantly. Due to her skill new nation state arised on map of world i.e. Bangla Desh.

Janta Party Regime-

Under the Prime Ministership of Morarji Bhai Desai, External Affairs Minister Atalbihari Vajpayee tried to maintain healthy relations with our natural neighbor Pakistan.

Rajiv Gandhi, Janta dal and Chandra Shekhar period-

The Congress government led by Rajiv Gandhi and the National Front Government led by Vishwanath Pratap Sing and Samajwadi Janta party government led by Chandra Shekhar followed non alignment in its true sense

On 10th April 1985 speech in Lok Sabha Rajiv Gandhi said, "India's foreign policy has been well established. We are continuing along the same road. Due to this foreign policy India has achieved position in the world. Our foreign policy is not different from our independence struggle.

Critique of Indian foreign policy in cold war period –

1. In Nehru era Indian Foreign policy was not institutionalized but it was personality centered.
2. Indian foreign policy was more influenced by ideology than national interests.
3. Hans Morgenthau has said in his book 'Politics among Nations', foreign policy should be based only on National Interests. However, India's foreign policy in earlier era does not match with this principle.
4. Indian foreign policy was more emotional than facts.
5. India opposed arm race, however we took atomic tests.
6. India has interfered in internal issues of Shri lanka. It lead death of our young energetic Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.
7. Due to Non alignment approach we failed to attain our defense interests from World Powers.
8. Indian foreign policy ignored our defense needs.

Post-cold war period –

End of cold war changed the dynamics of international politics.

1. It has ended the ideology based conflict between Communist block & Liberal Democratic block.
2. It leads the co-operation among nations.
3. End of cold war supported the globalization. Process of economic integration was started.
4. New trade block came into existence. New regional organizations were established.
5. Economies of nations were opened. Increasing economic interdependence vanished the possibility of war.
6. Now ideology is not the base of foreign policy. America & China are not enemies as they were in the past.
7. Fall of communist block extended the democracy in the world.

8. Now new nation states are created like East Timor.
9. Role of Non State Actors like MNC's, IGOs, INGO's is increased.
10. Challenge of International Terrorism is increased.

• **Change in Indian foreign policy in post-cold war period –**

P.V. Narsimha Rao period-

Indian foreign policy is changed in last three decades. Process was started by Prime Minister P.V. Narsimha Rao. He & finance minister Manmohan Sing has opened Indian Economy. New objectives were accepted for Indian foreign policy.

1. Prime importance was given to protect economic interests through foreign policy.
2. Now less importance given to political interests.
3. National interest has replaced ideology.
4. Journey started from socialism to capitalism.
5. Foreign policy got professional touch.
6. Realism replaced idealism.

Look East Policy –

Before globalization India was dependent on Western countries for its economic & trading interests. Political relations were also close to west than eastern countries. Prime Minister P.V. Narsimha Rao started making relation with east part of the world. India opened relations with ASEAN. In cold war period India has ignored this organization.

Israel –

Under pressure of Palestine supporting nations & left parties in internal politics, India hesitated to make political relations with Israel. However, globalization has extended the opportunity to us to create healthy relations with Israel.

Prime Minister H.D. Devegaua Period –

In First United Front Government (1996) Prime Minister H.D. Devegaua renewal 25 year Russia – India Friendly pact which was first done in the year 1971.

Prime Minister Indrakumar Gujral Period –

In the second United Front Government Prime Minister Indrakumar Gujral tried to theories Indian foreign policy. It is known as Gujral Doctrine.

1. He insisted that while excluding disputed issue Indo – Pak relation can be developed.
2. He gave educational, cultural, social aspects of two nation's relations.
3. He insisted that south Asian countries should not look at India as big brother.

4. If India gives assistance to south Asian countries, influence of China can be decreased.
5. Gujral also gave importance to create healthy relation with OPEC & EU Countries.

Prime Minister Atalbihari Vajpayee Era –

Prime Minister Atalbihari Vajpayee was well known foreign policy expert. He has worked as External Affairs Minister in Janta Party government. (1977-1979)

1. As a Prime Minister (1998-2004) he tried to maintain to good relations with U.S.A.
2. He tried to maintain good relations with permanent members of United Nations Security Council.
3. He declared No first Use of Atomic weapons.

Prime Minister Manmohan Sing Era-

Manmohan Sing continued the NDA's policy to maintain relations with U.S.A. Success point of his foreign policy was Atomic agreement for civil use. Manmohan Sing lead alliance government. Alliance partner DMK insisted its approach towards Shri Lanka. Trunmul congress pressurized government to stop Tista river water accord with Bangla Desh.

Prime Minister Narednra Modi Era –

There were few doubts about Modi era about his performance in foreign policy at initial stage as he has served as Chief Minister but did not have experience at central government. However, he shown from starting point through inviting Head of the governments in South Asia. He tried to maintain good relations with U.S.A. & Japan. Tista water dispute was resolved with neighboring Bangla Desh. However, there are some disputes with China

• **Challenges in front Indian foreign policy-**

1. To deal with encroachment approach of China
2. To create alliance of nations who are unsecured by China
3. To continue dialogue process with China
4. To solve the issues with Pakistan in peaceful way
5. To strengthen relation with America while considering the fulfillment of India's national interest.
6. India is known as soft power in the world. We should utilize this belief in our interest.
7. India contributes only 1% of world trade. It should be increased.
8. Indian people feel that we are super power. But for that we have to increase our share in world trade. We are yet depended upon super powers for weapons.

• **Critique of Indian foreign policy in Post-cold war period**

1. India has now accepted principle that in international politics, there are neither permanent enemies nor permanent friends.
2. Post-Cold war period foreign policy did not resolved issues with Pakistan & China.
3. We have not achieved permanent seat in U.N. Security Council & post of U.N. Secretary General.
4. We have failed to handle national & international media on important issues. for example – reporting by Indian electronic media in Dec.1999, airplane hijack by terrorist & 26/11 attack on Mumbai was not useful for Indian Government but in fact it has helped attackers.

• **Conclusion**

India' role in world politics is important. India wishes to maintain good & healthy relation with all the countries. Role of India, in the Economy of World is leading one. India is the natural leader of the South Asia but India has never shown big

brother position. India has always taken democratic approach in International politics, supported democratic regimes. India believes all the countries can fight together with the problem of economic under development & terrorism. Economic development cannot be achieved without the united effort. No doubt, India have its own national interests. But fulfillment of India's national interest is not expected at the cost of world Peace.

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