

## **THE NEW DYNAMICS OF INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY: FROM IDEALOGICAL TO PRAGMATIC**

**Dr. Pravin S. Bhagdikar**

*Associate Professor,  
 Head, Deptt. Of Political science  
 Annasaheb Gundewar College, Nagpur*

**Abstract:**

*Countries across the world are beginning to perceive India as an emerging economic and political power and seeking mutually gratifying trade and commercial links with its growing economy. In the 21st century, India's foreign policy faces diverse challenges and needs to develop all-inclusive strategies for addressing these challenges. In this research paper efforts have been made to critically analysis the shifting of foreign policy from ideaological to pragamatic.*

**Keywords:**

*Foregin Policy, Non-Alignment, Act East Policy, BRICS, Liberalization, SAARC*

The foreign policy is the sum of the principles, the interests and objectives which a state formulates in conducting its relations with other states. The principles are the codes of right conduct which are considered desirable in themselves, such as adherence to treaties and non-interference in the internal affair of other states. Interests are what a state consider, in general terms, essential for its survival and development, such as territorial integrity, improvement of living standards, and maintenance of a free way of life. Objectives are more or less precisely delimited interests, formulated in the circumstances. India's foreign policy in the pre-independence days was the Congress Resolution adopted at the Haripura session in 1938 which asserted, "The people of India desire to live in peace and friendship with their neighbours and with all other countries and for this purpose wish to remove all causes of conflict between them... In order, therefore, to establish world peace on enduring basis, imperialism and exploitations of one people by another must end."

Prime Minister Jauaharlal Nehru in the Lok Sabha on 9 December 1958 said, "From the larger point of view of the world also, we have laboured to the best of our abitivity for world peace. ... It is a privilege to be associated with peace, but it brings one a great responsibility ... We should...try to live up to it. ... In our domestic sphere also we should work on lines which are comfortable with peace.

We cannot obviously have one voice for the world outside and another voice...internally. The other positive aspects are enlargement of freedom in the world, replacement of colonialism by free and independent countries and a larger degree of co-operation among nations. It is completely incorrect to call our policy 'Nehru policy'. It is incorrect because all that I have done is to give voice to that policy. I have not originated it. It is a policy inherent in the circumstances of India, inherent in the past thinking of India, inherent in the whole mental outlook of India, inherent in the conditioning of the Indian mind during our struggle for freedom, and inherent in the circumstances of the world today.<sup>1</sup>

While pursuing his agenda on foreing policy, Nehru pointed out that India would naturally stretch its hand of friendship to other Asiatic neighbours. To quote Nehru: "In developing our foreign policy, we shall naturally first cultivate friendly relations with the countries of the East, which have so much in common with us. Nepal will be our neighbour and friend; and China, Japan, Indonesia, Annam and Central Asia, we shall have the closest contact. So, also with Afghanistan, Persia, Turkey and Egypt."<sup>2</sup>

Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru was the philosopher, the architect, the engineer and the voice of India's policy towards the outside world. His personality dominated both the formulation of the policy and its implementation to an extent and degree for which in peace time there were few parallels in many other democratic country. The viewpoint of India's foreign policy was "no role, no involvement" hence India distanced itself from any of the major superpowers of the world, USA and the former USSR.

After the end of cold war and the commencement of liberalization era Indian Foreign Affairs experienced greater pragmatism approach towards their foreign policy and approaches. The earlier Nehruvian model of idealism was repudiated after humiliating defeat of India by China in 1962. Mrs. Indira Gandhi while accepting pragmatic gesture buried the Nehruvian model of Idealism and made

some essential changes in foreign policy which was seen in Bangladesh War 1971. Indira Gandhi became 4th Prime Minister of India in 1966. She was elected twice from 1966-1977 and again from 1979-1984. During her tenure, Gandhi introduced many changes in India's foreign policy. She used her father's policies as theoretical base for new guidelines; however she introduced some notable changes in the "implementation side". Nehru pursued a "macro" approach in foreign policy while Indira Gandhi took a "micro" approach as she was quite determined to establish India as a regional power with a strong military.<sup>3</sup>

Liberlization of the economy beginning in 1992 under the joint direction of Narsimha Rao and his then Finance Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, had set the things in rolling. India has become the international hub for global service industries. The result was bare space of three months when Delhi had hosted the Prime Minister of Britain, France, Germany, Russia and of course, the President of the United States. Now the same mood we have been experiencing with present Prime Minister of India.

**Relation with Israel: Towards Deidealization**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Israel is hailed as a historic moment which came after 25 years of full diplomatic relation. It is a failure on the part of our foreign policy that it took so long for an Indian PM to visit Israel. India had recognised Israel in 1950 but diplomatic relations was established in 1992. That is how our foreign policy runs. Prime Minister Modi's visit to Israel is a coming out party for bilateral ties and marks a pragmatic turn in India's foreign policy. Because of the Palestinian problem Indian political strategist scorned them even Manmohan Singh barely mentioned Israel during his 10 years. In 1971 during Bangladesh war, it was Israel who supports India as well at the time of Kargil conflict which laid the foundation for a strategic partnership.

India always and probably still blows the trumpets of non interventionism and all embracing foreign policy. But after the Nuke Deal with U.S.A., India should be pragmatic enough to weave a full fledged strategic tie-up with Israel.<sup>4</sup> India and Israel's full diplomatic relations established on 29th January, 1992. Thanks to P.V. Narsihmrao who adopted a pragmatic approach towards foreign policy. Due to idealistic policy like Non-Aligned Movement the relationship between two countries was not cordial. India always inattentive of National Interest and always hyperactive about the principle of 'no role no involment.' Policy. It

is noted that during the Indo-China war most of the Afro-Asian countries including Arab were not ready to go against China. But during the crisis and also on Kashmir issues, Israel fully endorsed India's stand which continued in 1971 at the time of war against Pakistan. On the other hand, Arab states supported Pakistan. Egypt, Algeria and Syria were neutral but Kuwait, Jordan and Saudi Arabia condemn India; provided Pakistan with American built combat aircrafts. Israel also supported with military hardware.

India is a staunch follower of peace resolution of the International conflict in Palestine according to the UN Charter. India always favours Palestine state and was first to be recognised as an independent state. While tackling Israel-Palestine issue, India always took the safe mode where it cannot ignore the sentiments of its Muslim population. But at the same time there is a realization by Indian strategist that pro-Arab stance has not been properly rewarded whereas Israel towards which Indian attitude is always neglected, support India on Kashmir issue. India never corned the West Asian country while dealing with Israel issue. It has taken three years for Prime Minister Narendra Modi to visit Israel. Modi travelled to many Gulf States and Iran before going to Israel. There is a lot of ideological legacy that he had to take care of. Now India stands on Israel issue is self-interest. It is seen that India's stand towards Palestine on international level is more neutral rather than consistently opposing Israel operation in Gaza.

Prime Minister Modi's visit to Israel was the first by Indian PM to the Promised Land ever since it became a sovereign state in 1949. The visit was the part of 25th anniversary of our diplomatic ties that were established with the two countries opening their respective embassies in 1992. The prolonged journey between the two countries is due to India's dependence on the Arab world for oil and for its good size population working in the Gulf countries. At 25 years of diplomatic relations celebration, Israel's Ambassador, Daniel Carmon said, "As we celebrate this historic day, we have chosen a Growing Partnership as the motto for the year 2017 to signify that our relations, and the celebration of these, are not bound to one specific point in time."<sup>5</sup> After the wide-ranging talks, the two sides signed seven pacts covering multiple areas like innovation, water conservation, agriculture and space. India and Israel also agreed to set up \$40 million fund for industrial Research and Development, and innovation fund, with both countries contributing \$20 million each. In a joint

media appearance with Netanyahu Prime Minister Modi said, "Our goal is to build a relationship that reflects our shared priorities and draws on enduring bonds between our peoples."

However, relationship with Israel doesn't mean there is any shift in our West Asia policy. It was the convention that had gone on for decades because of our romanticism in foreign policy. Someone had to bring in realism, which Prime Minister Modi did. At the end, "In our pragmatic de-hyphenated foreign policy, we are friends with Iran and Saudi Arabia at the same; US and Russia at the same time. China, Philippines, Japan, Vietnam- all of them may be friends or foes at various levels; but for us they are all our friends on a stand-alone basis."<sup>6</sup>

### **Balancing power through Act East Policy**

The significant changes occurred in world politics and the same scenario after the Economic liberalization, India forced to adopt and to focus on strengthened and multifaceted relationship with ASAIN countries, which is another important elements of foreign policy neglected under the Idealistic approach of 'No role no involvement.' It was again P.V. Narsihmrao, the pioneer of modern foreign policy of India, who woke India from its snooze and made Eastward Look a blueprint of India's Foreign Policy. As long as the Cold war persisted, India was in touch with non-aligned countries and that included countries both in the Far East and the Middle East. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Non-Alligned Movement lost its relevance and supposed to be forgotten. As far as Eastern country is concerned, India's concern was negligible.

One of the more pronounced shifts in foreign policy came through the "Look East Policy" initiated in 1991. What may well be true, but considering that many of China's neighbours have in recent month appeared to seek closer military alliances with US. The India relation with ASEAN trade which in 1993 was a mere 2.5 billion is now to cross \$65 billion in 2016-2017.<sup>7</sup> India's Export to ASEAN was US\$ 2.91 billion in 2000-2001 & 25.20 US\$ billion in 2016-2017 which is almost ten fold increase. Similarly India's import from ASEAN is 4.15 US\$ billion in 2000-2001 and 39.84 US\$ billion in 2016-2017. The net trade deficit of U.S. \$ 14.6 billion with the ASEAN in 2015-16 is the outcome of trade deficit of U.S. \$ 10.2 billion with Indonesia, U.S. \$ 5.4 billion with Malaysia and U.S. \$ 2.5 billion with Thailand. India's combined trade deficit with ASEAN in 2015-16 would have been much higher but for the fact that India ran a trade surplus of U.S. \$ 2.7

billion with Vietnam, U.S. \$ 826 million with Philippines and U.S. \$ 416 million with Singapore.<sup>8</sup> During the cold war investment flow in India from this region was negligible. The same scenario has changed dramatically. Rise in trade with Southeast Asia has been accompanied by simultaneous increase in cross-border investment flows. Under the Look East policy, India initiated many programme to develop closer cooperation with Southeast Asia.

It was necessary to counter Chinese influence in South Asia and Southeast Asia India started towards moving toward Southeast Asia to build strong economic, strategic and political ties. Realizing the importance of Indian Economy and its strategic importance, ASEAN is also keen to develop strategic and economic relation with India. These moves between them can be seen in the context of numerous politico-strategic and economic realizations brought about by the end of the Cold War in international relations. In the early 1990s, the Congress government led by P.V. Narshimah Rao, fully cognizant of the tremendous global changes occurring at that time, formulated the Look East Policy, which constituted a fundamental shift in India's foreign policy. Until then Southeast Asia had barely figured on India's foreign policy priorities. Since the initiation of the policy, this region has become more prominent in India's foreign policy priorities. Since the initiation of the policy, this region has become more prominent in India's foreign policy. The Look East policy marked a strategic shift in India's perspective. It coincided with the beginning of economic reforms and was seen as an opportunity to enlarge its economic engagement.<sup>9</sup> PM Modi gave considerable importance to the need for extending the dialogue beyond the bilateral ambit, upgrading the trilateral US-Japan-India dialogue to ministerial level. Equally important is India's participation in the quadrilateral meetings with the US, Japan and Australia, particularly since 2017 which has underlined New Delhi's interest to exchange views on the strategic environment of the Indo-Pacific region. At the same time, however, India is cautious not to offend China in the process.

Indo-Japanese cooperation received a big push with the two prime ministers signing an agreement in 2017 to establish the India-Japan Act East Forum which is conceived of as a platform for bilateral cooperation. The forum will identify projects for the economic advancement of the region, with focus on connectivity projects, disaster management and environment and people-

to-people contacts through tourism and culture. It was inaugurated in December 2017 and Japan has already extended a substantial ODA loan which would not only upgrade the National Highways (NH 40) but also support India's connectivity initiatives in Bangladesh, Myanmar, and other neighbouring countries.

The better relation, both trade and culture, India and ASEAN has come long way in the past decade, At one time ASEAN countries suspicious about the Indian role in South Asia. But the 'Look East' policy realizes both sides the benefits from free trade region. This will help people of both regions in the coming days and make the 21st century a real Asian Country.

#### **Foreign policy and Regional cooperation**

After the end of cold war the SEATO, NATO and other military based regional organisation had lost their relevance. Similarly cooperative based organisation like SAARC, Non-Alignment has lost their utility due to shifting of 'National Interest' perception from International to Regional Cooperation. It seems that after the inception of globalisation process and economic reforms Indian foreign policy adopting a commercial and market oriented approach. India is a very ambitious country. It has high aspirations to become a global super power. Marching towards, India join regional forum like BRICS which is economically sound and geographically importance for Indian strategic view. The recent Goa summit which was held on October 15-16, 2017 comes to end with interesting political development on the international stage. The main aim ...is ...to Challenge G-7 and devalue the importance of World Bank and IMF. Through BRICS, the countries can have multilateral relations in their local currencies. Thus, weakening the "US Dollar" helps all of them and their own currencies are strengthened.

In the recent years, developing countries have increasingly emerged as regional and global growth engines, reflecting higher growth in economic activity and trade, as compared to the developed economies. Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) – the five emerging global powers from the continents of Asia, Africa and Latin America – are incrementally increasing their global engagements. Today, BRICS economies together account for 22.5 per cent of the global output, 17.2 per cent of global trade, and over 40 per cent of the global population.

BRICS export-import (exim) trade with the world registered a growth of 5.8 per cent in the first half of 2016 as against de-growth of 2.2 per cent in the

same period last year. China is expected to grow more than 6 per cent in 2017, India at 8 per cent, Brazil at more than 0.5 per cents and Russia at above 1 per cent. It is worth mentioning that trade among BRICS countries continues to grow although China remains BRICS' as well as India's largest trading partner responsible for 82 per cent of Indian containerised trade. India exim trade with BRICS nations has been consistently growing at 4 per cent since 2012. Recovery in Brazil and Russian economy is "good news" for BRICS and it might entail an increase of trade among India and China in 2017. We are also noticing some interesting trends that are beginning to emerge of late. Rise of India, Thailand and Vietnam as alternative sourcing markets to China can put some pressure on China in future. China remains India's strongest trading partner followed by Russia and Brazil. India's exim trade with BRICS nations was strong at 6.5 per cent and 7.8 per cent, respectively, in 2015 and 2016.<sup>10</sup>

The biggest success of BRICS since its first gathering in 2009 has been its economic agenda. The group has been a useful platform, especially for India and China. The launch of the BRICS New Development Bank [DNB] was a next step. But at other side, China, that has been the biggest obstacle in other for such as the UNSC where India seeks to sanction Pakistani's terrorist Mazhar Asood. However there are many obstacles on the way of India as far as BRICS is concern. China did not look at Pakistan and the problem of terrorism exclusively through the Indian perception. Interestingly Pakistan get much better deal than India as later is a member of BRICS. Russia and Pakistan recently completed joint military exercises aimed at combating terrorism. Russia is happy with BRICS declaration which supported its initiative to work for an international convention to prohibit chemical and biological terrorism. Russia also successfully sanctioned the resolution which mentioned about the unacceptability of unilateral sanctions imposed on sovereign state. Recent Trump administration recognised American sanctioned against Russia. It was expected that the West has imposed wide-ranging economic sanctions against Russia after the events in Ukraine two years ago. Apart from speedy economic growth after the China, the strategic outcome from the BRICS, India is the least beneficiary.

#### **Conclusion:**

The post 1990's era of Indian Foreign policy is much pragmatic than the Nehruvian era. But the principle and execution of foreign policy have

been subjected to critical analysis. Some of them are as follows:

1. The Nehruvian legacy of ignorance and idealism, Indira way of aggressive but beneficial bilateralism, Rajiv Gandhian style of dominaton, P.V. Narshimhrao's future vision & AtalBihari Vajpayee's Liberal policy has changed landscape of Foregin policy of Inida.
2. Indian Prime Minister vist to Nepal after ten years, Israel visit after 13 years, less attention towards neighbouring countries has failed to produce the desired results. After Modi's visit to above countries the scenario has been changed to some extent.
3. The Inter-state prolonged issues with South Asian neibhbourhood yet to be solved. Kashmir problem, cross border terrorism, border dispute with China & Pakistan, Inter-State dispute of water with Bangladesh, Pakistan, China and Nepal and the most important growing friendly relation and economic co-opeation of SAARC countries with China are the key issues where Indian diplomacy need hard work.
4. Despite of good relation with Western, European and ASEAN countries, we are not in position to retain our claim on NSG and Security Council of UNO as a permanent member.

Despite some lacunas it can't be denied that the Indian foreign policy has greatly increased nation's prestige in the international sphere. India has not only highlighted the problem of climate

change, terrorism and imperialstic approach on International diasphora but also has strengthened the relationship with Western countries as well as third world countries. First Indian diaphora in foreign countries has been addressed which should be a part of our foreign affairs. At last, Indian Foregin policy after Post liberalisation experienced very drastic changes with keeping the basic principles which we have preserve as a Doctrine of our foreign policy.

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